



Aldermaston CE Primary School

Minutes of Meeting (FGB 6) – Wednesday 15th July 2020- 7pm

Present: Mel Higgs – MH (Headteacher), Ally Burridge – AB (Deputy Head), Sam Chaventre – SC (Chair), Dave Shirt – DS, Cathy Jones – CJ, Thomasina Ward – TW, Charlotte Watchorn – CW. Revd Jane Manley – JM, Gayle Bonner – GB (Clerk)

This meeting was held via Zoom.

1	Opening prayer
	SC opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. CJ led the prayer. Apologies received from EJC, PB & JS. CL stated he might be able to join.
2	Declarations of Interest
	Regarding Playzone under item 6, SC, CW, MH & TW all declared their conflict of interest and will not take part in the discussion.
3	Any other urgent business
	MH – School donor – this will be covered under the finance update, Item 7. Finance – Elmdale Broadband contract - this will be covered under the finance update, Item 7. Playzone – MH will update on this in her Headteacher update – The clerk reminded Governors to declare their conflict of interest for this item and not engage in the discussion.
4	Governor Recruitment
	<p>SC discussed the previous discussions around the two vacancies on the board. The Governors had received some interest for the roles but wanted to review skills. SC had identified that marketing was very much a gap to fill and expand on. SC said that obviously DS is the main finance person but we need a back up person.</p> <p>In relation to the recent absence of JS at meetings, SC has now spoken with JS. JS informed SC that he has not had access to the internet so has not been receiving any communications. JS is happy to continue as an associate member but wants clarity for the role and what the specialty is. MH & SC have met and suggested JS continues in his investigative role. DS queried when JS would be able to access Governor communication again. SC needs to contact JS to find this out.</p> <p>The two other posts are for an LA Governor and a Co-Opted Governor. SC queried if there was guidance around the roles and possibly a job description. 4.1 - GB to send through to SC.</p> <p>JM arrived to the meeting, 7.14pm.</p> <p>JM & CJ talked about the interested parties and their wealth of skills. SC will review recruitment again in September.</p> <p>GB discussed that with AB departing this would create a Staff Governor vacancy. SC asked about when AB would be departing. AB said it is provisionally Christmas at the moment. SC asked if AB would be happy to continue until Christmas. AB confirmed she would. After AB has departed the clerk will hold a Staff Governor election.</p>
5	Governor Meeting Dates 2020/21
	SC distributed a questionnaire to Governors to ask their opinion on how meetings should be scheduled from September onwards. SC said that other schools are likely to be taking away committee meetings and just run FGB meetings. All of the Governors voted that they would like to keep the committee meetings. SC requested that heads of committees set their meeting dates and email them around to

	<p>their committee members. 5.1 – Heads of committees to publish their meeting dates ensuring the clerk and chair and copied in. SC has asked Governor Services for the Leadership Forum dates in advance to allow different Governors to attend. There is also a Safeguarding Network meeting that SC will send out the dates of to Governors. SC suggested that as meetings come up the heads of committees can decide if they will hold the meeting at school or virtually. SC asked if Governors were happy with that decision. The Governors AGREED with this decision.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Headteacher Update</p>
	<p>MH briefed Governors on the children who had been attending school over the lockdown. There had then been the possibility to bring more children back into school. MH reported that 50% of the school were attending but for some children that is only a few sessions a week. The attendance is very patchy at present and it is worth noting the school may face difficulty in September when compulsory schooling is required. There will be an adjustment period for children and parents. MH gave out the attendance figures per year group.</p> <p>The DfE and LA guidance had been reviewed and the risk assessment was completed and sent out to Governors. MH thanked CL for his thorough review of the document. SC warned that it may not be the final version as the Government may change their guidance, the document remains flexible at present. MH has informed parents of the staggered start/end times. The school is incurring additional costs to put things in place for September. These include, additional cleaning supplies, hand sanitiser, lidded bins for classrooms, extra hours for break cover and an additional adult to support the new foundation stage children starting in the Wrens class. MH has also been working with the school contractors to ensure their risk assessments align with the schools.</p> <p>CJ asked about Governor visits. MH said it probably won't be possible but it would be good for Governors to make contact with their link roles. SC said that early in the term there could be virtual link meetings. MH will inform the staff of this and is happy for Governors to make contact. SC said she was happy to provide some example questions for Governors. CW asked if teachers are continuing with their existing responsibilities. MH said the only change would be the EYFS role, all the other curriculum managers are staying the same.</p> <p>Playzone</p> <p>MH raised the re-opening of Playzone. MH declared that she was on the Playzone committee so needed to run past some plans to ensure they match the needs of the school. The staff are currently on furlough but there is great need for wrap around childcare in September. A survey has been done to gauge the demand and an assessment has been done on the financial viability. MH said that all of the children that had previously booked places were all Aldermaston children except one. The playzone can be set up into groups to recreate class bubbles where possible. MH discussed keeping the groupings consistent and keeping Playzone adults with the same groups where possible. The DfE have said that best practice must be followed but children and adults are allowed to mix. As a school we need to decide if we support the re-opening or are we saying unless we can replicate the school rules we will not open.</p> <p>MH invited questions.</p> <p>JM asked what other schools were doing. MH said big schools are not able to open due to their volume of children. There does not seem to be one way that schools are managing it but the financial viability is a major issue. MH expressed that the families need the provision and she is worried that it may never be able to re-open. MH asked Governors to make a decision. SC said DS, CJ, JM & AB would be able to participate in this decision.</p> <p>AB agreed it was important to have the wrap around care but equally its important to keep everybody safe. JM talked about the effects of lockdown and the impact on the children's social lives. JM said it</p>

was important to way up the risk with having a sense of normality and routine. CJ said that what had been discussed sounded sensible and the school would mitigate the risk as best they can.

The Governors AGREED that if Playzone were happy and the risk assessments are in-line it should re-open. SC asked about the breakfast club. MH said breakfast the club was not very popular and the numbers are too low at this point. CJ said that once education was compulsory again parents will have to find the wrap around care.

MH distributed the recovery curriculum presentation from WB regarding recovering from Covid-19. It has two strands, Recovery of well-being and Assessing Learning. The main focus will be to re-establish routines and structures incorporating hand washing, health and hygiene. MH said that consistency helps children to have routine but there needs to be flexibility in the timetable in the initial weeks. There needs to be sensitivity shown as some children may have faced bereavement. There will be increased PE and development of Oracy skills to enable children to articulate. PSHE to promote recovery. A rainbow room has been painted with ELSA materials and sensory toys as a safe space. The Emotional Health academy will also be working with the school.

The second strand will review the children's learning and identifying the gaps for the class and individual children. That information will be used to plan the curriculum going forward to ensure TAs work with children closely on filling the gaps. The English Co-coordinator has been developing new techniques around Reading and Phonics. There will be additional sessions in Maths for times tables and number bonds. Chronology can be worked on as it underpins the curriculum and allows cohesion. MH does not want any narrowing of the curriculum, that is not in the children's interest.

MH invited questions.

SC asked that if when the gap analysis is done, could some of the work be communicated to parents to ensure they can see their child's progress and how they can continue to support their children going forward. MH wants to be careful about committing to providing additional reports, the teachers have lots of existing commitments. AB said the school could consider when the first parents evening is scheduled, it could be moved forward to enable parents to have a follow up. AB said that they had already assessed half of the school children who have been in school. The children who have not been into school have also been contacted. CW suggested MH explaining in her newsletter about how the school is going to fill the gaps. The terms curriculum will be sent out to the children and parents and this could be expanded on. CW said that parents have been worrying about how well they have done with homeschooling and they need the reassurance. CW said it would be useful for the committees to review any data and ensure their focus aligns with the SDP for the coming year. AB said that the children have had a wide range of experiences with some children having lots of homeschooling and some having none. AB said the vulnerable children have been looked at for having assessments next term, the PPG money could be used for support. CJ asked about volunteers return to school. MH said she would review the situation after the October half term. Quite a few volunteers are in a vulnerable category but MH will contact them as soon as feasible.

7

Finance Update

DS lost his connection to the meeting at this point. DS send his update as follows;

DS reported that was there was little update since the last meeting. The Finance Committee had not met, and the Finance Officer was still awaiting her training, so there were no budget reports available for review.

Finance Committee ToR

The ToR was distributed to Governors to review it in advance. DS said that the only change was a typo "any" should have read "and". DS had temporarily assigned it Issue 31a as it had not been approved,

once submitted for approval it should have become Issue 32. Also, on Page 2 it states as dates for approval and adoption as July 2019, this should read July 2020. DS said this would be the case for the other policies up for review. The Governors AGREED to APPROVE the ToR.

Elmdale Broadband Contract

The Governors were asked to consider a request from the Finance Officer;

Elmdale whom provide the Telephony and Broadband services have reminded the school that their 3-year rolling contract runs out on 31.8.20. They have offered another 3-year contract for the same price.

The Finance Officer took advice from West Berkshire Finance. The school can consider this as an exception considering the timings and current circumstances as long as there are no extra costs and that the school are happy with the services the supplier provides. What I will need is agreement from the Governors to go ahead with the continuation contract for another 3 years. This will need to be brought up at the next Finance meeting, whenever this may be. The Finance Officer and Office Manager will be undertaking a contract audit in September so this issue does not occur again.

MH asked Governors if they were happy to approve. CW asked if it had to be another 3-year contract. MH said that the current company have not served notice due to lockdown but it is due for renewal. CW said it would have been useful to see the actual contract as the due diligence needs to be done. TW asked if the company were approved by WB. MH said that most schools use Elmdale and they are giving us the same price. MH said we could suggest a 1-year contract approval and then review next year to ensure the due diligence. TW said that due to Covid-19 there could be a negotiation with the price and contract terms. CW said that at the moment prices are generally going down. It is extra work but could the Finance Officer see if a 1-year contract is possible. The Governors decided to see if a 1-year contract could be negotiated. AB said that the price could go up just for a 1-year contract so there needs to be caution.

School Donor

MH raised that a donor had offered to donate £10,000 to the school PTA for IT equipment, specifically i-pads. The PTA can claim gift aid there is would be an additional £2,500 to spend on a system manager, screen guards and a charging trolley. The school can also claim back the VAT. MH discussed her spending limits, the FMP procurement of goods and services states that there must be approval from the Finance committee. The IT manager has been doing the procurement of quotes, MH met with PTA to brief them of the situation. On the 25th June the PTA, MH and the donor met to discuss the equipment and the quotes. The IT Manager had met with teachers and an IT specialist to ensure the specification is correct. MH is unable to wait for the next Finance committee as children would not have the i-pads for September. MH needs Governors to approve a method where approval from the finance committee could be gained. MH suggested that the IT manager recommends what quote meets the school's requirements, this could then be put forward to the PTA. MH required authorisation to spend over £10,000, MH sought approval for £15,000, it will be slightly under that. SC asked the clerk if FGB could give their approval. The Clerk stated said the FGB could approve the expenditure, there is also two members of the finance committee who are present in the meeting. The Governors AGREED to allocate the £15,000 expenditure. SC asked if this could be announced to parents once the i-pads are in use. MH said one class will be focused on initially and then phased across the school. MH plans to name the donor, she has their agreement to share the information further afield.

8	Policies
	<p>The Governors were sent the following policies in advance for review;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Management Policy • Charging Policy • Lettings Charges • Governor Allowances • SEND Policy • H&S Policy <p>The policies have been reviewed and agreed by the Finance Committee. CJ talked through the policies and which members of staff had reviewed them. SC raised the item in the Governor Allowances policy that states a child-minder can be paid for. This relates to ensuring fairness and excluding Governors on wealth grounds.</p> <p>CJ requested that the Financial Management Policy would need to be deferred as WB are currently reviewing the model document. SC said that at the bottom of the policy it references appendices. CJ said these were available in the finance folders on GovernorHub, these would also be available on the school website.</p> <p>The Governors AGREED to APPROVE the policies.</p>
9	Safeguarding
	<p>MH reported that the school previously had three open matters. One is now closed and the two remaining cases are awaiting outcomes from children services. SLT have conducted a safeguarding review and the families that have not been contacted will now be called. CJ asked if MH was surprised about some families not engaging with the school. MH said she wanted evidence that children had contributed to their learning and made sure that everybody had contact in some form. AB said that the school had been very thorough about reviewing the vulnerable families.</p> <p>The school newsletter will share news on the new government initiative called SafeApp for parents to download. MH said there is also a new Child Protection policy being compiled which now references new technology.</p> <p>The clerked briefed Governors on the updated KCSIE policy she would be distributing, there is also a document from <i>The Key</i> that summaries the changes.</p>
10	AOB
	<p>CJ raised the Year 6 trip to Wales. MH said this had been postponed and the school are in negotiation with the provider. It has provisionally rebooked for March 2021 and parents have now been informed of the situation.</p> <p>SC expressed thanks to MH and her team for their huge effort as always, in particular during this challenging time. MH & AB thanked Governors for their time and support.</p> <p>SC will be in contact over the summer holidays. The Governors expressed thanks to SC for her first year chairing.</p> <p>Meeting closed 8.25pm</p>
	<p><u>Actions</u></p> <p>8.1 – TW/PB to look at school website examples 8.2 – GB to prepare committee ToR's for September FGB approval. 4.1 – GB to send SC the details of LA & Co-opted roles.</p>

	5.1 – Heads of committees to publish their meeting dates ensuring the clerk and chair and copied in.
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Signed:

Date: