



ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
Minutes of the Virtual Workshop for all Governors
Wednesday 21st October 2020. 7pm

Present: Faruq Bilbe (Chair); Adedayo Benson; Dave Dymond; Robert Howell; Dave Close; Ian Church; Julia Wordsworth; Sara Fincham-Majumdar; Attia Rafiq-Sharif; Yota Dimitriadi;

In Attendance: Rachel Lawson; Alice de Croos; Sarah Tweddle; Adam Jones

Clerk: Deborah Savage

Agenda Item	NOTE: To conform to Government advice that social distancing should be maintained this meeting was held virtually using the Zoom meeting platform.
1	<u>Apologies:</u> No apologies had been received.
2	<u>Declaration of Interests.</u> Governors were reminded to declare any conflicts of interest. None were declared.
3	<u>Minutes of the FGB held 16th September 2020.</u> These had been circulated in advance of the meeting but their approval was delayed until the next formal FGB meeting.
4	<u>Verbal update from the Head teacher.</u> The Head began his verbal report to Governors by stating that 5 weeks into term and the new ways of working within school, the wellbeing of staff and children remains the key priority of the school. The Head informed Governors that staff remained positive although they are now extremely tired and in need of the half term break next week. The Head is proud of the whole school community and how they have pulled together. He thanked them for their hard work and continuing efforts to ensure the school days run as smoothly as they can. Staff are taking reduced lunchbreaks or even working through their lunch breaks on occasion to maintain the class bubbles. The Head informed Governors that staff anxiety remains and that the school is doing all it can to try to put the necessary measures in place to reassure staff. The Head reported that all staff have had one wellbeing day off this term – which has been cost neutral to the school as cover has been provided in-house. As there is no socialising possible between staff now due to social distancing the school have been providing treats (such as chocolate) as a morale booster and those manning gates at either end of the school day have received some lovely supportive comments from parents and carers which have been shared with all staff. The children have adapted well to the new ways of working and are role models for the staff!

Governor Comment: It would be nice to facilitate something social for the staff as this area of school life is missing but this is not possible. The Head agreed that it was not possible and staff are keen to do all they can to keep the bubbles secure.

Governor Question: Are staff able to flourish in their areas of strength and special interest? Are they able to pursue their interests in the classroom? We have developed our curriculum and this is in the SDP and as far as possible we are teaching this enhanced curriculum although we have had to make some adaptations. Staff are able to bring their personalities into the classrooms and their teaching – and teachers are still enjoying teaching.

Attendance.

The Head had shared the latest attendance figures prior to the meeting and these were year group specific. There had been one Year 6 bubble that had had to isolate for a week so this had an impact on the figures but the school's figures were broadly in line (and slightly above) other Reading schools. **ACTION:** The Head would forward attendance figures for disadvantaged children to Governors.

Governor Question: Have unauthorised absences gone down? We are closely monitoring absence and the reasons behind any non-attendance. We have this data on a spreadsheet and we can closely monitor patterns on a day-by-day basis.

Governor Question: Are parents still concerned about sending their child into school due to COVID? Parental anxiety has gone down. Having staff manning gates and able to answer questions has helped with this and parents do approach us with any questions or concerns. A small number of families who initially told us they were isolating and therefore not sending in their child have had their absences changed to unauthorised as it later transpired that they were not isolating. This has been a small number of families however.

Governor Comment: When I have dropped off or collected a child and seen and spoken to staff they have been very positive. Although you say there is staff anxiety they don't convey this to parents and their positivity is reassuring to parents. It almost feels that COVID does not exist. This helps to make families feel secure in sending their child into school. The school were pleased to hear this feedback.

Catch up funding.

The Government has made catch-up funding available to every school and ASPs will receive around 49K. The first part of this payment has just been received by the school. There are conditions made on how the money is to be spent and it is certain that Ofsted will be looking into how a school has spent their catch-up funding allocation in any future visits (which are to resume shortly). The head reported that there is need within school for emotional support and this would be provided alongside academic catch-up work. The school is fortunate to have amongst the staff a number of trained ELSAs and these staff (after allowing the children time to settle back into school) are

now beginning to work with some of the children most in need of emotional support. Teachers are able to refer any child in their class they think is in need of support and this work is being carried out in the afternoons.

The school intends to recruit two temporary LSAs for the rest of this academic year to work on a 1:1 or small group basis with children who need support to catch up and the job specs for these posts have been carefully drawn up. The Head informed Governors that he was confident that this was the best use of the catch up funding for ASPs.

Governor Question: The catch up funding – how many children will it cover? We are working in our classes now to catch up all children using quality first teaching. We are finding that many children are making up lost ground this way and we are not expecting that a huge number of children will need extra support.

Governor Question: Is catch up funding based on the number of vulnerable children in school? No – it is per head.

Governor Question: As you are recruiting extra LSAs is there a risk, as other schools might be advertising for similarly skilled people, that there will be competition with recruiting? We have been careful to cast the job spec wide enough to attract what we hope will be a wide range of people so we are hoping for a large pool of candidates. We have been told that Reading are seeing a 25% increase in response to job adverts.

Governor Question: How will the new LSA posts work – presumably they will have to work across the bubbles? They will, yes, and we encourage our staff to wear PPE. We are also having a member of staff return early from maternity leave to work in Year 1 for 2 months as an extra support. We hope to be able to limit the LSAs to a specific year, but within this they will have to work across bubbles.

Open Mornings.

The Head informed Governors that the school has refined the format of their Open Mornings for prospective parents over the last few years and were pleased with how they were working so it is particularly disappointing that holding these events is not possible at the moment.

Currently, parents showing an interest in the school were being sent out an information pack and the school is due to film a short promotional video in the first week back after half term. This will consist of footage of the school and some presentations that would have been given in person to visitors.

Governor Question: As part of this video would you like some comments from current parents? We plan to hear the student voice as part of the video so it would be good to hear the parent voice too yes.

ACTION: ARS volunteered to assist with this.

Staffing.

We have advertised for a Caretaker to work alongside our Site Manger. The Site Manager has moved into the staff accommodation now and he has worked very hard since March and has made an enormous contribution to the working of the school under the adaptations we have had to make. We have had some interest already in the role and have looked closely at a new Job Spec so that the two roles are different but complement each other.

We have submitted the Job Specs for the two LSA posts to RBC for grading and are waiting for these to come back before we can advertise them but we hope to have people in post before Christmas.

SDP.

The Head explained that the school are holding off on carrying out any assessments at the moment, giving children time to settle back into school. Assessment will resume after half term and it was suggested that the AHTs attend a Zoom meeting to discuss their data (once it is gathered) and explain any issues that there may be to Governors.

There followed a discussion about holding a PEC meeting at the start of December when it is expected that performance data will be available which will help all to understand the impact COVID-19 had had on children's learning.

Governor Comment: The inclusion of the AHTs at meetings has been very useful in the past and we can use the questions supplied at the RGA meeting to form a template for the AHTs to report to Governors.

The SDP is in place and being reviewed regularly. Quality first teaching is helping children catch up academically and the number of priorities is limited to enable focus on the important issues.

Governors Question: Will SATS still be taking place next year? We anticipate they will be going ahead, yes. ASPS children usually make accelerated progress and we have seen no marked difference in where the current year 6 are compared to previous cohorts.

Governor Question: Have you been carrying out Phonics screening? This will start after half term. We have been able to carry out extra tuition in our bubbles as lots of our staff are RWInc trained. We are making the best use of the class support that is available in each bubble although this is being used in different ways according to the needs of children within each bubble.

Governor Question: How is differentiation working now? It is more challenging, especially in Maths teaching. We have had to re-focus our usual model but we are adapting as best we can.

	<p>Governor Question: How can catch up funding be used to help stretch more able children? Our aim is for quality first teaching in the classroom and now we have two staff in each bubble with some children that are behind being taken to be taught separately at times this does give the staff more opportunity to focus on those that remain.</p> <p>Governor Question: We don't know where children would have been had they not missed so much school? We think the profile is broadly similar to previous cohorts. We have tested year 6 twice in Maths and their arithmetic scores doubled in a few weeks. As we have been experiencing high mobility of children in the past we are used to catching children up and it is our intention that children should close any gaps rapidly.</p> <p>Governor Question: How can you differentiate homework? We now do homework on line and have found that many children are more engaged with this. We have noticed that some children are particularly enjoying online times tables programmes. It is difficult for some children however. We do differentiate in homework setting. The Learning Platform uses reward stickers which some children find very motivating.</p>
5	<p><u>SEN/Vulnerable COVID-19 impact – Sarah Twedde</u></p> <p>Sarah had written a summary for Governors that had been circulated in advance of the meeting and she talked Governors through the main points.</p> <p>There has been a rise in the number of SEN children in school over the past 3 years and a marked increase this year since the 1st September. Most of these newly arriving SEN children are from out of area and their needs were undeclared. Some of these children have significant conditions. Sarah informed Governors that the problem is with the process involved in the arrival of a new child as their previous school does not have to declare any issues to the next school. This is both unfair on the child but also has an impact on the dynamic of the class they join. However, the school have adjusted their plans and all the new SEN children have settled quite well.</p> <p>Sarah reported that having 2 adults per bubble was working quite well – it was not perfect for the support of SEN children but it is manageable. However, the staff are very stretched. Currently there are 6 children attending ASPs who are waiting for a place at a SEN school.</p> <p>Governor Comment: Sarah's report is positive but we are very stretched with the number of SEN children we have and the number within that who have complex needs. We have had to make the case to RBC that taking additional SEN children will negatively impact the education of the other children and we cannot meet the needs of additional children. This has been accepted by RBC so far. The SEN support team are having to carry out intimate care and some of the children have physical needs and we are conscious of our staff well being too. Some of the children pose a flight risk from their bubble and we are conscious to the threat to the security of the bubbles.</p>

The Sunshine room is now being used for small group and individual support work and the staff are finding the workload very challenging. There is also a larger group of SEN children with less complex needs but who still need support.

The trained ELSAs are now beginning support work with some children. There is one ELSA in the Foundation stage and 3 more spread between the bubbles. There are a number of children who need this support so we have had to prioritise and some children will have to wait until after Christmas for some support. We are fortunate that we don't have to buy-in emotional support as we have the trained staff but it will have an impact on the support available in the bubbles. The impact of ELSA support is hard to measure but we hope to do this.

It is pleasing to see that some SEN children are quite quickly getting back to where they were before lockdown and making progress beyond this. Some of our SEN children actually progressed during lockdown.

The newly arrived SEN children have come with safeguarding issues as well and we are working to build relationships with the families to help us monitor these.

Governor question: How are you prioritising the children in need of ELSA support?

ELSA is intended to be a 6-week programme. Some children are receiving play therapy or private therapy and you don't usually run two interventions at the same time so these children will not receive ELSA support now. Some children are in bubbles with ELSA trained staff who are able to give small inputs daily so they are not our primary focus at the moment. Those most in need who are not having any support will receive bespoke sessions starting now and some in January.

Governor Question: How many ELSA trained staff do you have in school? 5

Governor Question: Do you need to train additional staff? No – and it is a two year course. We are giving additional resources to staff to use alongside their PHSE lessons which are working on addressing anxiety issues.

Governor Question: Do you have outside agencies still coming into school? Some outside services are coming into school yes. The Ed Psych was working remotely over the summer term with children but is back in school. However, we asked for 10 sessions this term and have only been allocated 6. OT is coming into school. SALT has been online only and the SENCO informed Governors she had sat in on a session and found it useful to see how online assessments were working and that they seemed to be going well.

Governors were told that the school possess enough physical resources in school to use with the children and that the school have great staff who work hard with the children and who also support each other.

Governor Question: Is there a risk that some of your trained ELSAs might move on to other settings? We have no indications that this might be the case and our staff share their ELSA skills in their everyday jobs and with other staff.

	<p>Governor Question: Is there support for future staff development? There are courses running online and quite a lot of free course too. Some staff are undertaking some training and the Attachment and Trauma training is due to be cascaded down to staff soon.</p> <p>Governor Question: Do ELSA trained staff ever need refreshers? Yes – but we had a workshop recently so there is no current need.</p> <p>Governor Comment: In addition to the new Hamilton Road SEN school opening shortly there is another SEN school being built in Winnersh due to open in September 2022. ACTION: Information about this school to be uploaded to Governor Hub.</p>
6	<p><u>Remote Education Update – Adam Jones</u></p> <p>Governors were informed that the school has been using db primary (Primary specific online learning and resource platform) to support children’s learning at home. It had been the school’s intention last academic year to introduce the system for use in online homework for years 5 and 6 but circumstances meant that it was used by all year groups to support lessons at home. This meant a rapid upskilling of staff. The school has now been using the system for some months and have formalised the processes on how information should be presented to children and how they should be submitting work back so there is standardisation across the school.</p> <p>Governor Question: How are you using the system now and how can you use it in the future should we need to teach remotely again? It is being used for homework at the moment. We have developed a framework to guide how homework is set and teachers keep an individual list of who in their class accesses the system. We do supply paper copies of homework if needed but the need for this is low.</p> <p>We are now working on developing it as an online learning platform and focusing on how we can deliver inputs to the children – using video presentations or narrated PowerPoints for example.</p> <p>Governor Question: Do you have an Online Learning Policy in place? We have started putting one together and are looking at some model polices for guidance. ACTION: We will make sure that this policy covers differentiation and will share it with Governors once it is ready.</p> <p>Governor Question: How have you trained the children in the basic skills they need to access the platform? We had trained Years 5 and 6 last academic year but once we knew we going into lockdown we rapidly introduced it to the other year groups before school closed. There are a few children who did not engage with it during lockdown but the majority were really comfortable using it.</p>

	<p>Governor Question: Did you involve the parents in how to access the system? We had planned to hold meetings for parents but in the end produced a booklet that went home and was posted on WEDuc too. We focused more on the KS1 parents as this age group of children need a higher level of parental support to access the system.</p> <p>The head informed the Governors that Adam had made a number of instructional videos for staff and parents too.</p> <p>Governor Question: How do you monitor access to the system? Each class teacher monitors their own class and has a list of children who do not access the system at all or who have a low level of access.</p> <p>Governors were also informed that some of the school's older laptops had been turned into Chrome books so the school now have around 15 devices that they can loan out to children who need them should a bubble / year group have to isolate or should full lockdown happen again. RBC have also allocated the school 29 laptops with dongle internet access should a class have to isolate or lockdown occurs. The school reported that they now feel better able to support children with no access to technology to support remote learning in the future.</p> <p>8.30pm at this point Sarah Tweddle, Adam Jones and Sara Fincham-Majumdar left the meeting.</p>
7	<p><u>Financial Impact of COVID-19</u></p> <p>The SBM had previously sent a briefing document to the Governors in advance of the meeting and she talked the Governors through the main points that had not already been touched on by the Head in his report.</p> <p>There is a higher than expected pay rise for teachers which was not fully budgeted for, but because of savings made in other staff cost areas the school do not expect to go over budget.</p> <p>Additional cleaning is in place and this is currently planned to continue until March. The additional spend on PPE and cleaning materials plus extra cleaning costs is predicted to mean an overspend of 25K on this line. ASPs do not qualify to recoup any of this spend through the Government scheme.</p> <p>There is expected to be an underspend on the supply teachers line. The school are keen to limit supply staff to keep the bubbles secure.</p> <p>The school has purchased an e-learning training app to deliver statutory and CPD training for staff due the fact that the usual training courses are not available. This covers topics such as COSH, H&S training, safeguarding and emotional literacy training.</p> <p>The CCTV and Lockdown systems are fully installed and working. Key staff have had training and the school is working on its "Rainbow" lockdown plan. Lockdown practise drills are planned for next term.</p>

	<p>The school hopes to resume lettings in January. Now the Site Manger lives on site it is easier for him to manage lettings and the school are aware of his increased workload over the last months and did not want to resume lettings too soon.</p> <p>Consultation on the school streets scheme has begun with the local neighbours. Some feedback has been received. The number of volunteer marshals coming forward so far is low – 6 people have come forward.</p> <p>Governor Question: How many do you need? We think 6-8 each session each day. We need to work with the other schools but we realise that the main burden lies with us as we have the youngest age group of students.</p> <p>A Governor offered to assist with the marshalling.</p> <p>The school are keen to be sure that the system will be sustainable before it goes live so it does not fail after 2 or 3 weeks.</p> <p>The school has been approached by a company who want to rent the modular building.</p> <p>Governor Question: Who does want to rent it and for what purpose? The Get Active company who run after school provision have a base in Bracknell that they use to run 6-week intervention programmes for certain students where they offer a mix of behaviour therapists and activities. They would install an Astro pitch and use the building from 9.30-2.30 so there would be no overlap with our students. We are still having talks on the practicalities and have spoken to RBC who have expressed interest in the idea but not made a decision yet. We would have to share the rent paid with RBC.</p> <p>The new SBM has had a particularly challenging start to her new role and the Head thanked for her hard work and efforts over the last few months.</p>
8	<p><u>Discussion on monitoring this academic year.</u></p> <p>There followed a discussion on what governors should be monitoring and how best to do this in the current circumstances.</p> <p>Governors were informed that there are things that they should be monitoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff wellbeing. This is outside the remit of the PEC. The school plan to carry out a staff survey in November so there will be data available then to help monitor wellbeing. • Recovery/academic progress. Assessment data will be available in December and it was agreed to hold a PEC meeting then inviting the AHTs to report on any issues in their phases. Whilst this would be a PEC meeting all Governors are invited to attend if they wish. • Distance learning • Particular pupil groups – PP / SEN etc.

	It was agreed to hold a PEC meeting on Wed 9 th December. A governor offered to help with planning for bereavement support which ties in with the school's PHSE curriculum. ACTION: she would liaise with the Head about this.
9	<u>AOB</u> A Governor mentioned that the school might consider using Google Expeditions software to make an exploration of the school.
	The Workshop closed at 9pm.

New Actions:

Action:	Owner:
Attendance figures for disadvantaged children to be forwarded to Governors	Head/Clerk
Governor to assist with promotional school video	RL/ARS
Winnersh SEN school information to be posted to Governor Hub	IC/Clerk
Online Learning Policy to be shared with Governors once completed	RH
Work on Bereavement support in school	YD

Future meeting dates:

Resources meeting: **DATE CHANGE to 25th November 2020**

ADDITIONAL PEC meeting: 7th December 2020