

MENDIP EDGE FEDERATION

MINUTES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Held on Tuesday 22 September at 6pm, Via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT:

Mike Brownbill, Will Ewens, Kate Golding, Tim Hawkings, Richard Holmes, Sarah Lorimer, Stefan McHale, Diane Sleeman, Adrian Warman, John Virgin

APOLOGIES RECEIVED: Lucy Frampton, Suzi Smith

IN ATTENDANCE: Debbie Andrews (Clerk)

Mr Warman welcomed Mrs Heffernan to the pre-meeting. As Designated Safeguarding Lead at Fairlands, Mrs Heffernan provided governors with details of the updates included in KCSIE 2020:-

- Definition of safeguarding – preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development.
- Private fostering – when children live with other family members for various reasons for 28 days or more. Staff to be aware.
- Contextual safeguarding now called extra-familial abuse.
- Lado referrals – now include not suitable to work with children.
- Part 2 reflects the mandatory implementation of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex and Health Education (RSHE) from 1 September 2020.

Posters have been updated and are in the classrooms and include the safeguarding email and mobile telephone number for pupils. Mrs Heffernan has spoken to every tutor group regarding what to do if worried about themselves or their friends. Also they have practised the Childline number. She will also undertake assemblies.

Mrs Heffernan held a Teams meeting with staff on the INSET days to provide them with the update. She also updates the staff on a weekly basis regarding individual safeguarding cases.

Staff have been made aware of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). These forms of abuse are where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or decide a child into sexual or criminal activity. Staff are vigilant to look out for the signs that pupils are being exploited in both these areas by looking for changes in behaviour.

Staff have also been reminded regarding the recording of racial incidents although they are very aware of this area and tend to email Mrs Heffernan with details.

A governor commented that safeguarding is a high priority for governors and fundamental in any OFSTED agenda.

A governor asked how can governors know that training in schools is effective, particularly as governors are unable to visit at the current time.

Mrs Heffernan confirmed that she is setting questions to check staff understanding of KCSIE and an email will confirm that they understand and have read part one.

Draycott & Rodney Stoke and Shipham First Schools have held similar staff meetings to check understanding regarding KCSIE.

A governor asked whether there have been many safeguarding issues now the pupils have returned.

Mrs Heffernan commented that there have been a few issues with online safety, which are being covered in computing lessons and in the mental health and well-being sessions, which are taking a higher profile since the return to school. There are not as many pupils as had been expected displaying anxiety. Covid restrictions have helped to make pupils feel safer – not mixing with other year groups, in smaller physical areas and equipment staying in school. FITBIT feedback being undertaken on Edmodo at Fairlands. Pupils’ mental health.

Signed Dated

Mr Warman thanked Mrs Heffernan for her update and Mrs Heffernan left the meeting

MEGB20/21:01 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None.

Mrs Andrews will email the WLT Pecuniary interest form to governors for them to complete and return to her by email as agreed with WLT.

DA/
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MEGB20/21:02 AGREEMENT OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 23 JUNE

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June were agreed and will be signed by Mr Warman at an appropriate time.

MEGB20/21:03 MATTERS ARISING

DSL job description – not actioned. Mrs Andrews will check the situation with the WLT.

DA

It is difficult to know who is responsible for what with regards SCC or WLT. Hopefully the situation will become clearer as we move forward with our new relationship with the Trust.

Conversion grant – Mrs Golding has looked at the figures and it looks like all the monies will be spent. It depends on whether the schools are being viewed individually or as a group. Mr McHale will contact Mr Perry to ascertain the position if appropriate once all costs are in. Mr Warman will share the updated sheets with him when available.

SMc
AW

Safeguarding – Mrs Sleeman made Mr Warman aware that she wished to stand down as Safeguarding Governor due to it being difficult to undertake the role at times and hold meetings with the schools. After a discussion, she agreed to retain the role with the assistance of Mrs Andrews arranging the meetings with the safeguarding leads – by telephone or online if necessary. Both Mr McHale and Mr Ewens expressed how grateful they are for Mrs Sleeman’s support as Safeguarding Governor.

DA

Governor roles - Mr Warman is happy to stay as Health and Safety Governor and Mr Holmes as the governor responsible for Online Safety. Mr Virgin agreed to be the link governor for Careers. Mr Warman will speak to Mrs Frampton regarding the SEND link governor position.

AW

Mr Warman will put out some publicity for new governors as our number is low. With the recent coronavirus pandemic, many people’s circumstances have changed, education has been high profile in the media and the role of school governor may be of interest to a new audience.

AW

A governor suggested merging governor roles but it was felt, due to their importance, that they are better left as individual responsibilities.

Meeting dates – the meeting dates for 2020/2021 have been shared by Mrs Andrews and a reminder is attached to these minutes.

DA

Governor appointments – Chair and Vice Chair appointments had been agreed by the WLT.

MEGB20/21:04 COVID-19

Risk Assessments – circulated prior to the meeting for governors to read alongside the WLT Covid-19 Contingency Planning document.

Verbal feedback provided by each school following the return of pupils and all staff in September:-

Draycott & Rodney Stoke and Shipham

The children have come back amazingly well. Three bubbles are being operated with classes facing forwards. Each child has a pack of stationery.

Signed Dated

Lunchtimes and play time are staggered. Older children have their lunch in the classroom and younger children in the hall. The children use different entrances.

A lot of admin time is taken up with illness and queries regarding whether a child should be in school. Consistency is used with every enquiry – if the child has any of the government stated Covid-19 symptoms they should not come to school and should get a test. It has been challenging as it takes time to obtain a test and then get results.

Staff are doing exceptionally well. INSET was an emotional day with shielded staff anxious about returning. Individual risk assessments have been undertaken with these staff with measures put in place where needed. Staff are a lot happier now 3 weeks into the term.

Both schools have received spot checks from the Trust which have gone well and feedback taken on board.

Draycott & Rodney Stoke received a call from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) asking questions on the phone. Mrs Collins answered the questions extremely well as the Headteacher was unavailable and there has been no follow up from HSE. Mr Warman gave a vote of thanks for her handling of the situation.

A few more spaces have been opened up outside of the schools so that parents can socially distance when picking up and dropping off their children. New arrangements are bedding in. There is also good signage in both schools.

Teachers have been made aware of the need for remote learning. Mr Ewens is looking at making the lessons more interactive with more presence online with teachers themselves, e.g. You Tube or pre-recorded. A governor commented that it is important that the online lessons are short and snappy and gave Mr Virgin's online lessons as an example.

Cheddar

Similar experience to Draycott & Rodney Stoke and Shipham. The school has class bubbles but not in reception. The children have their own equipment and are encouraged to wash their hands frequently throughout the day. Lunchtime is taking a long time with one group at a time. Also, only one group is allowed outside at a time. Corridors and toilets are a little trickier with children waiting to use the toilet. It is difficult not to be near children in reception and Year 1 but easier in the other years. Daily cleaning schedules are undertaken.

Staff seem positive, some anxiety from those more at risk.

The kitchen team wear face coverings and visors are available to staff if needed. There is an isolation room for children with symptoms. Books are quarantined for 72 hours.

Fairlands

Very similar situation to the First Schools. Fairlands has four bubbles or districts. Each district is a year group. The children are eager and keen to be back at school. Few behaviour issues so far, although it took a while for some pupils to get used to the school routine again. Lunchtime was taking a long time so a few tweaks have been made. Meals from the school canteen are eaten in the hall and packed lunches are eaten in the districts.

There are mini Arks in the four districts for time-out and ELSA support.

Grateful to the staff who have lost teaching rooms. Systems are in place where the teacher stays until the next teacher arrives with the help of a 'starter'.

Staff who were shielding are feeling much better. Some wear face coverings through their choice. Some parents have also requested pupils wear face coverings.

Obtaining a Covid-19 test is a challenge. The number of pupils absent has

Signed Dated

increased every day. 67 on the day of the governors meeting.
One of the 10 test kits allocated to each school has been used for a member of staff. It has been agreed with WLT that these local test kits will be used only for situations where it is necessary to speed up a test result which is causing a member of staff to be absent, so negatively affecting the school's ability to cover classes and pupil ratios.
Covid issues take over the day. Grateful to the staff for continued teaching and learning.
Edmodo codes have been set up for each year group for pupils who are self-isolating to access the curriculum areas.

A governor commented that it is a massive undertaking for the schools and feedback suggests that the children are really pleased to be back. A governor asked if there is sufficient work on Edmodo to cover a period of forced self-isolation (currently 14 days).

Mr Virgin replied that he had prepared six hours of work for science using the online Oak Academy, which amounts to two weeks' worth of learning. The topics will change at half term.

Teachers are using FITBIT through Edmodo. FITBIT is a simple way of checking learning in a lesson by setting a short task at the end of each lesson and has been introduced while staff cannot mingle with the class during lesson time or collect exercise books to review in a timely manner. There was a little bit of apprehension from a couple of staff but they are now fine with it. Mr Virgin commented that FITBIT is working really well in science.

A governor asked how would lessons be delivered if we move to any defined tier which requires remote learning for full bubble(s) of pupils. Will there be live lessons and daily live interactions? What will children do who do not have IT provision?

Mr McHale commented that Fairlands would look at short and snappy interactive lessons. A survey is being put together to see what the need is for IT support. 88 packs were sent out during lockdown. Partial lockdown could be an issue. Years 5/6 (primary age) would still come to school. Also, there is an expectation that all staff come into school. Hopefully there would be a better experience at home for the children as they would follow their timetable.

Mr Ewens added that teachers are already engaging in conversations with families to find out their situations. Families will be advised that things could change. Hard copies would need to be sent home if no IT.

Headteachers are aware of the Virtual Learning policy set up by the Trust and have shared with staff.

A governor asked whether the bubbles are too big and also can we not appeal to local industry for assistance with IT equipment.

Mr McHale commented that it is very difficult with regards the bubbles as it cannot be guaranteed that there has not been an interaction so the whole year group home would need to go home. Contacting industry for computer assistance is a good idea.

Governors reviewed the Trust Contingency Planning document, which was emailed by Mr Warman prior to the meeting.

The Trust have requested that governors discuss mechanisms of monitoring and implementation and how governors check processes and record this for evidence purposes. One member of the governing body also needs to be appointed as the Covid-19 Risk Assessment Link.

It was discussed whether the Covid governor should be different for each school or just one person for all four schools. It was agreed that for consistency there should be just one link and Mr Warman offered to take up

Signed Dated

the position as a temporary extension of his Health & Safety role. He will make visits to all four schools following risk assessment guidelines. A governor asked why the members of the Trust could not undertake the Covid inspections. Mr Warman replied it would be a large job for the Trust bearing in mind the number of schools and he was happy to undertake the role.

Mr Warman will email Becki Pearce, Mr Ball's PA to confirm that the Trust Contingency Planning document has been reviewed alongside the current Covid risk assessments for each of the four schools. He will also confirm that the schools provided a verbal update on their current Covid-related arrangements/control measures and discussed their readiness to move elements to a remote learning platform if it were required at short notice. Governors were reassured that the schools had considered improvements which could be made from the lockdown experience and in anticipation that any immediate requirements are likely to be for an isolation period of 14 days rather than an indefinite timescale.

AW

MEGB20/21:05 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The process is different this year in that the Trust are involved and setting objectives for the headteachers. There is a collaborative approach between the Trust and governors. The headteachers have been contacted regarding their performance management meeting. Mr Ewens' review is on Monday 28 September and Mr McHale's is on 8 October. Mr Warman is attending Mr McHale's review and will also try to attend Mr Ewens. Rev Hawkings will also try and attend the review for Mr Ewens.

MEGB20/21:06 TRUST GOVERNOR

Mrs Andrews provided details to governors of The Trust Governor which is a secure online system where governing bodies can centrally manage their processes and documents. All Trust schools will use the system. Mrs Andrews has received some training, but will need to spend more time familiarising herself with the site. Once she has done this, she will share details with governors.

MEGB20/21:07 REPORTS

Finance Committee – meeting to be held on 6 October.

Foundation Committee – meeting to be held 8 October.

Governor Support – Mrs Andrews attended a Clerks Briefing on Teams and the notes are attached to these minutes.

Governor visits – it was agreed that governors will not visit schools until the current Covid-19 situation has improved. Mr Warman encouraged link governors to make contact with the departments and hold virtual meetings to check how things are going and provide support.

SEND – as mentioned above, Mr Warman will liaise with Mrs Frampton.

Standards – Mrs Andrews will arrange a meeting to be held on Teams.

The meeting will look at the impact of lockdown and the recovery needed. It would also be useful to know what tracking the Trust are expecting and the new style of reporting. We are also aware of the need to link back to the curriculum, a suggestion made by Mrs Lorimer last term.

Govs

DA

MEGB20/21:08 HEADTEACHER RECRUITMENT

Mr Warman advised governors that a number of good candidates had applied for the headteacher of Cheddar First School position. Some governors were able to support the process which was being held at Cheddar First School on 23 and 24 September. A lunch to meet the candidates was being held and governors were invited to attend.

The staff governors left the meeting.

Please see separate confidential minute.

Signed Dated