

**MENDIP EDGE FEDERATION**

**MINUTES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

**Held on Tuesday 9 February 2021 at 6pm, Via Microsoft Teams**

**PRESENT:**

Mike Brownbill, Lucy Frampton, Kate Golding, Tim Hawkings, Richard Holmes, Stefan McHale, Diane Sleeman, Adrian Warman, John Virgin

**APOLOGIES RECEIVED:** Will Ewens

**BY INVITATION:** Phil Maddock and James Norwood

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Debbie Andrews (Clerk)

Mr Warman opened the meeting by welcoming Mr Maddock and Mr Norwood. Everyone then introduced themselves. Mr Maddock will be a parent governor and Mr Norwood was agreed as a co-opted governor by the local governing body. Mrs Andrews will arrange confirmation of the appointments and the induction training for Mr Maddock and Mr Norwood.

This is the first meeting using the new Trust Governor portal. Although there have been a few teething issues navigating the system, it has in the main been successful in providing the necessary information to governors.

**MEGB20/21:17 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

None.

**MEGB20/21:18 AGREEMENT OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 17 NOVEMBER**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 November were agreed and will be signed by Mr Warman when possible in person.

**MEGB20/21:19 MATTERS ARISING**

**Pecuniary interest forms** – declarations can be made by governors using Trust Governor, as well as confirming safeguarding documentation has been read. Mr Warman suggested an internal training / awareness session for governors on the Trust Governor portal. Mrs Andrews will arrange a date for the session.

DA

**Recognising the hard work of the staff** – Mr Warman sent an email to all staff before Christmas. The suggestion of an additional Inset day in January was discussed with the Trust but did not proceed. Mr McHale commented that the staff are looking forward to half term to have a well earned rest and recuperation.

**Trust board minutes** – Mr Warman has not spoken to Mr Perry but Trust Governor provides a format for the sharing of minutes so hopefully they will be shared in this way.

**Insight into early years provision** – to be carried forward.

**Health and safety policy** – Mr Warman will share the Word template with Mr Ewens.

AW

**Governor recruitment** – Mr Maddock and Mr Norwood have joined, although there are still vacancies. Mr Brownbill suggested Mr Jim Reeve. Mr Brownbill will provide contact details to Mr Reeve so that he can have a conversation with Mr Warman.

MB

**Cheddar** – actions now not relevant due to the unexpected removal of Cheddar from Mendip Edge governance since the last meeting. Governors noted their disappointment at the manner in which this decision by the Trust had been reached and communicated. Mr Warman stressed that it is important that we use the experience to move forward supporting the three remaining schools.

Signed ..... Dated .....

## MEGB20/21:21 REPORTS (Part 1)

**Foundation Committee** – per the minutes of the Committee meeting held on held 21 January. Admission arrangements were proposed to remain as they are and governors agreed this. Mr Warman will advise Mr Perry so that it can be ratified by the Board and the Diocese advised.

KP

Rev Hawkings has decided to retire after Easter and there will be a process for appointing a new vicar. Thea Oliver, the Curate at Cheddar, is happy to be a governor and on the Foundation Committee. Mrs Andrews will talk to Ms Oliver to take this forward and invite her to the next meeting. Rev Burns is also happy to help at Shipham in the interim.

DA

Within the Trust, the LGB must consist at least 50% foundation representatives and Mr Warman asked for volunteers to be considered. A video from the Diocese had been forwarded to the governors with the agenda for them to view. Mr Warman is happy to be a foundation representative and Mrs Sleeman is considering. Mr Brownbill offered to speak to anyone who wants further information.

Mr Warman gave a huge vote of thanks to Rev Hawkings for his hard work and support as a governor of Shipham First School, the Federation and upon the Mendip Edge Governing Body joining the Trust. Rev Hawkings has contributed a lot to both the schools and the children. The governors wished Rev Hawkings well in his retirement.

*Mrs Jo Dodd and Mr Matt Perrett, the Senior Teachers at the Shipham First School and Draycott and Rodney Stoke First School joined the meeting and were welcomed by Mr Warman*

### MEGB20/21:20 COVID-19

#### Verbal Reports from the Headteachers

Mr McHale provided the following verbal report for Fairlands Middle School:-

Risk assessment monitoring is carried out week by week. Approximately 100 children at different times are on site and 80/85 per day split into four district areas. Teaching staff move around and LSAs stay with the bubble. Year 5 has two bubbles a day and it is anticipated that there will be more requests for after half term.

LSAs are acting as academic mentors to pupils at home, checking on learning and engagement by phone or a Teams meeting.

A small number of laptops have been given out to pupils at home from those provided by the government and by donations from the public.

Masks are worn and sanitizing carried out by all in school in line with the risk assessment.

Years 7/8 take a lateral flow test every week and the staff can take two tests per week. 130 tests are being taken every week.

There was a positive case in the Year 7 bubble three weeks ago. The bubble isolated for 10 days on Public Health England advice. Parents were supportive. Pupils were tested when they came back in.

One member of staff has been vaccinated and one member of staff is on long term sick, returning following a return to work meeting.

Waiting to hear what is announced on 22 February regarding the return of schools.

Staff are working hard and are tired. Teachers are undertaking live lessons and managing children at home and in school.

A governor commented that it is a massive strain for the teachers undertaking remote learning and following a rota in school.

Mr Virgin commented that the teachers could not have done everything without the help of the LSAs.

Mr McHale expressed concern that there will be additional pressure for

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places in school from 8 March if the government does not allow schools to fully reopen then.

Mr Perrett provided the following verbal report for Draycott and Rodney Stoke First School:-

Mr Ewens has undertaken the necessary risk assessments. There are 14 children on site. To alleviate staff anxiety, they are split between three classrooms on a rota basis. Numbers could increase a little.

Children at home and in school receive live or prerecorded sessions via Class DoJo.

Lateral flow tests are done by the staff once a week. One staff member has been in contact with a positive Covid case and has isolated.

Mrs Dodd provided the following verbal report for Shipham First School:-

There are 12/13 children in school each day from Reception to Year 4 split into separate bubbles supported by a Teaching Assistant. Staff are doing a tremendous job. Children in school and at home are doing the same tasks, a mix of live and prerecorded lessons. There are Zoom check ins and collective worships. A few more vulnerable children have been invited in this week.

Lateral flow tests are available to staff.

Playground and lunchtime duties being covered to give the Teaching Assistants a break.

## **MEGB20/21:21 REPORTS (Part 2)**

Written headteacher reports provided to the governors with the agenda papers using the Trust template. Mrs Dodd, Mr Perrett and Mr McHale summarised the reports providing additional information as appropriate:-

### **Shipham**

Remote learning to be tweaked for the next half term.

The challenge is to keep families involved, a balance between remote teaching and the demands of parents.

Regular communication with emails and Zoom.

Children's mental health this week. Project with all three classes getting children talking at home. Lovely responses on Class DoJo. Parents talk to children and recommend books.

Trying not to do too much on line. Projects outside like the RSPB Bird Watch.

### **Draycott & Rodney Stoke**

Organisation and systems set up by Mr Ewens.

Working with children affected by the last lockdown.

It will be a challenge how the children are phased back in.

A governor asked how assessment is working.

**Mrs Dodd** - Class DoJo. Work submitted on line. Children do a portfolio of work which teachers respond to.

Parents are really good at sending in work but it is hard to know how much work the children have done themselves. Parents send in videos of pupils reading. Some send in a lot of work and some are not submitting. It will be tough when schools return to plug the gaps.

**Mr Perrett** – the parents are good at supporting but not in all subjects, English better than maths. Maths – the school has encouraged parents to provide a photo of the maths work that they need feedback on rather than the pages of worksheets which have been done correctly. Tracking assessment. Push on reading – children reading at home. Parents are

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supportive and are doing as much as they can. Portfolios of work are being gathered.

*Rev Hawkings left the meeting*

A governor suggested weekly reading sessions for a group of children held virtually. This was felt to be a good suggestion which the First Schools will look into.

A governor offered to support children with being involved in a lesson.

*Mr Perrett left the meeting*

### **Fairlands**

Edmodo and Teams are used for teaching and learning. Live lessons are held on Teams. 30/40 minutes of dialogue or an activity. The teachers are always available during a live lesson. There has been significant training. Engagement has been strong, although it has dropped a little with Year 8, possibly following taster sessions for their GCSE option choices. The first lockdown had a significant impact on the data. Maths remains a concern, particularly with SEND pupils and there is real push around reading.

27 laptops received from the government with 8 more to be provided shortly for pupils. Also lots donated by the community.

Broadband has been a problem for some families which has led to some coming into school.

A tracking system is in place to ascertain which pupils are engaging with their work.

Families are contacted where pupils are not accessing lessons to offer help. Quality assurance - Mr McHale checks in on live lessons.

Recording of lessons and GDPR – not recording lessons until guidelines are provided by the Trust and procedures are in place.

A governor asked how many pupils are accessing lessons.

**Mr McHale** – in a class of 20, about 14/15. Some of these will be in school as key worker/vulnerable pupils.

Staff governors expressed thanks to the parents who have been supporting remote learning.

A governor commented that home learning is working well from a parent prospective.

Mr Warman commented that the Trust headteacher report template is deliberately more succinct than had been provided previously to reduce pressure on Headteachers in producing it and focus attention to relevant areas. Governors need to find out what is going on in schools via other means and it was agreed that electronic school newsletters will be shared with governors.

*Mrs Dodd left the meeting*

**Child Protection and Safeguarding** – Mrs Sleeman has tried to check in with the DSLs by email. There are some updates with regards KCSIE - further checks to be made following the departure from the EU and procedures for the recording of live lessons.

Mrs Sleeman thanked the schools for keeping the children safe.

**Finance Committee** – meeting held on Tuesday 2 February. Minutes will be uploaded to Trust Governor.

The committee are getting to grips with the Trust format. Mrs Macleod has been in contact with Axbridge First School Academy to look at their procedures. The next meeting will be held just before the full local governors meeting.

Signed ..... Dated .....

Budgets are as expected and are well managed. Funds are tight, trying to reduce costs from staffing budgets.

Draycott and Rodney Stoke – four children joining in September but 10/11 leaving which will have a big impact on funding. An informal discussion with staff did not achieve the required savings so have had to have a formal consultation around redundancy to reduce costs. There has also been a change in structures with the Finance Officers. Mrs Macleod will cover both Shipham and Draycott & Rodney Stoke First Schools and Mrs Collins will undertake the Office Manager role at Hugh Sexey Middle School.

**SEND** – Mrs Frampton and the SENDCos are reviewing the SEND policy. Mrs Andrews will enquire as to whether there is a Trust policy.

DA

**MEGB20/21:22 GOVERNOR ROLES AND SUPPORT**

Following the departure of Mrs Lorrimer as link Governor for English, Mr Norwood agreed to take up the role. Mr Warman will liaise with Mr Norwood regarding the link governor role.

AW

Mr Maddock has agreed to provide support to Mrs Sleeman with safeguarding. Mrs Andrews will provide the necessary contact details for this to happen.

DA

Mr Warman encouraged governors to make contact with their link areas and hold virtual meetings before the next meeting.

Link  
govs

**MEGB20/21:23 AOB**

Mrs Andrews advised governors that she will provide them with details of their new Trust email and password, together with how to access their new email.

Mrs Sleeman raised a concern that at the current time it was difficult to know what was going on due to not being able to go into schools and governors were not able to provide the necessary challenge.

Mr Warman replied that there have many distractions over the last 18 months with academisation and the pandemic and that the governing body now needs to use the benefits of joining the Trust to focus on areas such as monitoring.

Mr McHale offered to host a virtual meeting with governors after the data drop or when the children return to school.

The meeting closed at 20.05.

Signed ..... Dated .....