

THE QUEEN'S SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

THE QUEEN'S C OF E SCHOOL CUMBERLAND ROAD KEW SURREY TW9 4HJ

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governors of The Queen's School
Held by Google Meet on Tuesday 2 February 2021 at 7 pm.

Present: *Foundation Governors (9)*

(IH) Inga Hall (Co-Chair)

(NW) Nigel Worn

(ER) Emma Roberts

(VP) Vas Polydorou

(JF) Janine Farrance

(BR) Barnaby Rodgers

(MM) Marian Mollett

(HC) Harry Charrington

(MI) Mark Ivory

Non-Foundation Governors (5)

(BD) Voulla Demetriou (Co-Headteacher)

(BCW) Bethany Claus Widick (Co-Chair)

(CC) Cathy Christmas (Vice chair)

(JM) Jason Moore

(SK) San Kodia

LA Governor (1)

(MO) Mark Ollard

Other (3)

(DD) David Durie (Associate Member)

(HW) Hilary Wilson (Assistant Head)

(MJ) Michelle Jones (Clerk)

Opening Prayer (led by Fr. Nigel Worn)

1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

IH chaired the meeting.

The Governing Board welcomed Mark Ivory (MI) whose appointment as Foundation Governor would be ratified under Item 3 and introductions were made. The Governing Board also welcomed Hilary Wilson (HW), Assistant Headteacher.

2. DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL AND OTHER MATERIAL INTERESTS

All Governors were reminded of the need for confidentiality and to declare any direct or indirect pecuniary interest which might relate to any matter under discussion.

3. TO WELCOME AND RATIFY THE APPOINTMENT OF MARK IVORY TO THE GOVERNING BOARD AS ST ANNE'S FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

The Governing Board ratified the appointment of Mark Ivory as Foundation Governor at St Anne's and who has been formally appointed by St Anne's PCC.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE FGB MEETING OF 10TH DECEMBER 2020

The minutes of the FGB on Thursday 10th December 2020 were agreed as an accurate reflection of the meeting and were approved.

STRATEGIC – LINKED TO VISION

5. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON RETURN TO SCHOOL AND COVID-19 RELATED MATTERS INCLUDING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ON SITE, THE PRIORITISATION OF PLACES AND REMOTE LEARNING NEEDS

- In January the school went into lockdown and, following government advice, would only be open to children of critical workers and vulnerable children.
- The school has wanted to be as inclusive as possible and to accommodate as many children as possible who are eligible for spaces under the government's expanded critical worker categories, but ensuring as a priority that all vulnerable children have a space.
- The CHT provided a detailed summary of all steps taken to gauge demand for places and to then address the impact of the very high update of critical worker places whilst staying within our Covid risk assessment and having regard to the health and safety of staff;
- Over 30% of the total Queen's cohort is in school under the critical worker or vulnerable child categories, resulting in a waiting list under the vulnerable category.
- After requesting that parents reconsider whether the Guidance requirement of keeping their children at home 'where possible' would reduce numbers, CHT sought advice from Achieving for Children (AfC) and the NAHT, to establish a feasible number. AfC suggested having 30% of the cohort on site (a higher percentage than all other Richmond schools and the national average) and in light of this, CHT's risk assessed (in consultation with the Governors' Risk Assessment Working Group) that having 20 children per year group across the school would be the absolute maximum that could be accommodated in a year group, and that some could be less.
- Because of the extensive number of vulnerable children in one year group, it was necessary to prioritise who could attend school in that particular year. This prioritisation list was communicated to parents after discussion with the Governors' Risk Assessment Working Group (including Dr Emma Roberts) and consideration of an array of possible options to enable the school to accommodate all children currently attending. The result was the need to contact a number of families in one year group (based on application of the prioritisation criteria) and inform them that they would need to keep their children at home.

Q: Is there any suggestion parents are sending children into school, who perhaps shouldn't be?

A: There has been an increased number of vulnerable children invited into school. The government guidelines on keyworkers have changed since last Summer, only 1 parent is required to be a critical worker and the definition of a critical worker is much broader than in the first lock down. However, the government's default position is to keep children at home if you can. In the first lockdown 40 children were attending school initially but this increased to 80 children; this time there are 140 children attending school.

Q: Could the percentage of vulnerable children attending school be communicated to parents?

A: Yes, this could be communicated to parents along with details on the percentage of keyworkers and the reason behind the increase being the broader definition of who is classified as a keyworker. This was done via the 2 communications to parents asking if they really needed to send their children in.

Q: Have we been able to accommodate the top four groups identified under the prioritisation criteria before going out to the wider critical workers?

A: In one particular year group we were unable go as far down as the fourth group – we were only able to accommodate the vulnerable children, the two parent critical workers in either the NHS or education and the one parent critical worker in the frontline NHS and had to turn away some frontline education staff. We tried to be creative and come up with solutions to accommodate children but unfortunately, we have had to disappoint some families.

Competing Government guidance was received in terms of Health and Safety and keeping the school open to everybody possible. Initially, we welcomed everyone but then found we were overrun. As part of due diligence, the CHT's canvassed what other schools had been doing since lockdown, seeking best practices and presented this information to the Risk Assessment Working Group. It was noted that other schools had fewer children in attendance, as they had a much stricter approach to the entry criteria for keyworkers in place since April 2020.

The Governing Board thanked the Co-Headteachers, Assistant Headteacher and the Staff for all their efforts during lockdown and for managing the difficulties of accommodating keyworker families.

6. TO RECEIVE A PROGRESS UPDATE REGARDING THE TIMETABLE FOR SETTING NEW VISION PRIORITIES

- The CHT's planned to use the 4th January Inset day to work with staff on the Vision Priorities. The focus for the Inset day changed due to the immediately impending and recently declared lockdown and thus priority was instead placed on the provision for home learning for the pupils at home and the learning for pupils in school.
- When we come out of lockdown the focus will be in settling the children back into school and assessment to identify the gaps in the children's learning.
- Realistically we are looking at Summer 1, possibly Summer 2, before we can start making progress on the Vision Priorities.
- CC has been looking at what our peer schools do in their Vision Priorities and how these priorities impact on progress and attainment.
- Given the staff workload and pressures that lockdown places on staff it makes sense to pause. Post-lockdown will be the ideal time for reflection and to re-evaluate what really matters.

Q: In the past Governors have been heavily involved in the Vision Priority process from an early stage. Will there be the opportunity for Governors to be involved extensively before the ideas are set and to receive an understanding of the emerging conclusions of the Vision working group?

A: Yes, there are some areas that have already been identified by SLT to focus on progress and attainment, and how we approach the vision priorities from a holistic wellbeing perspective. We will then review the existing priorities, building or adapting these to incorporate the new points raised. These will be put together along with ideas from the staff, brought back to the FGB before anything is set in concrete and prior to engagement with parents and broader stakeholders. In addition, our Staff Governor is actively involved in the Vision process at the school level.

7. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON SFVS (SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUES STANDARD) COMPLETION AND DELEGATING RESPONSIBILITY FOR APPROVAL TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

- The SFVS is an annual questionnaire that asks the school about its financial controls systems, processes and approvals.
- It has to be approved by the FGB but in the past 2 years the FGB has delegated approval to the Finance committee.
- All governors should take the time to read the document.
- The SFVS is to be completed and submitted to the LA by 31st March 2021.
- The FGB agreed to delegate approval to the Finance committee and for any member of the Governing Board who wishes to see SFVS to contact MO. The approved SFVS will be circulated to all governors.

8. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON PROGRESS WITH CUA2

- The application has been completed and BR is reviewing the application with a representative from the LA.
- The final application will be circulated at the Premises committee meeting next week.
- Following approval at the Premises committee the application will be submitted to the LA next week and it is expected an answer will be received within a month.
- We have been advised by the LA that as we have already consulted the application can be expedited.

ACTION: Clerk to keep 'To receive a verbal update on the progress of CUA2' on the agenda

9. TO RECEIVE A DEFECTS UPDATE

- **Staircases:** Contractors have agreed to replace all the vinyl on both staircases.
- **Cladding:** Following a survey carried out by IH, HC, VP and the SBM the contractors have agreed to replace the split cladding (wooden panels) on the outside of the building.
- The contractors have agreed it will be done thoroughly and have confirmed this will not affect our statutory 12 year latent defects rights.
- It has been made clear to B&K we wish to confirm any installations and material specifications and Alex Windle, our surveyor at TFT, has agreed to carry out quality control checks at a cost which is to be confirmed.
- **Fire doors:** This is a major area of concern. Most of the fire doors are held back by magnets which release when the fire alarms go off. The magnets hold the doors up. Any doors not held back by magnets have sagged and therefore don't close properly. Five sets of doors are affected.
- HC met with Paul Forrest from the Diocese for advice. The SBM is in discussion with TFT to come out and inspect the doors along with the Fire Officers from Richmond Fire Service so we can identify if the problem is the hinges or the door frames.

ACTION: Clerk to add ' To discuss and approve the cost of the surveyor's fees' to the Finance committee agenda

10. TO RECEIVE A PHASE RELATED DATA OVERVIEW

- We don't have any data at this time due to Covid.
- This will remain on the C&S agenda and will be reported back to FGB when the data is available.

ACTION: Clerk to ensure 'To receive a Phase related data overview' on the agenda

11. TO NOTE THE CO-HEADTEACHER'S REPORT INCLUDING AN UPDATE OF THE PUPIL/PARENT/ STAFF SURVEY

- Year 1 Phonics screening: we are waiting advice on what the statutory assessment alternatives will look like. HW will be attending a meeting on Thursday and the CHT's will update at the next FGB.
- On the parent survey 99% of parents said their children were happy and felt safe in school.
- 22 pupils said they had experienced bullying, a lot of these were historic issues and the CHT's will contact the parents individually to ensure the matters have been resolved.
- There was a high return level in terms of the number of families
- There were quite a few 'don't knows' in certain areas and these will be investigated to establish the reason people didn't know e.g., is better communication required or is it because the parents are relatively new etc.

Q: Do staff feel the Mental Health First Aider being a member of staff is more or less accessible and are there any other resources?

A: We buy into an employee assistance programme called 'Work Place Options' and we direct staff to this if they need advice, the number is displayed in the staff room. The CHT's door is always open, and they have signposted staff to other services. We also have access to Richmond Wellbeing Service. Most members of staff have accessed the Mental Health First Aider and have been happy to do so. Other staff members have used Work Place Options or contacted their own GP.

Q: The number of pupils on roll is very low, compared to our usual numbers, do we have an idea what is behind this and how this compares to other schools?

A: The issue is the same across Richmond schools. A number of families have made the decision to move out of London to more rural areas and some families have taken the decision to return overseas. There has been a rise across the borough in parents deciding to home school. We have

had two families make this decision in the last year. A number of families from Hong Kong and the USA have arrived in the borough, but they have based themselves in Richmond Hill and Twickenham. We are receiving enquiries across the year groups, but for places in July and September.

Q: How do we envisage the Catch-up funding will be spent?

A: We receive £80 per pupil. The government envisaged a reduced cost tuition programme. We are trying to reduce the number of adults on site. We know having our own staff carry out the interventions has worked really well in the past and are currently exploring this with staff, looking to start in the Spring term. We haven't been able to start this yet.

Another option investigated is buying in supply teachers to release staff to add interventions to the curriculum. This isn't so effective due to the costings but does offer higher quality teaching with staff who know the children.

The CHT's and AH have been exploring if there is any catchup that could be done during this lockdown period e.g., providing online tuition to pupils in their own home. However, there are safeguarding issues that need to be carefully thought through around introducing an adult online into a pupil's home.

The SLT are looking into how we can apply the catch-up funding in a way that is meaningful and has good outcomes for our children.

Q: How has the lateral flow testing been received by staff?

A: Staff have responded really well to the LFT and the majority have taken up testing twice a week. We had one positive LFT which closed the Breakfast Club bubble. This was followed up by a PCR test. There was initially some confusion about using an LFT if someone was symptomatic. This has been clarified. The SBM is in charge of our Covid procedures in school.

Advice from the DfE has been conflicting when you telephone them and depending on the option chosen, one option tells us not to close a bubble when a LFT is positive, another option states that you should, but then advises it is at the school's discretion.

The school has decided that best decision is to close the bubble if a positive LFT is received, this was in consultation with the Co-Chairs of Governors and ER, in her medical capacity.

ACTION: CHT's to update FGB on Year 1 Phonics alternatives to statutory assessment

12. TO RECEIVE A SAFEGUARDING REPORT FROM THE CO-HEADTEACHERS

(Standing Item)

- The main focus is on the Risk Assessment. All staff are involved in tracking and following up on our vulnerable children who are not in school. We are tracking the engagement of children on Google Classroom and following up on those children who aren't present on the calls by phoning parents. We have had to be quite persistent with some families who we were concerned about.
- We are using all our safeguarding measures; staff are being vigilant and making referrals to SPA (Single Point of Access) regarding any concerns who have responded very quickly.

Q: How has pupil engagement been across the whole school?

A: Engagement has been very high. There have been a few families who have had issues with access. Paul Adams has been instrumental in ensuring children are able to access the technology. The meetings at the beginning and end of the day have been helpful in getting the engagement and gives a good record of who is learning. Staff are good at keeping those children they are concerned about on the call at the end, so they can ask additional and personalised questions.

Q: Is there a danger that Reception and Year 1 pupils, who potentially will have missed a whole term, will have different levels for those who've had online learning, versus those pupils who are in school?

A: This is something we've tried to mitigate by having those pupils who fall into the vulnerable category in school, as this will leave staff more available to focus on the children who haven't been in school when they return. Staff are looking at reintegration and reassessment when pupils come back into school. The learning offer for Reception has been slightly different and offered a more personalised tuition on Phonics. Based on Year 1's Phonic results, 98% passed and we know we can meet the needs of our children through this method of teaching. We need to allow our staff the time to assess the children and find out what the needs and gaps are, so we can support the children in tandem with the parents.

Q: Would it be possible to communicate this to parents to reassure them that although their child may not be in school, they will not be disadvantaged?

ACTION: BD, JST and HW to discuss a possible communication to be sent to parents to reassure them that although their child may not be in school, they will not be disadvantaged and what is in place to support them when they return.

13. TO NOTE THE KEY POINTS IN THE AUTUMN TERM SIP REPORT

- A key action for the Governing Board flagged in the SIP report was the vacancy for the Equality Governor. Anyone interested in taking on the role should contact the Co-Chairs of Governors in the next week.
- Issy James has been appointed as the Equalities staff member.
- The Behaviour policy is currently being worked on by the CHT's alongside the Educational Psychologist.
- The report noted the trend for a decline in Writing and slight decline in Maths in Year 6 SATs. SATs have been cancelled this year again and we are uncertain whether they will go ahead the following year. CHTs and governors intend to work closely with our SIP to obtain her input on addressing this issues.
- It was noted that, in light of the SIP Report (which had been tabled at C&S), the C&S committee discussed whether the SENCO hours should be increased in line with the increased need. A comparison was carried out last year in line with other schools. We have a lower number of SEN children than other schools. We are very inclusive and try to manage need with high quality first teaching first, particularly early on.
- The SIP wanted to talk to children and staff about behaviour. The SENCO and another member of staff weren't in school on the day of the SIP's visit. This was a virtual visit which made it quite difficult to observe the children's behaviour as we normally would.

Q: Can we ensure for future visits, particularly if we are still virtual, that the staff members the SIP wishes to speak to are available?

A: In future the CHT's will make contact with the SIP earlier to find out which members of staff should be available.

Q: The school appears to have fallen backwards in Maths, since Maths Mastery was introduced and are there plans to reverse this?

A: The last set of data was from 2019, this was a year into Maths Mastery. The real benefit of Maths Mastery comes when the cohorts have had it from the beginning of their school life. We can look at the learning points and the analysis of the data. We need to look at our cohorts and where we are now, which falls into the assessment cycle and how we need to adapt what we're doing in light of the lockdowns and missed education. We are expecting the data to be skewed due to Covid. The work provided on Google Classroom and in class is consistent with Maths Mastery. The White Rose Resources, which is a big Maths Mastery website, are being used. The one thing that is missing is the 'concrete', in that we can't guarantee children are using the manipulatives and the resources whilst they are not in school.

14. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON AUTUMN TERM VIRTUAL VISITS AND TO NOTE FUTURE VISITS

- The last visit was a virtual visit, teachers put a lot of effort into videoing classrooms, books etc.

- A visit was due this week, it was agreed at C&S to cancel this visit.
- The next visit is due on 5th July and we will review at C&S if this will go ahead.

15. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIRS, INCLUDING ITEMS OF GENERAL SIGNIFICANCE CONSIDERED BY THEIR COMMITMENT SHOULD BE DRAWN TO THE ATTENTION OF THE BOARD AND TO NOTE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

15.1 STEERING

- Not met

15.2 PREMISES, HEALTH & SAFETY & LETTINGS

- Not met
- CUA2 and Defects were covered under Items 8 & 9.

15.3 PASTORAL

- Nothing further to add

15.4 KAIROS

- Nothing further to add

15.5 FINANCE

- The draft budget will be brought to the next FGB.
- The latest impact of the Year on Year numbers is £76k less income next year based on the reduction of numbers of roll.
- We are in a very healthy position with our reserves.

15.6 CURRICULUM & STANDARDS

- A Year 3 teacher went through a typical day of online learning from a teacher's perspective.
- Assessment predictions show writing might be slightly down on what we are expecting, Covid is the main reason. 18 months ago, the focus was on writing. Parents will read with their children but don't typically write.
- When the children are in school the focus is on lots of big motor skills which then filter into the fine motor skills. When the children return there will be a focus on these again.
- Changes made to the current remote learning offer are off the back of the Parent survey. We are continually looking at improving our online learning offer.

15.7 PAY & PERSONNEL

- Nothing further to add

15.8 ADMISSIONS

- The LA have advised the birth rate for the next 2 years is low.
- Reception and Year 1 are full and there is a waiting list.
- There are vacancies in Year 2 and above and no waiting lists.
- No changes have been made to the Admissions Policy, the GDPR form has been appended to the Clergy form. The committee recommended the policy to the FGB for approval. The FGB approved the Admissions policy.
- Applications are still coming in for Reception 2021 the committee will report on how places were offered on National Offer Day at the next FGB.

STATUTORY

16. FOR NOTING:

i. CO-CHAIR'S REPORT

- Nothing further to add

ii. POLICY PROGRESS REPORT (STANDING ITEM)

- No changes have been made to the circulated list.

17. TO APPROVE THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- The school is looking to adopt Schools HR policies where possible, as these will automatically update to latest guidance.
- The core of the Complaints Procedure policy remains unchanged, the differences are updates on clarity, phrase and process.
- The new policy states the school now has 5 days to contact a person raising a complaint (the old policy gave 2 days).
- The appendix includes a flow chart which states what the exceptions to this policy are and whom to contact.
- There is additional guidance on serial, unreasonable and vexatious complaints.
- There are some areas (highlighted in red) that need to be completed to personalise the policy to our school, local authority etc. The front cover needs to be amended to include our standard paragraph.
- The Board approved the adoption of the Schools HR Complaints policy subject to completion of personalisation/red sections. The Co-chairs of Governors will review the policy post completion to approve those specific changes.

ACTION: BD to complete the red areas and amend the front cover of the Complaints Procedure and sent to the Co-Chairs of Governors once completed.

ACTION: IH/BCW to ensure the Complaints Procedure has been completed on behalf of the Governing Board

18. TO NOTE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SKILLS AUDIT

- IH will circulate last year's consolidated audit results and send out this year's form.
- Governors to review where we were and where they are now with their own training.
- Governors are to return their skills audit forms by the end of next week.

ACTION: All governors to complete the Skills Audit and return to IH by 12th February 2021

19. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON GOVERNORS' TRAINING (STANDING ITEM)

ACTION: Governors are to feedback on any training completed to IH and to ensure they have updated GovernorHub.

OTHER/AOB

20. TO NOTE ITEMS FOR/FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

- None

21. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON FORTHCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS

- No events are scheduled to take place due to Covid.

22. AOB:

To note the date of next meeting: Tuesday 11th May 2021 at 8am. Please note this is a morning meeting.

The meeting concluded at 9.03 pm

LIST OF ACTIONS

ACTION: Clerk to keep 'To receive a verbal update on the progress of CUA2' on the agenda

ACTION: Clerk to add ' To discuss and approve the cost of the surveyor's fees' to the Finance committee agenda

ACTION: Clerk to ensure 'To receive a Phase related data overview' is on the agenda

ACTION: CHT's to update FGB on Year 1 Phonics alternatives to statutory assessment

ACTION: BD, JST and HW to discuss a possible communication to be sent to parents to reassure them that although their child may not be in school, they will not be disadvantaged and what is in place to support them when they return.

ACTION: BD to complete the red areas and amend the front cover of the Complaints Procedure and sent to the Co-Chair of Governors once completed.

ACTION: IH/BCW to ensure the Complaints Procedure has been completed on behalf of the Governing Board

ACTION: All governors to complete the Skills Audit and return to IH by 12th February 2021.

ACTION: Governors are to feedback on any training completed to IH and to ensure they have updated GovernorHub.