



GOVERNING BODY OF TWINEHAM CE SCHOOL

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on Thursday 21st May 2020

Present: Mr S Reece, Mr A Chapman, Ms M Clinton, Mrs L Rydon, Mr R Hirst, Mr C Sykes, and Mrs M Smith

In attendance: Mrs C Barker (Clerk)

20/19 Opening Prayer

20/20 Apologies for absence: None – all governors present online

20/21 Declarations of interest: Mrs Dennis declared an interest as a County Councillor for West Sussex.

STRATEGIC SECTION

20/22 Approval of the budget for 2020/21

Copies of the summary of the 2019/20 budget had been circulated prior to the meeting together with notes on the proposed budget for 2020/21.

The Head explained the factors which had taken place over the year to the end of March 2020 namely:

- Accurate forecasting of expenditure
- Saved oil costs due to the new boiler
- Savings on the water rates
- Under spending on staffing costs
- Overspend on supply costs
- Overspend on free school meals cost centre
- Carry forward on PE funding
- Carry forward on DFCG
- Carry forward of £33,429

Governors noted that the replacement of the roof would be fully funded by the County.

For the 2020/21 budget there was an increase in the teachers' salaries due to pension increases which were not totally covered by the grant given. The cost of teaching staff was also more due to the apprenticeship of a member of the non-teaching staff as a teacher, making for a decrease in the non-teaching staff costs.

The school has also used grants or donations to supplement the school's budget such as the trim trail funded by £4,000 from Tesco and the purchase of books funded from the Usborne book fair and sponsored read. The Head stressed that it was imperative that the school should not overspend during 2020/21.

Governors asked the following questions: (During these questions Mrs Rydon joined the meeting.)

Q. Is the repair of the roof happening?

A. Yes, the LA is keen to carry out the work during the summer holidays. Additional waterproofing will also be carried out.

Q. An increase in cleaning materials was noted – is this for specialist cleaning?

A. More deep cleaning will take place which necessitates further supplies. An additional sanitizer has been purchased.

Q. What was the reason for the increased supply costs?

A. There had been significant illness in the Spring term – staff off work with serious conditions. No staff had had the virus although one member of staff had isolated as their child had had symptoms. Extra booster classes had impacted on the supply budget.

Q. Should more monies be allocated to the supply budget to take account of the coronavirus?

A. The cost centre could have been increased but the decision had been taken to leave it as the same as last year.

Q. Concern was expressed that the grant for funding additional teachers' pension contributions had not covered the cost – why was this?

A. Many of the school's teachers are experienced and therefore cost more and the pension payments are therefore greater.

Q. Could you give more details of the use of the PE funding and the carry forward?

A. Staff is paid from this funding so that the school can focus on the pupils staying active and their well-being. Pupils are offered a variety of opportunities which cost more. We are hopeful that the grant will continue.

Q. Can you give more details of the Co-op and Tesco grants and are more grants available?

A. The school was fortunate to be shortlisted in the Tesco grant funding and in the event came out top with a guaranteed £4,000 which has been spent on a Trim Trail. For the Co-op, families were asked to nominate the school and this produced further funding. Other grants have been available with online shopping for which parents have signed up. Most of the funding obtained has been to facilitate outdoor learning. Appeals for computers are usually successful.

The governors wished to record their thanks to Nicola Brunton and Mary Candy for their work in obtaining grants for the school.

Q. Has any more been heard from the application by FOTS to Rampion?

A. Nothing further has been heard following issues raised about it being a school project although it was submitted as a community project.

Q. Can you give us information about the pupil numbers for September?

A. Generally it is a low birth year for Year R with only 9 places allocated. The Head had been advised that five pupils would be leaving together with 10 Year 6 pupils. Three new families would be joining totalling five children in all. The forecast is for 95 pupils to be on roll, broadly the same as this year. The projected numbers for 2021/22 are good.

Q. It is understood that some Haywards Heath parents are not getting their first, second or third choices – have you considered promoting the school in the Haywards Heath area?

A. I think it would be best if we liaised with other local village schools rather than just promoting Twineham. We have had a lot of enquiries from parents whose children have been attending private schools and this may boost our numbers.

The governors wished to record their thanks to the bursar for her work on keeping the budget on track and for preparing the budget for 2020/21.

The governing body approved the budget for 2020/21 in the sum of £550,408.

20/23 Continuing Home Schooling

The Head explained the Seesaw programme which the teachers are using to work remotely with the children. The staff are also liaising with other schools. There is some structure for maths and literacy and some personal interaction too.

Governors asked the following questions:

Q. How many children were currently in school?

A. The number fluctuates but the average is 2 and the most 9. The responsibility is shared by the staff working 2 days per week.

Q. How many children are deemed as vulnerable?

A. A maximum of five.

As a parent governor, Mr Sykes was asked to give feedback on how his children had found the experience.

He said that one child had felt pressured to complete all the tasks and that the other child had needed more support and therefore more time. The interaction with the teachers had been good and they had particularly liked the blogs and assemblies.

Q. Have the school managed to keep in touch with all pupils?

A. One or two families had been monitored for safeguarding and there had been more contact with some families than before. Regular staff meetings are held to monitor situations.

Q. How do staff ensure that the pupils are keeping up with the work set?

A. Teachers keep an eye on the progress made and set tasks from what they are seeing. Review sessions are planned to monitor realistic progress and key tasks set in order for progress to be made.

The governors wished to congratulate the Head and the staff for their work in difficult circumstances.

20/24 Planning for the return of Years R, 1 and 6

The Head set out his progress to date taking risk assessments into account. Pupils would be admitted on the basis of:

- Each class in 'bubbles' of 15 pupils
- Staggered drop off and collection
- No parents on site
- Eating in classrooms
- Designated area for each 'bubble' on the field
- Regular handwashing throughout the day
- First aid and PPE agreed with staff
- Risk assessment of toilets, particularly if numbers increase.

For Buttercups the teachers would create a slightly different model and stations would be created using appropriate resources, eg water play was deemed to be safe. It was impossible for pupils to be two metres apart but there would be a caring environment with no touching.

For Year 6 each child would have a workstation, their own tray and zippy bag.

As the numbers increased the school may have to consider the rota-ing of pupils. Also for medical reasons some staff may not be able to return to work.

Governors asked the following questions:

Q. Is it expecting too much of teachers to be producing online work and to be in school?

A. Staff will not be expected to carry out both roles. Those staff in school will be in class full time. Different systems will be in place for Buttercups and for Oakwood. Mr Chapman is trialling a system to create a hybrid for both children in or out of school.

Q. What is the situation where parents decide that their child will not be returning?

A. Absences are recorded on a special code and no penalties will be applied this term. The letter which parents have received makes it clear that the decision rests with them. Those parents who are finding it hard want their child to return. The school will ensure that no child is disadvantaged.

Q. Does the staff feel comfortable about returning?

A. The Head has been liaising with all staff who have helped with the risk assessments alongside the unions.

Q. Presumably those staff who do not return to work will have serious conditions?

A. Yes

Q. What decisions will have to be made if pupil numbers returning increase?

A. The school cannot go against the rules set by the government – the priority will be vulnerable children, Year R, Year 1 and then Year 6 who will benefit from transition support. If the number in a group exceeds 15 then it will be necessary to create additional 'bubbles' which may necessitate a reduction in the number of hours the children in each bubble can be in school.

Q. Will the school be open for children of key workers over the school holiday?

A. The school will be closed for half term. Some children have been in school since 20th March.

Q. Is it likely that other year groups will be returning before the end of the Summer term?

A. It would be impossible both from a staffing perspective and the space available to have 7 bubbles. It would, therefore, be necessary to implement a rota system which would not be good for working parents. If local infection rates are low and a good track and trace system is in place it may affect the guidance issued. Some families do want to isolate until the end of the Summer term.

Governors noted that the number of new cases of Covid 19 in West Sussex was dropping.

Q. Are parents understanding of the need for flexibility of plans?

A. The school is lucky to have supportive and knowledgeable families with whom we generally have good relations.

Q. There seems to be a lot of contact from parents - do you have FAQs on the website?

A. We receive very few phone calls as most of the contact is through Seesaw which has worked well. Any contacts are more supportive than challenging.

Q. What would need to happen to implement Plan B?

A. Plan B would mean a third bubble being set up with different zoning and more staff. If a fourth bubble was required then it would become more complicated with different times for drop off, play, collection, use of toilets and in the end the school may only be able to deliver watered down provision.

The Head indicated that he would know by 5pm on Friday, 22nd May the number of pupils likely to want to return on 1st June.

Q. Has there been an offer of testing?

A. Testing is only on offer if the person is displaying symptoms. However, carriers do not necessarily show symptoms.

Q. What happens if a child shows symptoms?

A. They must isolate for 14 days but the guidance is not clear as to whether the whole family must isolate. We need to be ready for change and to follow any advice given.

The governors wished to record a sincere vote of thanks to the Head and all the staff.

The governing body unanimously voted in favour of the plans as set out and that adequate risk assessments had been made.

BUSINESS SECTION

20/25 Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2020

The minutes of the meeting of 10th February 2020 were approved. They would be signed by the Chair when the governing body next met in person.

20/26 Matters arising:

20/13 Mrs Smith reported that she was unable to report on the Equality Policy as the training course had been cancelled.

All other Matters Arising would be deferred until the governing body could meet in person.

The meeting proposed for 30th March 2020 had been cancelled due to the coronavirus outbreak. This would have been the last meeting attended by Mrs Birkby whose term of office finished in April. The governors wished to record their thanks to Mrs Birkby for her contribution to the governing body during her term of office.

20/27 Dates of future meetings: FGB

Virtual meeting to be held on 17th June 2020 at 9.45am for 10.00am
13th July 2020. TBC

Quality and Standard Committee: (at 2.45pm)

Summer term: 5th May 2020 - deferred

Resources Committee: (all at 10.00am)

Faith Committee: (at 3.30pm)

Summer term: 4th May 2020 - deferred

Actions continued overleaf:

| Minute No. | Task | By whom | When |
|-------------------|--|-----------------|-------------|
| 20/9 | Approval of Relationships and Sex Education Policy | Q & S Committee | 5.5.20. |
| 20/13 | Equality Policy to be sent to Dr Coates and Mrs Dennis | HT | asap |
| 20/13 | Questions and Comments on Equality Policy to be sent to HT | All governors | 28.2.20. |
| 19/84 | Clerk to note dates of LA adviser's future visits and include an agenda item in the FGB meeting following the visit. | Clerk | As and when |