



MINUTES OF FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Monday 1st June 2020 at 3.00pm
via videoconference

	<p>Present: Judith Smitham - Chair of Governors (Chair) Lara Jeffries – Headteacher (Head) Dawn Howarth - Vice Chair (DH) James Davidson – Headteacher at Penair School (JD – Item 5 onwards) Giles Horne (GH) Laura Dolan (LD) David Parker (DP) Victoria Sleeman (VS)</p> <p>Also in attendance: Jackie Parker – Finance Advisor (JP) Jon Brown – Clerk to Governors (Clerk)</p> <p>Clerk’s note: this meeting was held during the COVID-19 school closure. Governors participated via videoconference using the Zoom application.</p>	
Item	Minutes	Action
1	<p>Welcome and apologies The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Loic Rich and Elizabeth Phillips.</p>	
2	<p>Declaration of business and pecuniary interests relevant to this agenda Judith Smitham declared her business interest with Trelander Stores. David Parker declared that his wife (Jackie Parker, also present at the meeting) was working at the school as a consultant.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 April 2020 and matters arising The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated in advance and were agreed as a true and accurate record. Matters arising from the Action Log as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The FGM training documents had been shared. - The School Improvement Partner (SIP) situation was due to be reviewed. Although the SIP has been with the school for some time, his relationship with the current Head is relatively new. The Head confirmed that he seemed to have a good understanding of the school’s priorities, and they had established a good relationship. The Head appreciated the challenge the SIP provided. <u>The Chair proposed</u> that now was not a good time to try and change SIP, due to the continuing Covid-19 outbreak. <u>Governors agreed</u> to stick with the current SIP for now. <u>The Chair explained</u> that she would like to draw on particular governors’ expertise to explore other SIP options in future. - <u>A governor highlighted</u> that remote support was still available from Haven House for families with English as an additional language (EAL). The Head confirmed that she was aware this was a priority within school. One parent had expertise of EAL issues which the school wanted to draw on. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Finance Advisor (JP) had investigated the issue of payment for supply staff during the Covid-19 closures, and confirmed that all such payments had now been stopped by school. - JP had started the catering audit, and would present the results at the next FGB meeting. - The Clerk had implemented a filing system for all documents recently posted on GovernorHub, as well as previous meeting documents. He would work with the Chair to finalise the reorganisation of other older documents. <p>All other actions would be carried forward until the next FGB meeting or until schools were operating more normally.</p>	<p>Jackie Parker</p> <p>Jon Brown Judith Smitham</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Clerk's update</p> <p>The Clerk reminded governors of the protocol for video meetings, in particular that the Code of Conduct still applied. In order to maintain confidentiality, governors should keep their video feed turned on where possible and ensure the meeting could not be overheard.</p> <p>The Clerk drew governors' attention to the latest NGA guidance about the board's role in making decisions around the wider re-opening of schools, which had been circulated in advance, and summarised the key points.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Risk Assessment documents for wider school re-opening</p> <p>A completed risk assessment (RA) had been circulated in advance, along with a Covid-19 handbook, a post-Covid action plan, a tiered list of key worker categories and a workplace checklist provided by education Unions to accompany government guidance. The Head explained that one staff member had been active in ensuring that Union communications were considered. The school had been fully informed by government guidance, and had used the Local Authority RA template, while ensuring that the contents took Tregolls' particular situation into account.</p> <p>Penair Heads had met weekly via zoom, and meetings had also been held with other Heads in Cornwall. Parents and staff had been consulted via Google forms, and all of these voices had fed into the preparation of the school's documents.</p> <p>[James Davidson joined the meeting at 3.24pm]</p> <p>The Head explained that the focus had been on ensuring that vulnerable children could return to school as a priority – not just those in the social care system or with EHCPs, but those on the periphery of the system. This was particularly important given the context of the school. The offer to children of key workers had also been extended as a first step. The RA would be revisited at least every two weeks with a view to extending re-opening to other year groups requested by government.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> why the size of the proposed 'bubbles' would be 10 children rather than 15. A) Advice from the Unions was for 8-10 children in each bubble, which conflicted with government guidance. It is a delicate balance to strike, but the school needs to ensure that staff feel safe. They will look to increase the bubble size to 15 if it is felt safe to do so in due course. <u>A governor challenged</u> whether bubbles of 15 would be physically possible given classroom sizes. A) Yes, but it would be more difficult and increase risks of virus transmission.</p> <p><u>A governor asked</u> whether any parents of Y6 children were unhappy about re-opening not being extended to that year group. A) No. Discussions have been held with families with particular circumstances and these have been addressed but no-one has complained at all.</p>	

The next groups to be invited back will be nursery, Reception and Y1. It is unlikely that Y6 can be accommodated again before the end of term unless guidance changes substantially.

A governor challenged whether there would be flexibility for further relaxation of measures based on the local picture, or was everything tied into national guidance. A) The Head will continue to take advice both at local and national level, but at present the South West has relatively high transmission rates. A governor commented that the 'R rate' in Cornwall (rather than the wider SW region) was relatively low, and it was important to reassure staff about the low levels of risk without being complacent. Governors discussed the difficulties taking decisions in the light of conflicting scientific guidance, and the need for personal decisions by parents and carers about sending children back to school to be respected.

A governor asked whether any key workers had declined a place for their children. A) Places had to be requested and not all families did so. The numbers returning have enabled the bubbles to be kept within year groups or near enough.

A governor asked what the availability of staff was to return to school, and how this affected the decisions. A) Three staff are considered 'medically critically vulnerable' and therefore cannot return. A further three are vulnerable or shielding vulnerable household members, and it has been agreed they can stay away. One has been signed off with anxiety. So a reasonably significant number are not available, but there will always be two members of staff with each bubble (on a rota system), plus at least one senior leader in school at all times. A governor challenged how re-opening could be widened with the staff available. A) There would be enough staff for one more bubble as things stand. Guidance would need to change before more could be accommodated.

A governor challenged what plans were in place for the new Reception intake in September. A) It is not clear what school will look like in September yet. School have contacted all families of new starters and provided welcome videos. The usual transition arrangements won't be possible, but clear communication will continue.

A governor asked whether each bubble would have dedicated outdoor space. A) Yes, and children will be outside as much as possible. Zones for different groups have been coned off in the playground, and each bubble will have access to the field one day per week. The use of shared spaces to access outdoor areas will be carefully controlled.

A governor asked whether staff had been supportive of wider re-opening. A) They have all co-operated. The Head has met with a Union rep to address concerns. There has been no opposition to current plans, but issues might arise if pupil numbers had to increase.

A governor challenged whether there were any areas where social distancing would be particularly difficult, e.g. at lunchtimes. A) School will be providing packed lunches rather than hot meals to minimise use of the kitchen. Distancing should be manageable with the expected numbers. There might be attachment issues with some younger children, but school will work with parents to resolve this. Each bubble will have a dedicated kit with PPE, handwash, wipes etc in case of a need for closer contact.

A governor challenged whether senior leaders would be able to interact with the bubbles without increasing risks. A) It will only be possible from a distance. Senior leaders will ensure they are visible but will remain outside the bubbles.

Governors agreed that the RA was thorough and thoughtful, and expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Head for the work that had gone into it during uncertain times. The Head confirmed that it had been difficult, but that all responses from parents had been positive, and these had been shared with staff to show how much they were appreciated.

6	<p>Communication with stakeholders, including parents/carers and staff (NB also discussed under item 5)</p> <p>14 letters had been sent to parents since the start of the Covid-19 outbreak. The most recent three had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. Links to these had been texted to all parents/carers to ensure that all would receive them. Parents and staff had been surveyed to ensure that the school was listening to all voices. As well as individual contact with staff, whole staff meetings had been held via Zoom, along with informal activities such as quizzes. This was working well.</p>	
7	<p>Health and wellbeing of staff and pupils (NB also discussed under item 5)</p> <p>Some staff are feeling isolated. The Head is keeping in constant contact with staff members, and will arrange face-to-face meetings when possible.</p> <p>Some pupils had also been affected by the situation, and pupil wellbeing had been kept at the heart of all the school's plans. This would be discussed in more detail under item 8. Contact had been maintained with all children who were not attending school. The ClassDojo messaging system was working well. <i>A governor commented</i> that the local community seemed relatively happy and healthy despite the challenges, and that the recent weather had helped.</p>	
8	<p>Safeguarding update</p> <p>The Safeguarding Governor (DH) provided governors with a verbal update. The Safeguarding Policy had been amended with an appendix to cover the Covid-19 outbreak. Safeguarding and SEN staff leaders had been out in the community, delivering Hive meals and liaising with healthcare workers, with all concerns logged using the MyConcern software. Operation Encompass was still active, and there had been no incidents involving children who hadn't been on the radar before. The school was aware of one particular case of neglect which was being dealt with by the relevant agencies.</p> <p>Staff had received training about when to make MARU referrals. The new SENCO had liaised with staff about children with additional needs who would be returning to school in the coming weeks. The employment and mental health circumstances of some households meant that some children had increased levels of vulnerability at this time. Lack of engagement with online learning was being monitored and home visits carried out where there were particular concerns. Children with statements were being risk-assessed weekly.</p> <p>DH's Level 3 safeguarding training expired this month, but training opportunities had been cancelled.</p> <p><i>Governors thanked</i> DH for her work and for the report.</p>	
9	<p>Curriculum/learning</p> <p>The Head outlined resources that were being used to set online learning for children at home, including White Rose maths. Initially there was some inconsistency with the level of work set across year groups, but this has been addressed. Where pupils have not engaged with the ClassDojo system this has been followed up with parents. Those returning to school will be set the same work to avoid double planning. Staff working from home have had more involvement in setting online learning to avoid workload pressure of those staff on site.</p> <p>There will be a 'recovery' curriculum in place in September, and baseline assessments will have to be carried out, but there will also need to be a focus on wellbeing, particularly for those who won't have been in school for several months. Staff will use the rest of this term to plan for the next steps. The new curriculum is ready for September – progression maps have been completed for each subject. This will be presented to governors at a future</p>	Lara Jeffries

	<p>meeting. Plans to start introducing the new curriculum this term have been scrapped due to current circumstances.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether any transition will be possible for Y6 pupils going to Penair. A) Discussions have been had to explore the options. The Head of Penair School (JD) explained that their transition team were having to focus on other matters at the moment. New pupils with additional pastoral needs would be prioritised, and a virtual video tour would be provided for all new starters. <u>A governor suggested</u> that the digital campus set up by Truro and Penwith College would be worth looking at as an example. <u>Governors agreed</u> that most pupils would at least be familiar with Penair through visits as a partner school. JD confirmed that Tregolls pupils visit more than any other school.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether any formal reporting to parents had been possible, from an academic or pastoral perspective. A) Academic reports were completed just before lockdown and sent out shortly afterwards. However, these would not necessarily reflect pupils' current situations, and it would probably not be possible to prepare anything further this term.</p>	
10	<p>Any other business – urgent matters only</p> <p>School Business Manager</p> <p>A report concerning the School Business Manager (SBM) position had been circulated to governors shortly before the meeting. The Head explained that the SBM had been absent from school for several months, and had left their position on 31/05/20. Weaknesses had been uncovered in certain working practices, and there was a need for a robust model of working to remedy this. The report outlined the different options for finding a replacement, which the Finance Advisor (JP) had worked on, though the Head understood that governors wouldn't have had time to digest the contents.</p> <p>JP explained that different models had been considered. One area of the SBM's duties in particular need of work was Premises and Health & Safety. JP proposed separating those tasks out to have a standalone site supervisor reporting to an SBM. The Head confirmed that this seemed the most sensible option. This would increase staffing costs by £10k-£12k in the first year, rising to £14k-16k after five years. There was a need to start recruitment asap, as the school had effectively had no SBM in place since February so it was important to address that situation and reach a decision quickly.</p> <p><u>A governor commented</u> that it was important to have an effective SBM in place, <u>and challenged</u> whether the increase in budget outlined included on-costs. A) Yes, it was the total extra cost. <u>A governor challenged</u> how this would impact next year's budget, and how the extra cost would be balanced out. A) It is hard to say as there are some unknowns in the budget, particularly one teacher on a significant salary who is currently on secondment but whose situation from July is not finalised. It is unknown whether that salary will continue to fall on Tregolls next year yet.</p> <p><i>[The Clerk lost connection with the meeting at 4.18pm for several minutes]</i></p> <p><u>A governor commented</u> that this seemed a good solution if reassurances could be given around the budget, <u>and challenged</u> whether an SBM could be appointed in the first instance and the Premises role separated out in due course. A) The roles and responsibilities for a new SBM would have to be clarified before the recruitment process, so this would be difficult.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether the HR role could be removed from the SBM role, keeping premises and finance together. A) This had been considered, but day-to-day HR is a very</p>	

	<p>variable workload, much of it carried out by admin staff. Premises is much more predictable and covers quite a lot, including property compliance, maintenance schedules, asset management etc. A dedicated Premises Manager would be a good way forward to continue utilising current admin staff to their strengths. <u>Governors discussed</u> current admin roles, <u>and agreed</u> that it would be wise not to change them now, particularly after the Covid-19 uncertainties.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether a high quality SBM would be capable of doing both roles as previously. A) Benchmarking against other similar schools shows that Tregolls spends much more than average on teaching staff and less than average on back office. There was a need to redress the balance, especially given the current SBM situation.</p> <p>JP explained that next year’s budget was still a work in progress, given the uncertainty over one teaching role as previously mentioned. It was anticipated that there would be a small in-year deficit with these plans, but there were £120k reserves in place. Also the school was growing, so it was usual for the resulting funding lag to result in an in-year deficit. <u>A governor challenged</u> what was meant by small deficit. A) It currently looks like £10k-£20k, but it’s impossible to be certain at this stage. There were also opportunities to make savings in other areas. The Head confirmed that areas with scope for significant savings had been identified, but an effective SBM needed to be in place to drive these.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> that the biggest issue seemed to be reducing teaching costs. The Head explained that there was a need to consider the school’s context. It is not that teaching costs were spiralling out of control but there were certainly tweaks that could be made in this area.</p> <p><u>Governors agreed</u> to delegate the decision around SBM recruitment and role separation to the Head and Chair.</p> <p>Finance committee <u>The Chair proposed</u> reinstating the Finance Committee in order to keep closer oversight of this area and work more closely with the new SBM. <u>Governors agreed</u> to this proposal. The Clerk explained that he hadn’t been able to find any committee Terms of Reference among school documents, and agreed to source model versions for consideration by governors.</p> <p>Academy Trust Members <u>The Chair explained</u> that DfE advice was for Academies to have at least five Members, whereas Tregolls had three. <u>Governors discussed</u> the situation <u>and agreed</u> that this was not a priority for the board at present.</p> <p>Health & Safety <u>A governor agreed</u> to carry out a Health & Safety walk with the Head in line with the risk assessment prior to wider school re-opening.</p>	<p>Lara Jeffries Judith Smitham</p> <p>Jon Brown</p> <p>Laura Dolan Lara Jeffries</p>
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The meeting closed at 4.40pm

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Signed as an accurate record

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Print name

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Date

Action Log

Action date	Action	Who?	Due date
2019	Staff governor appointment	Clerk/Chair/Head	Sep-20
2019	Catering Audit	JP	FGB Summer 2020
2019	GDPR training to be provided at staff meeting - governors to be invited	SBM/Head	Post COVID
2019	Invite PCSO to future meeting	Head	Post COVID
2019	Governing Body structure to be reviewed	Clerk/Chair	September 2020
24/02/2020	Detailed breakdown of safeguarding statistics to be posted on GovernorHub and in future HT reports	Head	
24/02/2020	Invite Parent Governor applicants for meeting with view to appointing	Chair/Head	Post COVID
24/02/2020	Carry out curriculum monitoring visit	DH/DP	
24/02/2020	Arrange monitoring visit training - Penair contact?	Chair/JD	
24/02/2020	Contact Haven House to explore EAL support	Head	
24/02/2020	Monitoring visit to support SLT on lesson-planning and schemes of work	EP	
24/02/2020	Invite subject leaders to future FGB meetings	Head	
24/02/2020	Obtain external report to check new website compliance	Head	
24/02/2020	Check GovernorHub filing and reorganise where necessary	Clerk	
27/04/2020	Provide contacts at CC and DfE regarding school capacity discussions	JD	
01/06/2020	Present new curriculum to governors at future meeting	Head	FGB Summer 2020
01/06/2020	Make decision about SBM role structure and recruit candidate(s)	Chair/Head	
01/06/2020	Source model terms of reference for SAT finance committee and present to governors	Clerk	
01/06/2020	Carry out H&S walk before wider school re-opening.	LD/Head	