

St. Giles CE Primary School Governing Body Meeting
Spring Term 2020 21st of May, 6.30 – 9.00 p.m.



Meeting originally scheduled for 19th March, 2020, and postponed due to coronavirus crisis. Meeting held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Present: Vicky Jenks (Chair), Dean Easthope (Vice Chair),
Caroline Gardner (Head Teacher),
Helen Reynolds (Deputy Head), Rebecca Chew, Rachel Clegg,
Hannah Fraser, Rev. Andrew Knight, Jo Woolley, Niall Kelly,
Laurence O'Dwyer and Matt Walker.

In Attendance: Nicky Parker (Clerk), Ruth Hudson and Sophie Proctor
(both associate members)

Opening Prayer Reverend Andrew opened the meeting with a short prayer.

Apologies Scott Smither (work commitment). Apologies were accepted.

Governors Hanah Fraser' term as Local Authority representative is formally extended.

Niall Kelly, Matt Walker and Laurence O'Dwyer welcomed as new governors.

Urgent Business

(1) Potential re-opening of school on 1st June.

The majority of this meeting was spent discussing this very important issue. Caroline Gardner gave the rest of the Governors information. All of which was discussed in detail. Some of the most important of these were.

- Government position is that all schools should open for EYFS (Reception), Year 1 and Year 6 from 1st of June. Up to 15 children per classroom.

Governing Body and Head Teacher of each school to say what is safe in their environment.

- Results of parent/guardian questionnaire indicate that 31 pupils from EYFS, 34 pupils from Year 1 and 34 pupils from Year 6 may return to school on 1st of June. Some parents, especially of EYFS and Year 1, not certain and wished to have more information before deciding. There is no sanction for a parent who wishes to continue to home school their child.
- The school is already teaching a group of vulnerable children and the children of key workers who need this support to continue to work. Some of key workers have stated that they also need the wrap around support before and after the school day to keep working.
- The results of a risk assessment by school management and staff is the conclusion that the classrooms of St. Giles can accommodate 8 children in a 'bubble' i.e. a small group who will stay together for the whole school day and not mix with other small groups. However, parents will need to be informed that the 2 metres minimum distance can't be guaranteed even with these small numbers.
- With the number of pupils expected then the school would potentially need 4 bubbles of EYFS, 4 or 5 bubbles of Year 1 and 4 bubbles of Year 6 plus the 5 bubbles for the existing group of vulnerable children and children of key workers.
- The government guidance is that all children would return to their year groups after 1st of June and this would mean the school may not have enough staff for wrap around care in mornings and afternoons.
- All pupils would need to sit at a desk alone and close care could only be done by a member of staff wearing PPE. Only 1 bubble of EYFS would be taught by their current classroom teacher meaning three would have a different teacher/TA leading the group.
- Mealtimes would be separate with all children eating either a school provided cold packed lunch or a home provided packed lunch.
- Opinion of the school management and staff team was that the changes to school required to teach as safely as possible would have a more detrimental effect upon the EYFS and Year 1 children. It would be so different to what they have previously experienced that it may be distressing.
- There was a long discussion of the impact of non-attendance at school on all pupils and how isolation could be having a detrimental impact upon their lives and learning.
- The school would continue to provide home learning for non-attending pupils supported by members of staff unable to teach in school due to personal circumstances.
- Several staff members present felt that the cumulative impact for EYFS and Year 1 of all of these measure was such that they believed it would be a bewildering and negative experience for them.
- In contrast, Year 6 pupils are more likely to understand and adhere to the guidance from staff. It was also felt important to give them the opportunity to

have ending experiences at their school prior to the transition to secondary schools in September.

- The governors also felt it was important to be mindful of staff well-being and emotional health during the return to more classroom based schooling.
- There was a discussion as to whether it was possible to operate a staggered or part-time rota for some children to have an experience of going to school for some of the time, as opposed to a whole week. The logistics and implications for cleaning of the school between groups meant that this was a difficult option to achieve.
- There was a long discussion of the school's responsibility to use 'reasonable endeavours' to meet the needs of all children with an EHCP with Caroline explaining how this was being achieved.
- The governors looked at the feedback from parents in the questionnaire.
- The governors also had a long discussion about the impact of non-attendance on the academic learning of all pupils, and the potential widening of a gap in achievement with pupils with less family support or resources for learning falling further behind their peers. It was discussed how flexible the school has been to make resources available to all families during the period of lockdown so far.
- There was a break in the discussion to allow for other business in the meeting to be discussed.

- When the discussion was resumed, a decision was made to open the school for our existing group of vulnerable children, children of key workers and Year 6 pupils for 1st of June.

- It was felt that this information needed to be with parents as soon as possible, so Caroline offered to write a letter doing so tomorrow.

(2) Items raised at Parent/Governor Meeting.

- It was agreed that Niall Kelly will become the link governor with responsibility for the engagement and communication with parents of children attending St. Giles. He will liaise with Fiona Dryden to provide information for the school website.
- Niall also agreed to put a summary of discussions together following this meeting to be put on the school website.

(3) PTA request to local authority to use school bungalow building.

- Caroline reported that the school had been informed that the PTA had made an application to the local authority to use the vacant school bungalow building as a community hub with potential to raise money for the school.
- There was a lot of enthusiasm and energy behind the proposal from those involved. But it hadn't been discussed and agreed by the PTA Committee and as such wasn't from the PTA.

- There are some safeguarding issues related to using a building on a school site for anything other than school business. These issues need to be worked through before it would be possible to consider an alternative use for the school bungalow building.

(4) Recycling.

- Caroline reported that the school had been unwittingly registered as site for recycling on a website. This was an indirect result of the school trying to do more recycling. The school will now be removed from this website's register of recycling centres.

School Performance

(1) Head Teacher's Report

- The Governors acknowledged that the coronavirus crisis has forced the school to focus on essential issues.
- The Head Teacher reported that DfE has suspended formal reporting of Key Stage data for schools because of the current crisis. The information on pupil performance will be based on teacher assessment.

(2) School Development Plan

- All governors agreed to keep informed of progress against the school development plan.

(3) Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

- Caroline has completed a report on school performance with pupils in these categories. She was pleased that the report now included children who were previously looked after as she felt they were a neglected group.
- Some staff recently undertook training in attachment issues as part of their Continual Professional Development.

(4) Well-Being of Head Teacher and Staff

- Caroline and Vicky have remained in close contact during the period of lockdown to discuss the impact on the staff team as a whole.
- Caroline reported that she was immensely grateful to the selflessness and positive spirit of her staff team responding to very difficult circumstances.
- Caroline said that there has been some discussions with individual staff members about their concerns, mostly related to the potential risk for them and their families of returning to classroom teaching for more children after 1st of June.

(5) Staff Well-Being Questionnaire

- Niall, Dean, Laurence and Matt will be assisting the school management team by devising and implementing a multi-modal system to capture staff opinions and to use them to improve the school.

School Finance

(1) School Budget 2020-2021

- The school budget for 2020-2021 was discussed at the Finance and Personnel committee meeting, held virtually on 18th May, and will be presented for full governor discussion at the next full governors meeting on 11th of June.

(2) School Financial Value Standard

- The school financial value standard (SFVS) had been prepared by the finance committee, agreed via email by all governors on 18th of March and sent to the local authority by the 31st of March.
- There is a new requirement for the school to have data dashboard as part of the SFVS which all governors will have to see and consider. A copy of it and the full document are available on the learning gateway.

(3) Service Level Agreements

- All school service level agreements were agreed via email on the 18th of March.

Date of next full governors meeting

Summer Term 2020 Meeting 11th of June, 6.30 p.m. via Microsoft Teams

Any Other Business

Vicky confirmed she would be resigning her position as a governor and Chair due to a change of work circumstances. The rest of the governors thanked Vicky for her time as a governor and especially her time as Chair of Governors.

Everyone wished her well for the future.