

## NEWICK C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Governing Board held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 from 8.30am to 10.05am

#### Present:

Mary Molloy (MM) (A/Chair), Natalie Alty (NA) (Headteacher), Kalpna Robertson (KR), Caroline Smith (CS), Amy Clarke (AC), Sue Berry (SB), Rev. Paul Mundy (PM), Rob Boswell (RB), Chris Barnes (CB), Jane Johnson (JJ), Diane Reeds (DR), Ian Bellis (IB), Jon Tivey (JT) and Jo Lacey (JL)

John Philpott was the Clerk. The meeting was quorate (quorum 6) and took place remotely on the Microsoft Teams Conference Platform

#### 1. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mandy Watson (MW) and were accepted.

#### 2. Associate Governors Re-appointment (Agenda item 3)

2.1 The meeting agreed to extend the terms of office, as Associate Governors, of Sue Berry (SB) and Chris Barnes (CB). These had ended in July and they were both reappointed for a further year.

#### 3. Declaration of Interests (Agenda Item 4)

3.1 None declared in respect of this meeting. Governors were reminded to complete and return the annual declaration forms which had been made available on line before the meeting.

#### 4. Governors Code of Conduct (Agenda Item 5)

4.1 Governors were advised that they were required to read and agree the Governors Code of Conduct. The Clerk was to follow up by email that this had been done.

**ACTION: Clerk**

Email all Governors to ensure that they had read and agreed the Governors Code of Conduct

#### 5. Keeping Children Safe in Education (Agenda Item 6)

5.1 Governors were told that they also needed to have read Keeping Children Safe in Education. The Clerk was to follow up by email that they had done so.

**ACTION: Clerk**

Email all Governors to ensure that they had read Keeping Children Safe in Education

#### 6. Minutes of the last Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020 (Agenda Item 7)

6.1 The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and as it was being held remotely, they were not signed.

6.2 Actions from the meeting were reported on as follows:

Point 10.1 – Not yet completed. (Note: The training notes were sent to Governors by KR, post meeting)

Point 11.1 – Not yet completed. (Note: FGB meeting dates were circulated by the Clerk, post meeting)

(PM joined the meeting at 8.42am)

Point 7.4 - PM said that because the Church had a financial interest in the school property they needed to legally underwrite the solar panel project, with fees in the region of £1,500 to £2,000, and they were undertaking this. He was hopeful that the solar panels would be installed before the end of the year.

## **7. Headteachers Report (Agenda Item 8)**

7.1 NA's Safeguarding Report to Governors had been circulated on line in advance of the meeting.

7.2 NA said that another Child Protection referral had been made. This meant that the school now had two such cases being actioned. KR said that she would be carrying out a Safeguarding visit at school later that day.

**7.3 NA was questioned whether there had been an increase in safeguarding issues arising from the Covid pandemic. She said that there had not been an unusual spike in this, although there had been more need for nurture. Questioned on the attendance figures in the report and whether they were affected by Covid matters, NA said that there were children from two families not coming to school because of their concerns over very vulnerable family members. ESBAS (Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service) were aware of this and involved in the management of the situation.**

7.4 Discussion followed on the situation where work put on the school website and intended for children isolating at home was being used by parents home educating their children and the difficulty in managing this for both ESBAS and the school. **PM challenged NA that an unfair system of two tier education was being created as parent should be able not to send children to school at the present time. NA said that parents had the right to choose to take their children off role and home educate them. Other parents with vulnerable family members were choosing to send the children to school.** There was discussion on this and the potential this provided for creating a two-tier system of education.

(IB joined the meeting at 9am)

**7.5 NA was further questioned whether the parents not sending their children to school were aware that they were not receiving as good an education as those who were going to school and whether it was a safeguarding issue. NA said that their parents had been made very well aware of that and the safeguarding issues were the reasons for liaising with ESBAS and dialogue with the families. Questioned about home visits, NA said that the school had not made any visits, for Covid security reasons, although ESBAS might have done so.**

7.6 NA said that the new SDP (School Development Plan) had been written and published and the SEF (Self Evaluation Form) was being updated. The School Improvement Partner (SIP) would be visiting the school on the following day.

7.7 Pupil numbers had fallen during lockdown but had now returned to 213 children on role. The number of them receiving free school meals had risen from seven to fourteen which, at

8%, was the highest for a long time. The number of special needs children remained the same and all staff were now in school, including three that had needed to self-isolate.

7.8 Staff appraisals have been linked to the SDP with objectives linked to focussed children on a priority list. The remote learning policy had been updated so that if there were to be a further school closure period, the children would have access to more learning with all assignments capable of being uploaded. The application for a government grant in relation to home learning had been successful and IT devices obtained.

7.9 Playtime 'bubbles' included the supervisor and the qualified First Aider. The Keystage data had been submitted to the LA at the end of the summer term. The school had been an early adopter of the new Early Years framework.

**7.10 Questioned about how many pupils did not have access to IT at home, NA said this applied to a significant minority. The school lent devices where there was broadband in the home and there was also a contingency plan for where there was not. Training was given to the children or their parents, if they were very young.**

**7.11 NA was challenged why a school entry gate had been left open and unattended. She said that this was an isolated error by a teacher and procedures had now been tightened.**

7.12 A number of concerns and suggestions relating to arrival and departure of children from school were put to NA and discussed. These included; concerns over people collecting children being squashed together in the street outside the school, without wearing masks and the potential for someone being run over by passing traffic; banning parking outside the school and using the Church car park instead; having designated 'window' times for classes or groups of classes pickups; signs directing 'drop off and go'; seeking a police presence and enforcement; blocking off the layby outside the school and texting parents with appropriate advice.

7.13 NA said that she was happy to talk to concerned parents although she was not aware that any had so far raised this with the school. Application had been made to block off the layby but it was taking a long time for this to happen. It was agreed that CB would monitor and analyse the situation outside the school at drop off and pick up times and make proposals for positive change.

**ACTION: CB**

Observe at gatherings of carers outside the school at 'pick up' times and make any suggestions to improve safety

7.14 NA said she was confident that the promised £80 per child government catch up funding would be received.

## **8. Finance and Resources Committee structure (agenda Item 9)**

8.1 The meeting discussed a proposal by MW that the committee be replaced by a few governors working directly with Emily and Natalie on a less structured basis so as to make it a small focussed group. At present it was the only Governing Board Committee and more than half of the Governors (eight of the fifteen) were attendees at meetings.

8.2 During the discussion, there was general agreement that the only function of the committee which would benefit from smaller group working was the annual budget formulation process, and in practice this was actually carried out by two or three Governors.

Responsibility for the school premises was put forward as an important function of the Committee best overseen by a wide group of Governors. The meeting was not convinced that the interest of good governance at the school would be better served by the Committee being the responsibility of a small group of Governors with financial expertise.

8.3 It was decided that the Finance and Resources Committee should continue as presently constituted for this academic year and be reviewed in July. The Clerk was to circulate the dates of the Committees meetings.

**ACTION: Clerk**

Circulate to Governors meeting dates of the Finance and Resources Committee and make review of the Committee an agenda item for the July FGB Meeting

**9. Mental Health and Wellbeing update (Agenda Item 10)**

9.1 AC provided an update on mental health and wellbeing at the school. She discussed the CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) Jigsaw programme and said that these resources had been updated and all the teachers were using them. She was asked about the welfare of staff and said that whilst the pupil bubbles were working well in the short term, there were long term concerns over this. Breaks were having to be arranged to avoid too many teaching staff being in the staffroom at the same time.

**10 Policies (Agenda Item 11)**

10.1 The following policies had been circulated in advance of the meeting: Supervision of Children, Staff Behaviour, Child Protection and Safeguarding. NA said that these reviewed documents were based on new model policies, new guidance and the online policy. The meeting agreed the policies as presented.

**11. Any other business (Agenda Item 12)**

11.1 AC said that, as a Church school, collective worship was important and continued to take place using a variety of means.

**12. Dates of Future Meetings**

12.1 The Clerk was to circulate future meeting dates.

**ACTION: Clerk**

Circulate dates of FGB meetings