

MERTON INFANT SCHOOL

Minutes of the Virtual Full Governing Body meeting held on Wednesday 3rd February 2021

MINUTES

Present:	Lee-ann Dirienzo		
	Larissa James	Headteacher	
	Rachel Hill		
	Jan Beard		
	Emily Mean	Chair	
	Louise Silverton	Vice Chair	
	Gary Pierce		
	Wendy Rowland		
In attendance:	Zoe Wisken	Deputy Headteacher	
	Mark Livesey	Clerk	

The meeting started at 6.45 pm.

		ACTION
1.	Presentation by Laura Bennett (Maths Curriculum Manager) Laura Bennett gave a presentation on the monitoring of Maths. Q. (GP). A governor asked what a learning walk entails. A. LJ advised that a learning walk is essentially an observation; those engaged in the walk go around and visit the classrooms, talk to the children, review their books and their learning, talk to staff and witness the quality of the teaching and learning that is taking place.	
2.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence No apologies.	
3.	Declaration of Pecuniary Interests or Conflicts of Interest None.	
4.	Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2020 Agreed as a true record.	
5.	Matters Arising 021220_5_1 Discuss a joint leaflet with the Junior School in July with a view to publication during the summer holidays and September (ZW): ACTION C/F to July. 021220_5_2 Liaise with the Deputy Head at the Junior School, so that the Juniors are aware of Merton Infant's intentions with regard to this matter (EM): Closed. 021220_5_3 Make a note to ensure the leaflet is discussed at the Summer 1 and Summer 2 FGB meetings and to ensure that related agenda items are included in the draft Annual Task Planner which will be reviewed in the Summer 2 FGB meeting (Clerk): the Clerk had produced a draft Annual Planner, including reference to the leaflet, for approval at the July FGB meeting. ACTION C/F. 021220_5_4 Distribute some leaflets in your local area (all governors who live in Popley): Closed. 2110120_9 Merton Infant & St. Anne's School to sign Collaboration Agreement: Closed. 021220_5_5 Ask the Headteacher of St. Anne's to ask the Chair of Governors at St. Anne's to make initial contact with EM (LJ): ACTION C/F. 211020_17_2 Discuss the meeting dates for Resources and FGB meetings for the remainder of this academic year (LJ, LS & EM): Closed. 211020_4 Email the abbreviations list to LD, when RH has received it (RH): Closed. 211020_7_2 Check to see whether there are any updates to the rules on paid absences for self-isolation and if there are then circulate them to everyone so that they can make any comments or agree by email; email the correct wording (from the MOPP) to the Clerk (LJ): Closed.	ZW Clerk LJ

	021220_7_1 Send the Headteacher Summaries for each year group in Reading, Writing and Maths, in both percentages version and graphs version, to the governors on Friday 4th December (ZW): Closed. 021220_7_2 Include information, to the effect that the GB membership is low at present and that the GB has a plan to increase GB membership, although the GB still believes that Leadership & Management is good, in the Self Evaluation Evidence document and circulate the updated document (LJ): Closed. 021220_8 Email Matthew Rixon, the school's LLP, to see if he knows of anyone interested in becoming a governor (LJ): LJ advised that Matthew had said that no one had come forward yet as a potential governor although he will keep trying to find a governor for the school. Closed. 021220_9_1 Consider further information on the bespoke WGBT sessions, when received from HGS, and decide whether the sessions would be of benefit to the GB (LS): Closed. 021220_9_2 Email LD the name of the webinar "Understanding the governors' role in monitoring and evaluating SEND" (LS): ACTION C/F. 021220_15 Discuss the Car Park policy further with the Junior School Headteacher (LJ): discussed, policy updated & circulated to governors. Closed. 021220_18 Email all attendees the following figures, i.e. the number of children who have applied to the school as their first, second or third preference, tomorrow (JB): Closed.	LS
6.	Report from Resources Committee – any questions for Resources Chair The Resources Committee had met just before this meeting; there were no questions.	
7.	Receive Headteacher Verbal Report LJ talked the GB through her Headteacher Report, the main points of which are summarised below: • she thought that the LLP (virtual) visit had been quite positive and invited questions on the visit; there were no questions • the school had to complete the Review of the Remote Educational Provision to see where it was with regard to its Remote Learning Strategy as there were potential actions that the school could carry out if it had not done so already • she thought that the highlighted areas, to say whether the school does 'identify, develop, plan, implement, embed and sustain', were accurate, and invited questions on the Review; there were no questions • the DfE had provided a format for the Remote Learning Strategy's production, and ZW had worked hard to produce the document; the Strategy is a live document, to which things will be added over time • the school has a number of remote learning strategies, including Athletics, Bug Club (introduced in the Autumn Term) and Spelling Shed; the school worked quickly to put these strategies in place including the introduction of Google Classroom, for which the Remote Learning Team deserve praise • Attendance was calculated from the start of September until the end of the Autumn Term, as 97%, with the national expectation being 96% • regarding the data as of yesterday, from the 5th January the Numbers On Roll have increased from 32 to 68, i.e. the attendance increased from 37% to 82%. It is difficult to compare attendance data to the same point in the year as last year, even from the autumn term to the end of the spring first half has guidance about coding attendance changed mid half term. • Covid-19 staff testing has commenced on Monday and Thursday mornings – there have been no confirmed cases in school; all necessary testing kit logs and all the testing results are being completed as per guidance • the school should receive confirmation regarding the ordering of additional test kits; as there are enough test kits to last until Half Term and there is no requirement to carry out testing during Half Term, it will probably be necessary to order some test kits for after Half Term • everyone has been proactive in informing her of the test results for Monday and Thursday mornings; the requirement to contact the DfE with the results has been complied with by the staff • as it is Children's Mental Health Awareness week a range of activities have been planned, and the week is going well for the children • there has been a big CPD focus this half term on staff well-being and Mental Health • the Addendum to the CP policy, required for Covid-19, has been updated and published on the website • during the last week she has completed Celebration of Learning Walks with a positive result • she has a plan of transition to a new Maths Curriculum Manager who will take on this role during Laura Bennett's maternity leave • as of today, in school there are 31 children in YR, 23 children in Y1 and 22 children in Y2 = 76 children	

	• because of the widely defined criteria for critical workers, the school has had more children seeking places during this lockdown than during the previous lockdown • the school had advised parents by text message to let the school know if they were an 'eligible criteria' person, although not all such persons informed the school; the school is now finding that an increasing number of people, especially NHS workers, are being called in to work additional shifts and as a result the pupil numbers are increasing on a daily basis • during the first lockdown the recommendation had been to keep the bubbles of 15 children in a bubble; for this lockdown there is no stipulation regarding numbers in a bubble, although the guidance is still to keep the bubbles 'small' • the guidance still advises forward-facing tables and 2 metre distances where possible • the way the school has operated has varied; the school tried following the guidance during the first lockdown, but it proved not to work for YR as it is not conducive to their learning; the school has therefore operated YR as a year group bubble again, keeping the children working in groups of 6 as far as possible • Y1 also operate as a year group bubble sitting children in groups; whereas Y2 operate a split class approach with tables in rows • there is no right or wrong way to arrange the classes; an element of how each year group operates must be determined, to a large degree, by the arrangement that the teachers are comfortable with • the school's concern is that if pupil numbers increase again, where that will leave the school; at present it is not known when the current situation will end; although there is a set date of 8th March for schools possibly returning, she anticipates parents phoning the school and asking for places for their children during the first 2 weeks after half term • there will be a point where the school will not be able to physically admit additional children although the concern then is that the school will have to refuse admission to the children of NHS workers that are currently still managing to do split shifts with their partners at home • the top priority for the school are children who are either a) in social care under a Child In Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan or b) children that the school is worried about • the next priority are the children of NHS workers, followed by the children of workers in areas that the school considers to be important for the parents to be back at work in • ZW and the Inclusion Manager have also worked on providing support for the school's SEND children and ensuring that their IEP targets are being worked on • the school is training the LSAs, who do Speech and Language programmes with specific children, to run the programmes using Google Classroom as well • she has been reading the Ofsted Report regarding remote learning and at present there does not appear to be anything that the school has not already tackled Q (LD). A governor asked if groups like NHS workers have to send their children to school every day, or whether they can say to the school "I've got a shift that day, can I send my child to school?". A. LJ advised that the school has chosen to maintain full time education from Monday to Friday as this is a) a consistent arrangement for the child in terms of not having to work around split shifts and b) a consistent arrangement with regard to the bubble and c) a consistent and manageable arrangement for the member of staff in the face to face teaching group. Q (GP). A governor asked LJ if she had already arrived at an upper limit figure for the number of pupils that the school can admit, or whether this is something that she would be considering in the short term. A. LJ advised that, as an example, YR is being operated in 2 different bubbles, with one class having approx. 14 children and the other class having approx. 10 – 11 children. Because the children are not sat in rows, the school could accept 30 children in each classroom. In Y1, the 2 Y1 classes are in a single combined bubble of 23 children, and the number of children could be allowed to reach 30. In Y2, 2 separate classes are operated, with approx.13 in one class and approx. 11 in the other class, so that it would be possible for each of these classes to accommodate 15 children as only 15 tables in rows can comfortably be organised. The school has to be mindful of the fact that the more children that are admitted, if the face to face teachers go above the limit in the classroom, it is necessary for the school to consider whether to take the remote learning team off, which could affect the work/life balance of the staff involved. Q (GP). A governor asked LJ if she was giving herself a buffer zone in order to be able to deal with those applications for school places that she would find it difficult to turn down because of the circumstances. A. LJ answered in the affirmative. ZW provided a verbal update regarding remote learning, the main points of which are summarised below:	
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	- the recent data spreadsheet completed for remote learning documents that out of the 191 children on roll, there are 74 children (i.e. 39%) in school (2 have since been admitted and therefore not included in this data) - the remote learning children at home are 113; of these children, there are 93 children (82% of the remote learners) that are actively engaged in live lessons with a positive approach - approx. 20 children are not actively engaged with the remote learning; the school is calling the children and providing technology support, and she has often spoken to parents by phone and talked them through using the app - the school has some paper work packs for children who do have some access to devices but may have technology problems - the school has 4 such children, 2 being from the same family, that either have work packs delivered to them or being collected from school - in school she has tabs behind the data spreadsheet, containing the names of the specific children and details of the exact contact that the school has had with them; the spreadsheet is an ongoing working document that the school has been liaising with the Remote Learning Team about - when the school started remote learning in January it was providing recorded online lessons; the school designed a remote learning timetable to provide the children at home with a structure that the school would have been providing for them in school - during Weeks 2 and 3 the school was providing one session of live remote learning a day between all 3 of the year groups; now the school is delivering up to 3 live lessons per day per year group - the school has also been delivering online live reading sessions using Bug Club, as well as producing recorded "How To's" to parents, and delivering a high quality curriculum as it would have done if the children had been in school - she has been working alongside Scott Hayden who is part of the DfE government programme which provides free guidance and assistance to the school - she has spoken about assessment and feedback with the school's LLP and developed 'Voice Note Clips' which can be sent to the children to ensure effective time management when monitoring children's learning - the school provides weekly timetables for live teaching so that the parents can plan for the lessons during the week - regarding P.E., she has been providing a Joe Wicks exercise routine for the children, of which numbers joining these lessons numbers have increased over time illustrating that they enjoy it - the celebration assemblies are continually improving, the assemblies having been opened up to all children not just those receiving an award that week - as this week is Children's Mental Health Week; the children have been completing activities to do with emotions and pride - weekly live Circle Time sessions are planned per class to enable those in school to communicate with their class remote learners to maintain contact and friendships - as a next step for remote learning, she will create a feedback questionnaire to find out what the parents are enjoying and what the parents find difficult in relation to what the school is providing for them - the LSAs who have used Google Classroom have reported that they have got on with delivering their interventions very well A governor advised that he had been very impressed with the remote learning platform; although he hadn't used Google Classroom before it seemed very ease to use remotely as well as appearing to be very reliable.	
8.	Appoint Gary Pierce and Wendy Rowland as Parent Governors with effect from today for a term of office of 4 years Agreed by the GB.	
9.	Discuss GB Membership EM talked the GB through the GB Membership, the main points of which are summarised below: - she has followed up the LA Governor vacancy with the local councillor and will continue this by asking the local councillor for a nomination ACTION - one Parent Governor vacancy remains, which could be advertised in the Newsletter; the other 2 parent governor vacancies have just been filled by the parent governor appointments made under the previous item - there are currently 4 Co-opted Governor vacancies Agreed not to re-run the governor adverts on the various governor vacancy platforms.	EM

	The DTG (LS) advised that the GB has explored all the options for filling governor vacancies advised to her by Governor Services. ZW advised that she would include a mention, in 'Popley Matters', of the fact that the school still has governor vacancies and that applications for these can be made and handled remotely. ACTION. LS advised that she would change the wording of the advert slightly, with a view to attracting potential new governors, and send it to ZW for inclusion in 'Popley Matters'. ACTION.	ZW LS
10.	Discuss Governor Training, including WGBT LS talked the GB through Governor Training, the main points of which are summarised below: - the GB has already undertaken WGBT on most of the standard topics available - she has asked Governor Services if they could provide WGBT on a topic or in a way that is more bespoke to the GB's needs - she received a response advising that Governor Services can provide some WGBT, the GB having requested 'Effective Governance and Managing with a Smaller Governing Body' as the topic - although Governor Services have suggested possible dates for the WGBT they have not provided her with information regarding the likely content of the training - she believes that she needs to engage Governor Services or the tutor in a conversation regarding the content of the training Agreed that LS will book the WGBT on the topic 'Effective Governance and Managing with a Smaller Governing Body' for 16th March on the understanding that Governor Services can ensure that the GB is provided with the content that it requires and that LS will try to arrange for the session to start at 6.00 pm if at all possible; if the required content cannot be delivered, then the GB will forfeit the training. ACTION. Agreed that all governors will provisionally earmark 16th March for the WGBT. ACTION.	LS ALL
11.	Discuss reports from governor visits EM advised a couple of points: - LD has carried out a governor visit entitled 'First Celebration Assembly during Covid-19' (report circulated) - she has completed some governor visit reports and will email them to the nominated person (who will be decided upon later in this item) for circulation ACTION Agreed that LD will be the nominated person to receive and circulate the Governor Visit Reports. EM invited questions regarding LD's visit report; there were no questions.	EM
12.	Update Governor Newsletter EM requested ideas for a new issue of the Newsletter; suggestions included introduction of the new governors to the parents, concise pen portraits of the new governors, remote learning, governance and recruiting new governors, mental health, the new playground equipment, and the spiritual garden area. Agreed that EM will ask the relevant attendees for their contributions to the Newsletter a bit nearer the time of publication. ACTION.	EM
13.	Monitor any parental complaints None.	
14.	Decide whether to continue subscription to Governor Services AST (Advice, Support and Training) package Agreed to continue the subscription.	
15.	Decide whether to continue subscription to LA Clerking Service and agree Clerk Hours (as documented in Clerking Hours form) if subscription is to continue Agreed a) to continue the subscription and b) the documented Clerk Hours.	
16.	Approve Governor Monitoring Day for 25th May 2021 Agreed to approve the Governor Monitoring Day for 25th May, as part of which the GB Self Evaluation will be completed.	
17.	Review Governor Action Plan EM advised that the Governor Action Plan is on track to be achieved.	
18.	Discuss the dates for a) the next Resources Committee meeting (which will include discussion of the draft budget plans) and b) the next FGB meeting The following dates were agreed for the remaining Resources Committee meetings for this academic year, the 31st March meeting to be immediately followed by the next FGB meeting at 6.45 pm: 31st March, 26th May, 21st July, all these dates being a Wednesday with the meetings starting at 6.00 pm.	
19.	Correspondence	

	LJ encouraged governors to read the latest issue of the Governors and Clerks Newsletter, which contains a lot of useful information and should give rise to the governors asking questions in relation to the governors' accountability for the staff. Agreed that the Clerk will set up the new governors in GovernorHub so that they can book training. ACTION. EM advised the new governors that they will receive an email from Governor Services containing easy to follow instructions for accessing GovernorHub.	Clerk
20.	Any Other Business LJ encouraged the new governors to access as much eLearning as possible between now and the next FGB meeting on 31st March when the GB would look to appoint them to specific roles on the GB. LS advised that once the new governors have been set up in GovernorHub the first thing that they should do is access GovernorHub and register for the New Governor Induction training course. ACTION. LS advised that she will check to see what course dates exist for the New Governor Induction course and she will also email the new governors to let them know the exact title of the training course that they will need to search for when booking the training. ACTION. LS advised that at the next FGB meeting it would be useful to summarise what training each governor has undertaken and also what training has been undertaken as a GB; she will therefore aim to produce a training report for the next FGB meeting. ACTION. EM asked the Clerk to include an item for the training report in the agenda for the next FGB meeting. ACTION. RH advised that she would like to acknowledge the support that the staff have received from the SLT in the face of the various challenges that have arisen over the last few months, and to thank the SLT, on behalf of the staff, for their understanding and support. ZW asked if it would be possible to discuss appointing a Mental Health and Wellbeing Governor when governor roles are discussed at the 31st March FGB meeting. She also advised that as it had not proved possible for governors to attend the Mental Health and Wellbeing training that the school had been providing for everyone, she believes that it would be beneficial for the school and the governors if the governors could attend or join this training if at all possible at a later date. LJ made a couple of suggestions: • it may be worth giving a presentation at the next FGB meeting on 31st March on what the school has looked at so far in terms of Mental Health and Wellbeing, and then a further presentation could be given on the same topic at the Governor Monitoring Day on 25th May • at the next Mental Health and Wellbeing meeting one governor might like to join the meeting via Teams while those present work through the DfE webinars EM asked ZW to circulate the relevant links and dates for the Mental Health & Wellbeing meetings to the governors, so that it can be determined which governors could attend. ACTION.	GP, WR LS LS Clerk ZW
21.	Date of next FGB meeting The next FGB meeting (virtual) is scheduled for Wednesday 31st March 2021 at 6.45 pm.	

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

These minutes are accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed _____ Chair Date _____