

**MEADOW VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL
VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
WEDNESDAY 20TH MAY 2020 AT 1PM**



MINUTES

Present: T White, B Vickerage, K Bromley, J West, A Boyle
In attendance: J Logan, T Keenan, A Blench

FGB1.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 To accept apologies for absence.
Apologies for absence were received and accepted from T Davidson-Hague, K Smith.

FGB2.DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND BUSINESS INTEREST

- 2.1 Individual governors to declare any personal or business interests on any item
On the agenda.

No declarations were made.

FGB3.BUSINESS CRITICAL DECISIONS

- 3.1 To consider plans for the phase re-opening of school from 1st June 2020 onwards.

Governors discussed the plan for a phased re-opening of school from 1st June which JL had shared with governors prior to the meeting. JW and TW had met virtually with JL for 2 hours yesterday to go through this in detail as well. Governors recognised the amount of work which JL and wider team had put into this and expressed their thanks.

The following views were expressed by governors. It was mentioned that for LA Maintained Schools the closure and opening of a school are operational decisions for the Head teacher to make in consultation with governors. It was also stated that it was not essential that school opened to more children from 1st June and that we need to go with what we have confidence to do. We have not seen any adverse reaction to the recent slight relaxation of lock down yet. These decisions are not just about the children but are about adults and the wider school community. Its important that we try to not alienate the community we serve. Germany has opened its schools to the older children first. The view from scientists is that the bubble would be

sufficient and an acknowledgment that it's not possible to maintain social distancing within each bubble. Staff will want to comfort and hug younger children which is only natural. Younger children are mostly asymptomatic with COVID 19. If one child picks up the virus this will then result in the whole 15 in the bubble having to self-isolate potentially. Older children can maintain the 2 meters distance, but I am not comfortable with the idea of younger children coming back to school. We don't have access to local infection data. The reaction from adults on social media locally is mixed but there is a view that younger children shouldn't be coming into school. Looking to September my view is that we will still need to use home education and will need a plan for delivering teaching in homes. There is a recognition that school is doing its best and the plan is good and sound. The issues are around safety and the uncertainty in that area.

I don't agree with the plan. We are proposing bringing them back for a short period and then sending them off for the 6-week holidays. From an educational point of view this seems of little value. The planning which school has done around this is very good. The numbers of deaths reported are still very high. Unions have pointed out that the 5 tests haven't been met and testing/contact tracing won't be in place until mid-June. We shouldn't dash into anything. Let's adopt the bubble model for children of essential workers and vulnerable children first.

Governors were keen that school knows that any criticism of the proposal to open up to more children is not aimed at school who are doing a great job.

JL stated that she did not take this as a criticism and shares similar views. However, we have to do what we have been asked to do. A Plan has been created which attempts to put as many measures in place as possible to reduce risk, but we will never eliminate risk totally. We have to be open from 1st June onwards for key workers and vulnerable children, we could keep it like that for a week and in following weeks open up for other years.

A governor with a child in Year 6 stated that they were comfortable with what was being proposed and that school had given his family the assurances they were seeking. Their Year 6 child will be returning to school if this is what is decided.

Governor question – would it be possible to split FS down even more?

The issue with doing this would be our ability to cater for their needs in even smaller groups. Access to toilets would be an issue. Also, we would need extra staffing. With 15 in FS, we would have 5 + 1 adult in a bubble.

Governor question – have you had any issues with C19 at the moment?

We have had one child attend for school with a cough. They were not allowed into school. There hasn't been any illness so far.

Governor question – what is Rotherham LA view, are they opposed to re-opening?

As far as we are aware, they are not opposed. JL has been sent a questionnaire from the LA which asks about schools plans for re-opening. It was thought that the LA wanted schools to re-open. This is just a plan and there is no commitment to open to more children at the moment. In reality the school hasn't been shut as we have had

key workers children here throughout. The older children are the ones we stand a chance of getting this right with.

Governors supported a phased re-opening to the year groups and discussed starting with Y6. It would not be viewed as a failure for school if we don't get them back.

BV left the meeting at this point.

AB was asked for her views on how this might work in FS. Staff would have to change the way they worked with young children as we are currently very hands on. The children constantly put things in their mouths, touch everything and move around a lot. We can try to keep everything as clean as possible and wash things they have used regularly. Staff will feel very stressed and will worry that they might have caused a child to get ill. Perhaps staff will feel calmer as the weeks progress and they get used to a different way of working. Being at home hasn't been a break for staff and the prospect of returning is constantly on their minds. We realise we can't stay like this for ever. I understand that we will need a phased approach up to the summer and staff will do what leadership ask them to in this respect.

TK stated that she hoped that more vulnerable children would start to attend, if only for short sessions. This has already started to happen. If children with an EHCP came in they would need more individual support and care. Being in a bubble would be very difficult for some such as those on the autism spectrum. Parents of EHCP have been contacted and very few want to send their children in. There are other children whose families are accessing Early Help (not officially classed as vulnerable) who rely on school for support. We have been encouraging them to attend. We have done the best we can with the measures planned. Distancing would be impossible and inappropriate in FS.

A governor said that they liked the idea of 3 adults for each bubble. The key thing will be getting parents onside, encouraging them to prepare their children for what to expect and how to behave is key. The idea of individual stationery kits is a good idea.

JL stated that the 3 adults to each bubble might not be sustainable with more key workers and vulnerable children coming in which is possible. The children of key workers will always be priority in allocation of spaces. For FS especially what they will be coming back to is not what it was when they left. It's possible that things won't be much different in September and how we teach will need to change a lot. There will be no free play or free flow for FS children.

School is in touch with Early Help children every week plus additional children whom we have identified concerns with, which represent 22 children who are struggling with lock down. We would like to prioritise them over FS/Y1/Y6.

Governors acknowledged how difficult it would be for staff and children having to sit at a table on their own all day.

A question was asked about how internal communication would work between bubbles and the school office. School has phones in each classroom which would be used to ask for help.

Governor question – is there capacity to replace adults if they are off?

We have TK on standby but wouldn't do this for any more than a week. After a week we may need to consider closing the bubble. TA can manage groups with teachers setting work and overseeing what they do.

School has shared the plan with staff and another meeting is due with them this afternoon. Teachers who can't attend school due to shielding would support home learning. From 1st June children from Brinsworth and Ferham will be returning to their own schools. It was noted that as more non-essential workers return to work, we will see more essential workers children coming into school.

Governor question – is there an option to phase in the return? What would happen if we had more key workers children?

We would have to be flexible and some re-arranging of bubbles may be needed to accommodate. School needs to keep to the requirements of the EYFS Framework and its regulations.

Governor question – if when the PM makes the announcement on 28th May this is to not do a phased re-opening will we still return to teaching (rather than childcare) from 1st June?

We don't know the answer to that question. Next week is half term and school are closed to give everyone a much-needed break. Further communications with parents are needed with an explanation of reasons for decisions. Governors stressed the need to keep the communications very general and to not commit to very specific courses of action as this could all change. Feedback from parents was that the information coming to parents was good and reassuring. JL stressed that she will be available in school w/c 1st June to speak to any parent with questions. Staff are wanting to do what helps children and will show flexibility. We will learn along the way and this will help us think and plan for September. Its important to let parents know how school has been operating during lock down as well.

Governors were made aware that as more pupils return it may not be possible to accommodate every child and stay safe. The priority will be key workers children and vulnerable children always. It won't be school as it was before so some may not want to come back for that reason.

Governors agreed to a plan to open school to children of Key Workers and Vulnerable Children from 1st June trialling the bubble model, with a view to deciding later in that week if extending this to children from FS, Y1 and Y6 was appropriate. JL agreed to seek advice about starting to extend the years with Y6.

3.2 To consider the re-opening risk assessment document

It was agreed that the revised RA would be shared with all governors and their views sought via email given the timescales involved.

FGB4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

4.1 To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2020.

These were approved by governors.

FGB5. CONFIDENTIALITY

5.1 To determine any confidential items.

No items were identified for the confidential minutes.

FGB6. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

6.1 TBC – possibly a catch-up meeting w/c 1st or 8th June

The meeting closed at 2.20pm.