

Wistaston LAB Minutes 21/05/2020

WCLA Thursday, May 21, 2020 4Chair: Audrey Skidmore Clerk: Carole Self

FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked.

Governors Attending: >James Bancroft, Angela Clyne, Mike Finnigan, Sara White, Audrey Skidmore, Sara White, Simon Dodd, Stuart York, Lesley Meaney, Steph Watson

Governors Apologies: >John Harrison

Non Governors Attending: >Carole Self,

Non Governors Apologies: >

Agenda Item 1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed all Members to the meeting, in particular AC on her return to school.

MINUTE

No apologies for absence had been received.

Agenda Item 2 Declaration of Personal/Pecuniary Interests

MINUTE None

Agenda Item 3 Declaration of Any Other Business

MINUTE None

Agenda Item 4 Part One Minutes of the Last Meeting

MINUTE The Minutes of the meeting dated 26th March 2020 were received and confirmed as a true and accurate record.

DECISION Members approved the minutes of the meeting dated 26th March 2020 as a true and accurate record.

Agenda Item 5 Matters arising

Members reviewed the matters arising as follows:

- SY confirmed he had some visit reports to complete. **Outstanding, although Members agreed this action had now been superseded by the Coronavirus. Action closed.**
- Advertisements to be placed with Inspiring Governance and Governance for Schools – **Members discussed one possible new Member although they were disappointed that the individual had delayed follow up and they agreed therefore to continue with recruitment once the coronavirus crisis was over.**
- JB to contact Wistonian News and to place an advertisement re governor vacancies. **Postponed until after the coronavirus crisis.**
- Writing to be included on the next agenda. **The Principal advised that this would be postponed until the end of the crisis although he confirmed that he had received the report from the lead.**
- JB to contact the High School and other schools in the cluster to determine if anyone would be interested in becoming a governor. **Postponed**
- Consider sending invitations to reading clubs and include this as an action in the SDP - **postponed until the end of the coronavirus crisis. Members agreed to close this action**
- Provide an update on the SEF in its new format. **JB reported that he and Steph W had undertaken alot of work on this although this would undoubtedly now have to change to take into account the latest situation. Members agreed to close this action**
- E-mail the link/areas of interest for Members to agree the final list, then circulate to the Principal to circulate to staff. **The Chair confirmed that there was just one Member left to agree link roles for.**
- Feedback on the strategy days at the next LAB. **JB confirmed that this had been cancelled along with the Challenge Board meeting because of the Ofsted inspection at one of the schools. Given the current position, Members agreed to close this action.**
- Circulate potentials dates for LAB Open Day. **The Chair confirmed that before the coronavirus a provisional date had been identified as 6th July. Action closed**
- Discuss future LAB open days. **On hold. Members agreed to close this action given the current crisis.**
- Circulate the proposal from the PHSE lead in relation to the consultation on relationships and sex education. **JB confirmed that the consultation had not yet commenced given the current covid 19 crisis although the date in September had not as yet been deferred**
- Look into sharing videos of children undertaking activities. **JB Thanks to everyone who took part were recorded as this was deemed to be very enjoyable. Action closed**

MINUTE

Agenda Item 6 Principal's Report

MINUTE The Principal provided Members with the following verbal report:

Members acknowledged that the school had continued to be open since the end of March albeit only to children of Keyworkers. On site daily were Teachers, Teaching Assistants, a First Aider, Senior Leader, Finance staff and cleaners from Service Master. Members recorded thanks to the Assistant Caretaker who had been on site every day. The Principal advised that the school were advertising for a new Site Manager, with one application received to date although the closing date was not until 1st June 2020.

The Principal highlighted that he was concerned about the negativity in the media about Teachers especially when they had been working so hard planning the curriculum; transition activities; organising remote learning and maintaining contact with families. Members were reminded that staff had not had a break in a long time therefore the school closure the following week would provide a welcome break to all staff. **Q. Are you open for children of Key Workers? The Principal** confirmed that the Government had not agreed this and given the need to ensure that staff wellbeing was assured and that a further challenging time was to come, the school would not open. He confirmed that the school had received a couple of requests from Parents however as they had received sufficient notice they had managed to make alternative arrangements. **Q. Is the plan to continue with the provision for Key Worker children when the school opens? The Principal** confirmed that was the case although he expected the numbers to increase. SWatson confirmed that they had already increased following the last Government announcement on return to work. **Q. Will you try to keep children of Key Workers to a minimum on return to school? SWatson** advised that the school would be limited on numbers overall. The Principal recorded that the Trust had been superb during the whole Covid 19 crisis and he did not know what it would have been like if they were not in the Trust. He reported that links with Headteachers in the other schools was stronger than ever. **Q. Is there a limit to the number of children of Key Workers you can accommodate? The Principal** confirmed that this was 30 at the absolute maximum and as there had only been 8 children today, 30 should be a reasonable number. Members were advised that based on the guidance re return and the need to have "bubbles" of 15 pupils, this would mean using 12 classrooms which would only leave 2 spare classrooms and space in the hall.

Staff Wellbeing - No confirmed or suspected cases of Covid 19 were reported amongst staff. Members were advised that staff could now be tested if they themselves display symptoms or if anyone in their household does. The Principal confirmed that no staff had been tested as yet. Members were advised that the two apprentices appointed before lockdown will not now start until September. The Principal advised Members that a Year 5 Teacher had been offered a 12 month secondment at Shavington Primary School and that role would be covered by an experienced HTLA who had been teaching in Year 1 over the last few months and in upper KS2. Members were pleased that this individual was looking to achieve QTS status working alongside an experienced Teacher. Members were advised that this move would leave a vacancy for a Teaching Assistant TA and that a further vacancy for a TA was required to support EHCP children. Members were advised that both posts would be advertised in June.

Health and Safety/Building - the Principal updated Members on an issue with the water meter. He confirmed that the meter was indicating that the school was using significant amounts of water whilst the school was closed. No leak had been found to date, so the school believed it was an issue with the meter. Compliance with all Health and Safety regulations was reported. The hedge was reported to be being removed at present.

Transition - 61 pupils were reported to start High School in September. 73% of these pupils were due to start at Shavington. The Principal recorded his concerns with bringing back Year 6 children believing that this would only add to their emotional state. SW advised Members that she had contacted all new starters to the school of which there were 60 i.e. the school being full, with 3 pupils on the waiting list with one appeal submitted which would be heard in June. No children with EHCP's were reported to be new starters. Members were advised that no transition events could be held in school before children start which Parents acknowledged. Members were advised of plans to hold a virtual meeting with Parents as well as undertaking transition in September. SW reported on the success of undertaking personal phone calls with all Parents of new starters which the school had not done before, she confirmed that she would consider doing this again as it had been useful. Members were advised that information packs were to be sent out the following week with Ready for School packs to follow in July. **Q. Will the children be with their usual Teacher/TA in Year 6? The Principal** could not confirm that this would be the case although it was likely that it would be a Year 6 Teacher and therefore someone familiar to them. **Q. What is the uptake for Year 6 children wanting to return? SWatson** advised that this was three quarters of Year 6 children.

Pupil attendance - the Principal confirmed that the maximum number of children in on any one day was 11, all of which were children of Key Workers as no vulnerable children were in attendance as Parents think their children are safer at home although the school is checking in with them on a weekly basis. **Q. Do social workers know that the children are not in attendance? The Principal** confirmed that there was only one pupil with a social worker and they were part of the decision to keep this child at home.

Safeguarding - children eligible for Free school meals was reported as constant with an increase of one in the previous week. The Principal advised that he was concerned that some families may not be accessing this support. **Q. Do we need to signpost Parents again to this? The Principal** confirmed that he would include this in the next newsletter to be sent after half term. Members were advised that FSM vouchers for £15.00 per week were sent to Parents by e-mail and that these were a slightly higher value than a school meal, the difference for which the school could claim for.

Re-opening the School - The Principal reported that children were missing their friends and Teachers and as a result were becoming demotivated, some also were reported to having been affected by wider family bereavement. Members were advised that the school had sourced some bereavement training for staff which would be a focus upon return to school. Members were advised that the emotional wellbeing of children was of concern as was Teachers inspiration as a result of the crisis. **Q. Have you thought about doing some 30 minute online classes for children? The Principal** confirmed that he had thought about this as well as providing a virtual meeting for children to talk to each other, although he thought Parents could organise this for themselves and it was not for Teachers to do. He was also confirmed that any virtual meetings with children could pose a risk as Teachers could not tackle poor behaviour during these. Online teaching after the half term holiday was being considered for Year 2, 3, 4 and 5 children as Parents were concerned they would be missing out. The Principal confirmed that he was not sure as yet to the frequency of these but that these would be pre-recorded sessions. Members agreed that it would be good for children to see their Teacher.

The Principal advised Members that the school had purchased workbooks for every child Year 1 - Year 6 to use at home and by those children in school, this would ensure there was equality of learning for all. The Principal stressed that lessons would not be in line with the national curriculum as that would be very difficult although English and Maths would be as near to what was required as much as possible. Members agreed that careful consideration was required in terms of the learning to be undertaken from September. **Q. Will the workbooks cover the learning they have already undertaken in their current year? The Principal** confirmed that this was the case. **Q. Is there any High School guidance for Year 6 pupils? The Principal** confirmed that some lessons will be undertaken on transition and the High School were sending some material for the school to use. Members were advised that the school was heavily involved with Shavington given that the majority of pupils would go there although the interaction with other High Schools was less so. **Q. If the children are not undertaking any new learning during this period, how will they select books to read? The Principal** confirmed that the school would likely assist with reading books as the transfer of the virus was low although it still required some careful thought. Members accepted that whilst Teachers wanted to engage pupils, it would be difficult if there was no new learning and the teaching environment was different. **Q. Will there be any toys available for small children to use? SW** confirmed that there were some toys that could be cleaned and that she was working with other Early Years leads across the Trust on this.

Members were advised that pupils in Year 6 would likely be in Year 5 and Year 6 classes; children in reception would be in the Year 1 area and Year 2 children in the KS2 building in Year 3 and 3 classrooms. The Principal was not sure where the children of Key Workers would be allocated as yet. Members acknowledged that being in a different classroom would be difficult for children.

Members were advised that the NAHT had organised Corona Podcasts which enabled Headteachers to ask questions and share ideas with Doctors giving specific medical guidance as well. **Q. Will staff have PPE? The Principal** advised that the main risk is infection from Adult to Adult and Adult to Child so break times would be an issue with the staffroom being out of bounds for the foreseeable future. The Principal confirmed that children in each bubble would not be expected to social distance from each other, but would do so from other bubbles which is how schools will minimise the risk of contamination. He went on to say that PPE would only be used to administer first aid, take a temperature or for intimate care and supplies of these were on their way which was not an issue. Members were advised that staff could wear facemasks if they wished to. **Q. What is the uptake for children in Reception and Year 1 returning? Swatson** confirmed that this was approx 20 this being a third with the remainder being either unsure or not willing to return which of course could change.

Members were advised that the school had been working on re-opening on a phased basis to Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children however Cheshire East had now issued a statement with the expectation that all schools should follow whether they were in a Trust or not. Members were advised that the Trust had agreed to progress with the Cheshire East timescales which was that, if it was safe to do so:

week commencing 1/6 - the school would open for children of keyworkers only
 week commencing 15/6 - the school would accept Reception children
 week commencing 22/6 - the school would accept Year 1 children
 week commencing 29/6 - the school would accept Year 6 children

Staggered start times would also be in operation. **Q. Is there any reason why Year 6 children do not start first? The Principal** confirmed that they had not been given any indication as to why this was the case other than maybe younger children were the priority if Parents were going to return to work. Members discussed the impact on preparations for return, given the constantly changing guidance, had had on staff and accepted that the latest phased return might not happen as this would not be confirmed by the Government until 28th May 2020. The Principal confirmed that the arrangements would have to be back to normal in September otherwise all schools would need to be twice the size they were to accommodate this phased "bubble" approach.

The Chair confirmed that LAB members wanted to support the school and therefore would consider meeting once a month. The Principal agreed that it was valuable to talk through plans. The Chair agreed to look at future dates.

Q. What happens to vulnerable staff? The Principal confirmed that he had 3 members of staff who were shielding and would not return to school until it was safe to do so. Some staff who were considered as vulnerable because they had conditions such as asthma would undertake a risk assessment and would only return to school if it was safe to do so. Some clinically vulnerable staff would have to continue to work from home which would impact on the school's ability to enact the rota fully. The Principal advised that he felt very responsible about making decisions about staff's health during this time. LM offered to provide her contact details for staff as she could help them with overcoming anxiety and the appropriate use of PPE in particular. **Q. Do we have enough staff if we take out those staff who are shielding or are clinically vulnerable? The Principal** confirmed that it was very tight and he would be relying on some staff to return to work who had underlying health conditions or if they were not able to return they would have to be signed off by their GP. The Principal confirmed that staff were having to come first on this occasion and that all had sought medical advice and where safe they would return to school. **Q. Has the Trust explored children only attending for 2 days per week? The Principal** confirmed that the Government advice was clear that return was to be fulltime.

Members discussed how the school would make reasonable endeavours to keep children 2 metres apart however this would be difficult in any classroom as there needed to be a gap between the Teacher and the whiteboard and the whiteboard and the children.

Members agreed that it was important to set expectations for children and sought to understand how best the school could do that. The Principal said the worse thing the school could do was share pictures of classrooms and that these needed to be as welcoming as much as they could be and Teachers needed to make lessons as much fun as possible which would be difficult as Teachers would be teaching classes they were not used to. The Principal did say however that there was a real sense of community around the school that they were all in this together. Members thought it would be good to send guidance for reception and Year 1 children 2 weeks before they were due to return so they knew what to expect.

Q. Will children be expected to wear full school uniform? The Principal advised that children of Key Workers were not expected to and children wearing non-uniform would be better as staff could check whether they were in clean clothes every day. The Principal confirmed that children of Key Workers would still only be offered childcare not education during this phased return stage.

Sportscape coaches were reported as being excellent during this period and would work with children of Key Workers after half term.

The Principal confirmed that there would be no hot lunches on return to school and children not entitled to FSM would be expected to bring packed lunches with all FSM children being given grab bags which would be delivered to their classrooms. As well as the staggered start times, Members were advised that all children would have their temperature taken on arrival.

The Chair agreed to write an article in the next Newsletter in support of the leadership in this ever changing world. The Principal recorded his thanks to Swatson for her support during this challenging time. Members agreed that the leadership team had been exceptional and hoped that they would take the half term as an opportunity to rest.

The Principal confirmed that the school was starting to think about the strategy going forward and in particular behaviour and the learning gaps. Members acknowledged that children were not going to catch up on their learning instead the school would look to meet their needs and support them as some children will have regressed during this period. **Q. How will you capture any data if it is not being requested? The Principal** confirmed that the school had undertaken teacher assessments, all of which were due to be submitted to him the next day.

ACTION The Chair to look at future dates for meeting during the summer term
The Chair to write an article in support of the leadership for the next Newsletter

Agenda Item
7 **Policy Review/Approval**

In the absence of the uploading of the addendum to the Safeguarding policy in relation to Covid 19, the Chair agreed to take an action to approve this outside of the meeting. The Principal agreed to ensure this was uploaded to Trust Governor.

MINUTE

The Principal also confirmed that the Behaviour Management Policy would need amending and to that end this would be circulated to Members to report.

ACTION The Principal to upload the addendum to the Safeguarding Policy in relation to Covid 19 for the Chair to approve
The Principal to upload or circulate the Behaviour management Policy ready for approval.

Agenda Item
8 **Communications to/from MAT**

MINUTE No Chairs Report from this meeting

Agenda Item
9 **Date of Next Meeting**

MINUTE Members agreed that interim meetings would be helpful and to that end the Chair would organise these.

Governor Agreed Actions set during this meeting: 0

Wistaston Church Lane Academy Summer 1 2020 *dated:* 21/05/2020
Minutes approved by Carole Self