



Minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of the Wessex MAT held via Google Meet on Thursday 9 July 2020 at 6pm

Present	Elected Parent	Sophie Duke SD CHAIR
	Elected Parent	Vicky Needham VN
	Co-opted	Sandra Scott SS
	Headteacher	Catherine Smith CS
	Co-opted	Ruth Bettenson RB
	Co-opted	Margaret Moss MM
	Co-opted	Lesley Goldsack LG

Absent: Marian Zvara MZ, Joanne Wibley JW and Tom Amery TA

In attendance: Natalie Green NG (Clerk), Jan McKie, Finance Director Wessex MAT from 6pm to 6.40pm

Q/C - Question/challenge

1. Welcome

SD welcomed all present.

2. Apologies for Absence

These were received and accepted from Tom Bracey TB.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising & Action Plan

1. CS to provide report on impact of sickness and absence - ONGOING
2. TA to make enquiries with Duchy ref development and demographics in Poundbury and google schools to see how Damers appeared. - ONGOING
3. SD to mail governors with dates of 'Great Works' celebrations - ONGOING
4. CS to provide report on uptake at Clubs - ONGOING
5. CS to provide report on Guided Reading - ONGOING

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6. RN to provide short session on 'Steps' - ONGOING
7. SD to assign Link Governors to SLG - ONGOING
8. NG to follow up governor vacancy enquiries - on Agenda
9. SD/MM to finalise HTPM process by October 2020 - ONGOING

5. Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business & Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were declared.

6. Correspondence

CS noted an item of correspondence which she would discuss with SD after the meeting.

7. Headteacher's Report

Report on partial re-opening of school (MAT Update contribution had been included in the pack).

The following was noted:

Y2 and 3 had been impacted most significantly by the lockdown as other year groups had had the chance to come into school. Tensions from some parents had been noted but these were limited and most parents were happy. The school had gone beyond the expectation of government guidance and was filling the school as much as physically possible, whilst managing bubbles. CS said that every child had been invited to meet their teacher for 30 mins at least once a week. She noted that she was very proud of the staff in how they had risen to the challenge.

Q/C Governors asked about monitoring the data provided to the DfE and whether governors could see a summary of this going forward. CS said that the MAT reports would show a trend over a period of time and CS suggested that a governor could look at the detail of this.

Q/C Governors asked if any child had not been contacted. CS said that every child had, and added that visits had been made where phone calls had not worked. SD noted that reflection on lessons learned from the process would be useful. There was a discussion on the fact that some families from more privileged backgrounds, where both parents were balancing working from home with the demands of home learning, were struggling to support learning at home and that this had led to some challenges with parents. **Q/C Governors asked about the children still at home and were they still learning.** CS said that this was variable and some parents still had significant fears about their children being in school.

Q/C Governors asked about next term and if the school was concerned about parents who may be anxious about returning to school. CS noted that some parents had asked if they would be fined if their children did not attend. **Q/C Governors asked if the school had a choice about fines.** CS said that fining messages should not go out too soon in the current situation but the school would monitor those families who had poor attendance in the past closely. CS said that it was important to work

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alongside parents rather than against them to overcome anxieties. CS added that there were some concerns around extended families and the impact on grandparents etc.

Q/C Governors asked about the DASP approach and whether DASP schools were working consistently together in terms of getting children back to school. It was noted that some inconsistencies in the community had been less than helpful and CS said that she would not have taken the approach governors had described. Governors particularly wished to note that they supported the approach Damers had taken. Considering staff wellbeing and recent pressures, governors also wished to stress that they would not wish the school to run any kind of catch up work or a summer school. **Q/C Governors asked if CS was anticipating any response from parents on why a summer school was not being offered.** CS said she was not expecting this to be questioned and staff wellbeing would be cited should she receive any such comments.

Y4 transition - CS described the very successful Leeson House evening which had recently taken place. The children had been 'amazing' and had loved the experience. Other transition activities were also very celebratory and CS stressed that she felt really proud of the transition activities the school had managed to provide and the ethos behind them.

September arrangements were discussed and CS said that there would be a delay of 3 days to the start for Foundation children and that this had been communicated to new parents. Also, a few familiarisation sessions had been offered to new parents and children in the first week of the summer break. All current returning children would return to their familiar class and teacher and would transition to their new room and new teacher over a three day period. The risk assessment for September was noted, CS noted the shift in mindset needed from one of guaranteed protection to one containing an element of risk and how these risks were being reduced. Bubbles would be used for track and trace purposes as well as reducing risk and CS explained the contact issues. From 2 September the school would operate primarily with class bubbles, but also with Year Group bubbles with class bubbles within them during times such as staggered lunch breaks and drop-off / pick up times and specialist staff would need to work across year teams. **Q/C Governors asked whether children accepted social distancing.** CS said that the majority of children fully accepted it and were self regulating although social distancing remains difficult within play situations. SS supported this and said children were naturally aware of their personal space, and activities such as reading were not causing any problems, CS added that side by side approaches could also be taken. CS added that she had not been asked to implement anything which she was not comfortable with, some children had thrived and none had been negatively impacted.

Q/C Governors asked about the calm starts which many children preferred and whether there were plans to change school start time arrangements. CS said they would continue with staggered starts with separation at the gate, and gates around the school site would be used. Current arrival arrangements were going very well and CS explained the detail. Lunches would continue in the classroom for now so family dining was not planned to be reinstated as yet.

SD thanked CS for her report.

[LDP link: L and M objectives – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children](#)

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-Ensure that all Governor actions are tightly linked to the evaluation and monitoring of the LDP, the development of the new curriculum and the embedding of the new assessment system

8. Trust Board Issues (this item was discussed before item 7 so JmK could leave the meeting earlier).

- Budget Plan and Budget Monitoring to the end of May 2020

JmK invited questions on the series of documents which had been included in the meeting pack. She noted the positive changes in the new budget. Income had reduced slightly but SEND payments were part of a c/fwd and had not been received until February 2020. Staffing costs were noted. **Q/C Governors asked about PFI income and JmK explained that this was a pro-rata adjustment for the partial year and had been incorrectly worded. Q/C Governors asked about Pupil Premium income which JmK explained, noting that this would not be a problem going forward but related to conversion mid-year. Q/C Governors asked about supply cover in staffing costs and JmK said that monies retained would be tracked.** She noted that the position for 2020/21 was healthy and the c/fwd was expected to be in the region of £124k. **Q/C Governors asked about pupil number projections which CS explained was due to the current lower numbers in the Reception cohort, and added that the school was full for September and there was a waiting list.** A discussion followed on the need for further staff to cope with a challenging cohort in terms of expected EHCPs, and a resignation would need to be replaced. **Q/C Governors noted that the support staff figure for 2019/20 was 16.6 and had increased to 20.9 in 200/21.** CS would check with DC to clarify. **Q/C Governors asked about additional expenses due to C-19 and JmK said that she and DC were planning to put in claims next week for additional cleaning etc.** CS noted the additional staffing costs due to C-19 which would not be funded by the government. **Q/C Governors asked when the full impact of this would be known and JmK said she would know more after the planned work with DC shortly.**

Governors noted their agreement of the budget to the MAT directors.

(At 6.40pm JmK left the meeting).

9. Governance Issues

- Chair and Vice Chair Elections for 2020/21 - self nominations were invited from governors and should reach the Clerk a week before the next meeting in case ballot papers needed to be prepared.
- Succession Planning - NG updated the LGB that 2 candidates from Inspiring Governance had been identified and she and SD would speak to them shortly. SD noted the potential gender imbalance on the board and urged governors to consider suitable male candidates. Governors noted the recent Skills Audit and acknowledged the constraints around recruitment.
- NG updated governors on the new arrangements for Governor Services and governor training, noting in particular that Chairs and Clerk's Briefings would continue on a termly basis and bespoke training could be arranged, but all other training would be available through the

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National Governance Association. The subscription was being arranged by the MAT Finance team.

- NG noted that the Clerk to the Trust Board had enquired about the Self-Review process for the LGB and governors would consider this as an agenda item for the next school year.

***LDP Link L and M objectives** – To further develop and strengthen the role of governance in securing improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for children*

-Establish a clearly defined role for all governors in securing accountability across the school

10. Any other Urgent Business as declared at start of meeting

None.

11. Date and time of next meeting: Tuesday 29 September 2020 6pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.42pm.

Action Plan following the Full Governing Body meeting held on 9 July 2020

Action to be Taken	Minute No.	Governor/Staff Member Involved	Suggested Completion Date
1. Provide report on impact of sickness and absence	4	CS	In due course
2. Make enquiries with Duchy ref development and demographics in Poundbury and google schools to see how Damers appeared.	4 (7)	TA	ASAP
3. Email governors with dates of 'Great Works' celebrations	7	SD	ASAP
4. Provide report on uptake at Clubs	7	CS	In due course
5. Provide report on Guided Reading	7	CS	In due course
6. Provide short session on 'Steps'	7	RN	ASAP
7. Assign Link Governors to SLGs	7	SD	ASAP
8. Finalise HTPM process	10	SD/MM	By October 2020
9. Check Support Staff numbers in budget with DC	9	CS	ASAP

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Date