



Minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of the Wessex MAT held via Google Meet on Tuesday 29 September 2020 at 6pm

Present	Elected Parent	Sophie Duke SD CHAIR
	Elected Parent	Vicky Needham VN
	Elected Staff	Tom Bracey TB
	Headteacher	Catherine Smith CS
	Co-opted	Ruth Bettenson RB
	Co-opted	Margaret Moss MM
	Co-opted	Lesley Goldsack LG
	Co-opted	Joanne Wibley JW
	Co-opted	Tom Amery TA

In attendance: Natalie Green NG (Clerk), Linda Parkinson-Hardman LPH (Prospective Co-opted Governor), Moira Bearwish MB (DHT) from 6.55pm

Q/C - Question/challenge

1. Welcome

SD welcomed all present, particularly prospective governor LPH who gave a brief introduction before governors introduced themselves.

2. Apologies for Absence

These were received and accepted from Sandra Scott SS.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising & Action Plan

1. CS to provide a report on impact of sickness and absence - not practical to complete in current circumstances. REMOVE

2. TA to make enquiries with Duchy ref development and demographics in Poundbury and google schools to see how Damers appeared. - TA had emailed Jason Bowerman at the Duchy Office and was awaiting a response. ONGOING

3. SD to mail governors with dates of ‘Great Works’ celebrations - CS said that she intended to run this and was considering how it could be run virtually. CS would update parents and would then inform governors. ONGOING

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4. CS to provide a report on uptake at Clubs - not practical to complete in current circumstances - REMOVE

5. CS to provide a report on Guided Reading - this would be provided for the February 2021 LGB. ONGOING

6. RN to provide a short session on 'Steps' - RN would present this at the next LGB. ONGOING

7. SD to assign Link Governors to SLG - SD would meet with CS to discuss link governor roles and gaps. CS suggested an update to governors who could dial in at the end of SLG meetings. ONGOING

8. SD/MM to finalise HTPM process by October 2020 - some delays had been experienced and CS would discuss a third member of the panel with MF and feedback to SD. ONGOING

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

No declarations of interest were declared. NG noted the annual review and thanked those governors who had completed the new MAT form. When the remaining governors had completed their form she would submit the school record to the MAT, noting that this was a legal requirement for all governors.

6. Chair and Vice-Chair/s Election 2020/21

The Clerk assumed the Chair to conduct the annual election. SD was duly elected and then resumed the Chair. MM confirmed that she would stand as Vice Chair and was duly elected. SD thanked MM and noted how much she appreciated her support and experience. It was noted that the Vice Chair role could be a joint one and governors were encouraged to consider standing.

7. Correspondence

None.

8. Headteacher's Report

CS said that she had attended a meeting of MAT HTs and they had decided on a system of consistent reporting using the same format across the MAT and that this would be ready for the next LGB. CS showed the headings and asked for feedback from governors:

1. *Learning & Development Plan Priorities for 2020-21* - this was still in development but would be shared with governors shortly. At this point, CS noted how positive the start had been and that children were ready to learn. Significant slippage in learning was not evident across the school as a whole. Learning Development Priorities remained even more relevant and the school will continue to embed Harmony principles throughout the Curriculum and the school community.
 - Attendance: headline information would be provided for key groups.
 - NOR: CS noted that the school had never been more full and there were waiting lists for every year group apart from Y1. Numbers in the Y1 cohort were low across the town on entry and this

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had impacted last year's budget but numbers are rising. Numbers were above PAN in KS2 in all classes. Children were still joining the school via such means as In Year Fair Access panels and CS had been able to withstand pressure to accept further children. Attendance was currently 97.1% which compared favourably to the national average of 88.7% and the Dorset average of 92%. CS noted that this figure would be higher if children were not self isolating. Heavy colds had been evident in the first week. Persistent absenteeism was being closely monitored but the focus currently was on supporting parents rather than imposing fines. CS noted the challenges for schools with positive Covid-19 cases and the need to regain the trust of parents to return children to school in such circumstances.

- Overall Attendance/Breakdown of Vulnerable Groups - SEN and Pupil Premium children's attendance was slightly below and the school was monitoring this on a weekly then on a monthly basis and would then share with governors. **Q/C Governors asked about the plans in place if there was a positive Covid-19 case.** CS described a very definite protocol to follow working with the LA, Public Health and DfE.
- New Intake/Transition - CS said that the new intake had settled extremely well. The staggered times and exits and entrances had been calm and very few issues had been noted on the gate. CS said that a fire alarm had been set off by a child that morning and all children had coped very well with it. Governors would write to staff especially the Foundation team to thank them for an excellent start. SD supported this and said how well the start of the school day was going, adding that it was very calm and well managed, with CS on the gate in the morning and afternoon. She thanked CS and staff. **Q/C Governors asked if lateness has improved.** CS noted a significant improvement as there was a definite need to be at school on time so children could join their bubble and class teacher, so parents were far more punctual. VN added that there was a sense of safety when dropping children off.

2. *Quality of Education*

- Curriculum Summary/ Recovery - mental health, wellbeing and resilience were highlighted, noting the importance and relevance of Harmony principles.
- CPD - the recent INSETs were focussed on the children and moving them from lockdown to full schooling. There would be two training days in October focusing on Pupil Progress Meetings and Performance Management. Other CPD was taking place but outside the INSET format.
- Enrichment - ensuring that the quality of education was the best it could be despite restrictions, and being accountable to each other within the MAT was important. CS noted that a Falconer would be attending school next week to work with children who have been looking at an eagle topic.

3. Safeguarding

- MB said that the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education had been updated and had been included in the meeting pack. The MyConcern tool was also being used to capture the update to staff. Other updates were included in the meeting pack. MB noted that the Child Protection Policy had been updated once again alongside the addendum. In terms of a whole school update, part 1 had taken place and would be followed by part 2 in due course. Rachel Nesbitt would complete her Level 3 update in October 2020 and RB's training was up to date. MB asked if all governors had completed the Safeguarding Level 1 training, which NG would check and report back on. NG noted that all Safeguarding training for governors would now take place online via the NGA Learning Link. **Q/C Governors asked if there would be a focus on**

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Mental Health work in terms of Safeguarding and CS said that this work would continue as it was as important as it ever was, if not more so. MB said that in terms of Transition all Safeguarding records had been transferred or archived and information was coming in now about new children at Foundation stage, in addition to that gained from pre-schools. Diane Coker had checked the Single Central Record (SCR) and peripatetic staff had also been checked in addition to students and new staff. **Q/C Governors asked if there was more Safeguarding activity than usual.** MB felt that this was not heightened any more than usual for the time of year. Foundation children were now settling and trusting staff more so more issues may begin to emerge. **Q/C Governors asked about the SCR in relation to GDPR and CS described this and said that all information was password protected and only accessed by certain members of staff.** CS noted that if LPH was interested in this work she could put her in touch with Tammie Barnes, the DPO.

- CS also noted that the report format would also look at breakdown of need across the MAT - EHCPs, Child Protection, CIN etc
 - CS noted full sign up for virtual training now in school and that this is a big step forward in terms of reaching all staff and a definite positive outcome of the current situation.
4. Behaviour and Attitudes/Personal Development
 - CS said that the RHSE expectations would be implemented in September 2020 with a statutory duty applied from summer 2021. MB would be updating teaching staff next week.
 5. Budget updates
 - CS noted significant additional costs associated with Covid-19 and the lack of reassurance from the government on how costs would be covered. **Q/C Governors asked if there had been any additional funding, CS said that there had been some but it was not clear as yet the degree to which this would be allocated.**
 6. Staffing including Leadership & Management and staff attendance.
 - CS noted issues regarding teachers being off work waiting for Covid-19 tests and results for other household members. This was taking up to 5 days and with no insurance and budgetary provision to offset this, raised concerns. She described issues in terms of staff wellbeing and noted that part time staff were willing to work additional hours to cover shortfalls or to make up the time they had not been able to attend. **Q/C Governors asked about the impact of staff pay rises.** CS said that 5.5% had been agreed and implemented but there was currently no funding from the government to cover it. Jan McKie (JMK) would provide a report to governors on the overall budget position in due course.
 7. Pupil Outcomes would be shared in due course when data became available. **Q/C Governors asked about EYFS assessment and CS said that the school was not taking part in the national baseline pilot.**
 8. Premises/H&S - this would include Covid-19 risk assessment updates and SS would be the link governor. CS said that the current risk assessment is dynamic and a live version is shared with SLT, site staff, office staff and the H and S link governor to ensure that all were aware of amendments as they occurred.



Q/C Governors welcomed the reporting format but asked about the work involved in completing it and meeting the deadlines. CS said that the MAT reporting deadlines had now been set and reporting would take place every half term. It would be submitted alongside the other MAT HT reports, giving governors a MAT-wide insight.

Q/C Governors asked about supporting families who were self isolating in terms of home learning. CS showed the three levels of remote learning provision currently being finalised, looking at remote learning options in different scenarios. She noted the statutory duty to have this completed by the end of September 2020. Level 1 provision was already in place and support was being provided for individuals who were self-isolating for a short period of time due to household testing delays. Levels 2 and 3 were now planned for and CS was confident that teaching staff would be ready to implement these at short notice when remote provision for a bubble or group of children was required.

Q/C Governors asked about hard to reach children during lockdown and whether they were back in school - CS confirmed that all were. She noted that some parents had made big strides with their children in terms of home educating during lock down.

Q/C Governors asked about the recipe food packages TA had put together and whether this had resulted in any improvement for these families. TA described how this work had progressed and MB said how much the families had valued the experience. CS would be contacting TA to set this up again with a targeted group this term.

SD thanked CS for the report and the overview of the template. Governors had no further suggestions for headings.

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

-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

9. Trust Board Issues

CS noted new MAT Appointments adding that the new Health & Safety Officer, Karen Aldridge had been very helpful to her; the new Company Secretary Karen Weir would be joining on 1 October 2020 from DASP and was expected to make a positive difference; a new Finance Officer had been appointed and JMK would move to full-time MAT Finance Director from 1 November 2020; MF would also step down as Head of Hardyes in April 2021 and become full time CEO of the MAT.

Q/C SD noted that she would like to see more information and minutes from the Trust Board and NG noted that she was still trying to access the MAT Portal which had presented technical difficulties previously but would try again shortly.

10. Governance Issues

- Governor Training Arrangements with NGA Learning Link - NG noted that all governors were set up on the system and needed to complete the self-registration to the Learning Link. All training, with the exception of Chairs and Clerks Briefings, would now be virtual and available

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via the NGA. She commended the module list to governors, noting that it was comprehensive.

- Succession Planning - currently there were 3 co-opted vacancies and SD and NG had spoken to LPH about one of these. Governors were encouraged to put ideas forward for suitable candidates. RB noted an organisation called REACH which sourced volunteers, which she would forward to NG, and TA would contact the Chamber of Commerce with an appeal. NG would examine the latest Skills Audit to identify any gaps on the board.

***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

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

None.

12. Date and time of next meeting: Thursday 15 October 2020 6pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8pm.

Action Plan following the Local Governing Body meeting held on 29 September 2020

Action to be Taken	Minute No.	Governor/Staff Member Involved	Suggested Completion Date
1. Report back on enquiries with Duchy ref development and demographics in Poundbury and google schools to see how Damers appeared.	4 (4 (7))	TA	Awaiting Response
2. Report back to governors on 'Great Works' celebration plans.	4 (7)	CS	by LGB November 2020
3. Provide report on Guided Reading.	4 (7)	CS	By LGB February 2021
4. Provide short session on 'Steps'.	4 (7)	RN	On October 2020 LGB
5. Assign Link Governors to SLGs.	4 (7)	SD/CS	ASAP
6. Finalise HTPM process.	4 (10)	SD/MM	By October 2020
7. Send CP Policy and Code of Conduct for Staff to NG for inclusion in next LGB pack.	8	MB	ASAP
8. Check on Safeguarding Training for governors and report back.	8	NG	ASAP
9. Governors to write to staff, particularly Foundation stage, to	8	SD	ASA9

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thank them for the excellent start.			
10. Access MAT portal	9	NG	ASAP
11. Write to Chamber of Commerce ref governor vacancies.	10	TA	ASAP
12. Check Skills Audit for gaps and report back.	10	NG	Next LGB

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Date