

Exminster Community Primary School Full Governing Board Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: 21 May 2020

Time: 18:00

Venue: Virtual (due to Covid-19 restrictions)

Present					
Name	Initial	Position	Name	Initial	Position
Sarah Whalley	SW	Headteacher	Paul Frazer	PF	Governor (Co-opted)
Talitha Kerrigan	TK	Governor (Co-opted)	Ian Rogers	IR	Governor (Co-opted)
Stephen McDonald	SM	Governor (Par)	Frankie Hyde	FH	Governor (Staff)
John Collins	JC	Governor (Co-opted)	Liam Hatton	LH	Governor (Co-opted)
Kate Beale	KB	Governor (Co-opted)	Becky Dupre	BD	Governor (Par)
Helen Hibbins	HH	Clerk	Ian Moore	IM	Deputy Headteacher
Alwyn Reeves	AR	Governor (LEA)	Jonathan Wood	JW	Governor (Co-opted)
Paul Herring	PH	Assistant Headteacher	Hamish Cherrett	HC	Governor (Co-opted)
Apologies					
Name	Initial	Position	Reason		

Advice given by Governors at this school, in this meeting, is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity.

Governors must not disclose what individual governors have said or how they have voted within a meeting.

Governors must respect the confidentiality of Part Two items of business as agreed by the Governing Board.

1 Apologies for absence

1.1 None offered

2 Declarations of Interest on agenda items

2.1 None declared

3 To approve the minutes of the Full Governing Board meeting on 23 April 2020

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[2020-04-23 FGB draft minutes](#)

3.1 Resolved

4 Update on actions (not included elsewhere on agenda)

4.1 All Governors to book onto training courses (via the Clerk) and inform the Clerk on completion to update the Governors' training record.

TK reminded Governors that online courses were available.

Ongoing reminder

4.2 13/02/2020 5.6 Lead Governors for curriculum matters and personal development to be kept informed of progress of the RHE and PHSE policies.

The staff consultation was complete. The responses would be collated before moving to the next stage (PH)

Ongoing

4.3 13/02/2020 6.2.5 Extra information to be provided in safeguarding review meetings to highlight implementation of behaviour policy.

Ongoing

4.4 13/02/2020 6.2.6 Governors to undertake visits. Implementation of the behaviour policy could be explored.

Ongoing

4.5 12/03/2020 5.4.1 Summary of donations to be included on budget monitors

Ongoing

4.6 12/03/2020 10.7 All Governors to carry out a school visit in the Summer Term

Ongoing

5 To receive an update on measures being taken in school due to Covid-19

[Re-opening strategic doc for govs – final version](#)

Questions raised prior to the meeting:

5.1 *If an emergency evacuation of the school was required, would the current muster positions allow for sufficient social distancing? (PF)*

This would be practised when some children had returned to ensure that it was adequate. (SW)

5.2 *The document states that no books or equipment should be brought from home but where lunch is normally provided from home, what happens? (IR)*

Children will be allowed to bring lunchboxes, coats and named water bottles. (SW)

Questions raised at the meeting:

5.3 *The school is going against the Government guidance to open to children on 1 June, although it is understood that this is to make preparations. Are Governors happy with this? (FH)*

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The Government guidance was continuously being revised and the school could justify deviating from it. It was important that the school and staff were properly prepared for the children returning. Reception children would return on June 8 and further year-groups would follow. The process needed to be gradual, continuously monitored and assessed, to ensure safety for all. (SW)

5.4 *How are other schools approaching re-opening? (FH)*

SW explained the range of provision in local schools. It depended on many factors, including spaces and staff. Every Headteacher was making decisions based on the context of their school.

5.5 *The Government wanted all children to return by the end of the summer term. How would this be possible with the restriction of having 15 children in each pod? (FH)*

The decision had been made that children would not be sharing spaces. The only possible way that all children could return would be to operate school as normal, with different year groups attending on different days. This would go against current guidance and all plans made by the school to date. (SW)

5.6 *How significant is the guidance provided by the teaching unions in the decision to re-open? (AR)*

Current union guidance is against opening on 1 June. However, no staff had said that they were unavailable for work currently, with the exception of those who were exceptionally clinically vulnerable and would be working remotely. Clinically vulnerable staff would be individually risk assessed. Staff who had been consulted appeared comfortable with the structured, phased and continuously monitored opening. (SW/IM)

5.7 *The number of parents (indicated within the document) who currently wanted their children to return to school would assist with grouping. What would happen if more parents decided that they wanted their children to return? (AR)*

Parents would be advised, by letter, how the school would operate in order for them to make an informed decision about whether they wanted their children to attend. The week before each cohort was scheduled to return, the pods would be formulated according to the confirmed numbers. (SW)

5.8 *The provisional numbers indicated that roughly half of the children would attend. What would happen with staffing? How would the staff cope with home schooling and teaching in school? Would this double their workload? (JW)*

The school respected parents' rights not to send their children to school if they did not feel that it was appropriate. Home learning would continue to be set for all cohorts. It would not be "business as usual" in school. The home learning that was set would be taught in school; thereby not doubling the workload. It was acknowledged that feeding back to the home-schooled children would be difficult and parental expectation would need to be managed. (SW)

JW thanked staff for their work in setting online tasks.

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- 5.9 *SM commented that it was important that parents did not feel penalised for the decisions that they were making regarding sending their children back to school. They needed to be supported.*
- 5.10 SW had read letters from other schools informing them about arrangements for returning. Several had an undertone that children were not welcome back. It was therefore important that any communication from this school was positive and delivered the message that children would be welcomed back.
- 5.11 *If a parent who had initially decided that they did not want their child to attend and later wanted to send their child, would that be allowed? (KB)*
 Parents had the right to do this, but it would make it difficult for school in terms of planning. If the decision was made at a later date, there would be a week's delay in accepting the child back so that preparations could be made. (SW)
TK suggested that parents were advised that their child may be placed on a waiting list if not attending from re-opening to their cohort.
- 5.12 *If the numbers attending increased on 8 June, would that impact the risk assessment? (IR)*
 The number of key-workers children was steadily rising and this may potentially impact on the return of year 6 if it was exceptional. However, in planning for the worst-case scenario this could be accommodated currently. This would depend on staffing factors and any unexpected changes.
- 5.13 *BD commented that there were parental concerns about the return of younger children with respect to their needs and the impact of social distancing on the assistance that staff were able to give them.*
 A nurturing environment would be maintained. Children needed to be comfortable and if upset needed reassurance. Social distancing within school was not realistic, but appropriate measures would be taken to lower the risk of infection. New rules would be established for children moving around their pods, but in reality 2m would be difficult to achieve in a school with primary aged children. (SW)
- 5.14 *What about the provision and use of PPE? (BD)*
 Aprons and masks would be provided as a minimum for the purposes of toileting and first aid. A request had also been made to the "print farm" in the village who were manufacturing PPE. (SW)
- 5.15 *Should parents be asked to contribute towards the cost of PPE? (TK)*
 It would be controversial to ask for contributions from parents. The "print farm", that had a just-giving page, could be highlighted and thanked in a newsletter.
- 5.16 *If parents wanted to send their child to school wearing a mask, what was the advice? (IR)*
 The child would need to know how to use it properly and safely. (SW)
- 5.17 *How would the school deal with parents who were potentially unhappy with the arrangements? How were the school dealing with the questions being received? How could the Governing Board reinforce the operational decisions being made? (SM)*

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The school would set up an email address so that parents had a specific channel for communication. A list of FAQ would be compiled and available on the school website. This would be constantly updated. (SW)

- 5.18 *How were SEND children being accommodated? How would additional provision be made with more children attending? (HC)*
Each SEND child was individually risk assessed. (SW)
- 5.19 *In the proposed communication to parents, would a description be included to explain the structure of the provision and was this open for discussion? (JC)*
This was not something that could be consulted on. It was important to communicate to parents the provision on offer. Safety was the primary consideration. The letter would explain the pods and the changes in working environment. A sense of the child belonging to the pod would be generated and it was important that this would be a fun and enjoyable environment. (SW)
- 5.20 *Is the School Development Plan on hold? Is this something that Governors should be aware of and accept? (JC)*
The current situation was of a far higher priority than the SDP. The plan would roll over into September. (SW)
FH noted that teachers were still implementing SDP priorities in the home learning that was being set as it was an established part of their practice.
- 5.21 *In terms of safeguarding, is there anything that the board can practically do? (HC)*
It would be useful to continue the safeguarding review meetings. This would ensure that the board was confident that all requirements were in place. (SW)
- 5.22 *TK encouraged Governors to check in with staff to ensure their wellbeing. Supporting staff and the SLT should be a priority of the board.*
- 5.23 *If, unfortunately, a child or adult in school contracted Covid, what was the procedure? (IR)*
The pod would be locked down for 14 days and deep cleaned. Children and adults would be eligible for testing. There is an area in school allocated for children to go to whilst waiting to be picked up (SW)
- 5.24 The letter to parents would be sent on Friday 22 May. TK, SM and IR would approve the final version.
- 5.25 The risk assessments for re-opening needed to be considered and approved by Governors. Although this could be done using delegated authority, best practice would be to convene an extraordinary Governors' meeting. It was resolved to hold an extraordinary meeting on Thursday 28 May 2020.

The meeting closed at 19:00

Date of extraordinary Governors Meeting: Thursday 28 May 2020

Date of next meeting: Thursday 18 June 2020 18:00

Signed.....S McDonald..... Dated.....18/06/2020.....