



Harwell Community Primary School

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**Minutes of the meeting of the Governors of Harwell Primary School
Held on 8th July 2020 via google meet starting at 6.00 pm**

1 Welcome and apologies

Attendees:

Ann Parham (AP) Chair

Richard Thompson (RT)

Frances Williams (FW)

Janice Markey (JM)

Kirsten Christensen (KC),

Tom Gowers (TG) Vice Chair

Aisha Nevers (AN),

Chris Smith (CS)

James Thorne (JT) Associate Member

Joanne Ray (JR) Associate Member

Bryn Gibson (BG) Head teacher

Apologies: Danielle Reilly (DR), John Dickens (JD), Sue Greatbanks (SG)

The meeting was quorate.

Present: Jane Moreton – Clerk

1. Welcome

Ann welcomed everyone to the meeting being held via google meet (the second during the Covid19 pandemic).

2. Declaration of Interest on agenda items

None declared.

3. Approval of minutes of last FGB meeting held on 20th May 2020 and matters arising

Minutes were accepted by FGB and a printed copy will be signed by the Chair of Governors when possible *Doc ref 3.1*

All actions from that meeting completed or on the agenda apart from :

- EE governors to send questions re distance learning to school end June / early July
- AP had looked at the website and has completed a governor visit online report.

Action: Governors who are also parents were asked to add to this report for their personal feedback and feedback from their children.

- Flowers and a thank you card from governors are to be given to Athene Miller to mark her retirement on Friday 10th July.

4. Governors

Parent governor election

This is to be held asap in the new school year with the aim that it is completed before the first FGB meeting on September 30th.

Associate Members (AM)

James Thorne was registered with OCC as of AM on 3rd June and has completed his governor induction and online safeguarding courses have been completed. The full generalist safeguarding course will need to be completed in due course.

Joanne Ray has completed her governor services form. Induction training has been booked for Saturday 11th July

Action: Clerk to complete the governor registration form and submit this to governor services

FGB dates have been set for the next academic year and governors advised. Governors discussed the possibility of one of the meetings being hybrid - partly google meet to enable governors who cannot attend the meeting to join in.

Governors term of office expiring next year: Ann Parham's term of office ends on 14th November 2020 and she confirmed that she will be standing down. She feels that Harwell is in a very strong position and all governors are capable of being Chair. She is on two other FGBs, including as Chair in another school. She confirmed that she would be willing to support the new Chair of Governors.

STRATEGIC MATTERS

5. Covid19 Working Party

[working party report](#)

JM reported on the meeting held on Monday June 29th. As Chair, AP had thanked the SLT for their work during the Covid pandemic in the RAP meeting held earlier today and this was endorsed by the FGB.

The FGB also wanted to formally thank the cleaners for working additional hours on Saturday mornings to keep the school clean.

At the time of the meeting, the DfE guidance for the full opening of schools in September hadn't been issued. The school has now received this and are working on plans.

Governors have already sent fruit and chocolates to staff to say thank you. Individual cards saying thank you will now be sent to staff before the end of term.

The school will be submitting a Covid expense claim of approximately £6000.

Governor question: governors asked about the catchup grant and restrictions placed on the expenditure. BG confirmed that full details have yet to be received.

September

BG gave information concerning plans for September. The first two days of term are Inset days and BG is considering how to make use of the following two days (Thursday and Friday) for pupil transition with existing teachers and then with their new class teacher. A final decision has not yet been made. The guidance is fairly clear in that all children are expected to be back in school. The aim is for all the children to be back in school full time from day one. There will be some difficulties - e.g. handwashing in certain areas might be a potential problem (KS1 has a limited number of sinks available). Maintaining a larger class bubble will put a limit on certain things e.g. assemblies. Certain activities will be prohibited, such as singing, swimming, woodwind and brass lessons. The main issues are:

Arrival and departure - how to get 200 children into school as quickly and efficiently as possible whilst maintaining bubbles. Staggered starts are difficult because of siblings and they create dead time. The current system is well managed with 70 children quickly and effectively arriving and departing.

Lunchtimes - mixing pupils is a problem. It is looking unlikely that we will be able to provide a hot meal to all the school. It may be possible to have a hybrid model so that some children have access to a hot meal.

The school will have to adapt and adjust certain activities but full time provision will be possible. For example, there will need to be an adjustment with phonics as the restrictions will limit the ability to have single year phonics groups rather than mixed years. There will still be small group teaching but worked in a different way. PPA - supporting PPA will potentially necessitate staff crossing bubbles.

The school has to plan for a potential outbreak (defined as 2 cases over a 14 day period).

Governor Question - how do staff feel about the larger bubbles?

All indications have been that it was coming. There is staff acceptance that this is what was likely to happen. Children will sit side by side rather than face to face and the catch up tuition will be adapted. No major grumbling has been heard.

Governor Question- how will phonics work as it is currently in mixed groups across classes?

Teaching will need to be within class with small groups within the bubble if possible. If not, very clear records and a register will be kept in case track and trace is required.

Governor Comment: The school need to keep it as simple as we can in case there are suspected cases which might lead to a positive test

BG confirmed that he continues to have a weekly meeting with Chairs of Partnerships, OCC and Public Health. He has a DAP Headteacher meeting tomorrow about September.

He is currently concentrating on proof reading and commenting on reports which have had to take priority.

Governor Comment: Within the DAP, not many schools have got as many children back as Harwell.

The FGB wanted to record thanks to BG and his staff for the thoughtful way that the school has been managed during this pandemic.

TG commented favourably on the clear and regular communications from the school as a parent.

AP has written a paragraph from her as Chair of governors to be included in a letter to parents.

Appointment of an External Advisor for the Headteacher Performance Management

The FGB has appointed Sarah Varnum for the last 2 years. She can be used again or the FGB can look for an alternative. AP suggested keeping same advisor for one more year then look for a different external advisor,

Governor Question- How long does a school normally stay with the same advisor? Usually 3 years to maintain challenge to the Headteacher. FW and AP confirmed she is experienced and knowledgeable.

The FGB confirmed their appointment of Sarah Varnum as the External Advisor for the 2020/2021 academic year. FW and TG are to conduct the Performance management with her (same committee as last year).

Action: FW and TG to let the clerk have their availability for the week of 21st September.

Action: AP to contact Sarah Varnum when a preferred date is available

Annual RAP review meeting for staff and governors

This was completed virtually after school time earlier today. 6 governors joined with the SLT, teaching team and 6 support staff to review the 5 RAP priorities. Consideration was also given to potential challenges within each RAP priority which the school will face in September. The document for each RAP priority has a section for all staff and governors to add their thoughts. The documents will remain live until the start of the new academic year.

Action: All governors asked to review the documents

Governor Comment:

AP - the meeting worked reasonably well, perhaps not quite as easy as face to face. An effective meeting

RT - a good meeting. It was good to catch up with staff particularly as governors have not been able to be in school due to Covid. A very valuable exercise

JT - echoed what Richard said. It would have been good to have perhaps had a longer time to discuss. It was very useful to see how the planning process in school works

JM - in the circumstances, it was as good a meeting as could be

FW - the discussion was good but it was hard to keep to time

KC - a very useful meeting and interaction with school staff

AP - in the traditional face to face meetings, governors could always do with more time but are aware that staff have been working all day.

Overall, the FGB felt that the review meeting was a success and governors appreciated the opportunity to meet with staff and have a real input into evaluating the RAP and preparing for the new one.

6. GDPR

The school has remained very aware of GDPR throughout the Covid19 pandemic.

Secure google meets have been used successfully throughout for pupils, staff and governors.

Google classroom has kept pupil data secure.

Gooseberry planet has continued to be used, teaching children about online safety.

The school declined to undertake a data gathering exercise from a local secondary school as it was using a platform which the school does not use and so were unsure about the safety of the data.

7. Committee Updates

No committee meetings have been held since the FGB meeting in May.

OTHER MATTERS

8. Health & Safety

The school has continued to consult with OCC H&S and Public Health England at every stage of planning for further reopening. The Covid19 school Risk Assessment has been reviewed, updated and shared with staff, governors and parents.

The postponed OCC Audit will take place in the Autumn term.

H&S work carried out on site since the May FGB meeting:

- Boiler room - leak fixed
- External lighting - there were many non-working lights which had previously caused H&S issues. All light fittings have been replaced with new LED light fittings. All have been tested and proved to be operating correctly

- Grass steps on the field near class 3. The contractors fitting the new lights noticed that where the wooden sleepers had previously worn away, metal retaining poles were now visible following a very dry period when the ground had dried out. The area was roped off, staff informed and 16 metal poles removed.
- The swimming pool remains closed

Governor Question: Will a new Risk Assessment be prepared for September? Yes and this will be shared with staff, governors and parents.

Cleaning - within the DfE guidance for September, the concept of 'deep cleaning' has been replaced with 'enhanced cleaning'. The school has purchased 3 commercial steam cleaners at a cost of £2370. This will form part of the Covid claim submitted to DfE.

9 Safeguarding

- An Appendix to the Covid Safeguarding Policy prepared by LADO and personalised for the school has been completed and shared with staff and governors.
- The report from the LADO audit visit to school has been shared with governors.
- KCSIE 2020 will come into effect in September. RT has reviewed this and reported that there are tweaks but no major changes. The updated version will be included as a focus in the September inset. It was recommended that governors read the article in The Key which explains the update. New information about pupil mental health problems.

Governor question: Will the update affect policies?

BG has not yet had time to look at the new regulations or to consider policies. OCC will issue an updated Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy for the school to consider in September.

Mental health - the school already has several strategies in use e.g wellbeing club, Wizard Theatre and the new RSE curriculum embeds elements of wellbeing. The school also liaises with external agencies. Enhanced transition days are being considered for September.

BG will concentrate on finishing the reports, then finalise the RSE consultation for staff and governors before he can direct his energies into planning for September. The new Foundation Class intake have had no acclimatisation or transition but Mrs Wells is currently completing socially distant visits to every child. The FC staff will need to get the children used to routines as well as getting to know the children.

Governor question: What are the plans for replacing Athene Miller as safeguarding trainer?

Not all schools have an internal trainer. OSCB run courses which staff and governors can attend and there are options to bring in an external trainer for an inset day or join in with another school when they have training organised. The school will need to be rigorous in ensuring that training is completed on time.

12 AOB

Staff wellbeing

AP, as Chair, is conscious that the Headteacher and School Business Manager have been under an enormous amount of pressure planning the Covid response and the opening of the school to an increasing number of children. They have worked evenings, weekends and during the school holidays. There is now additional planning for September to be completed. Governors were assured that both will take time off during the summer holiday.

DR - AP has been to see her and taken flowers from the FGB and will stay in touch.

Meeting finished at 7.15 pm

ACTIONS

Ref	Action	Responsibility
3.1	Governors who are also parents to add comments about their and their children's experience of the home learning provided by the school during the Covid pandemic to AP's online visit report Online visit report	CS, FW, TG, AN, RT, JT, JR
4.1	Submit completed governor registration form to OCC Governor Services for Joanne Ray as an Associate Member	clerk
5.1	FW and TG to let the clerk have their availability for the week of 21st September.	FW, TG
5.2	AP to contact Sarah Varnum when a preferred date is available	AP
5.3	All governors to review RAP priority documents and add comments Priority 1 Priority 2 Priority 3 Priority 4 Priority 5	ALL

Key Dates for 2020-21

	Autumn Term		Spring Term		Summer Term	
FGB	Wednesday 30 September	Tuesday 17 November	Tuesday 9 February - afternoon		Wednesday 19 May	Wednesday 7 July 6pm start
Educational Effectiveness		tbc 6 pm start	tbc 6 pm start	tbc 6 pm start		Wednesday 7th July combined with FGB
Resources	tbc		tbc		tbc	
Pay & Performance	Wednesday 23 September HT - PM (tbc)	Early November Teacher Salary review		Tbc March HT - PM		
Gov-staff breakfast		Thursday 17 December tbc		Wednesday 31 March		
Governor staff joint meeting - RAP priorities						Wednesday 7 July 3:30 start

Open Morning and evening		Wednesday 25 November				
Meeting for new FC parents						tbc
Clerk to Governor Appraisal	Tbc September / October					