



Western Road Community Primary School

Meeting of the Full Governing Body - held virtually via Zoom

Monday 30th March 2020 at 6pm

M I N U T E S

Governor members present:	Tom Jeffery (Chair), Holly Atkins, Rosie Gloster, Eleanor Murphy, Luke Palmer, Hilary Turner (Vice Chair), Irena Wooler (Head Teacher), Roy Watkinson, Sami Howard, Toby Meanwell, Antonia Jewels, Louise Adams
Associate Members:	Rea Hamilton (Deputy Head Teacher), Ruth O'Keeffe
Officers present:	Nicola Gibson (Clerk), Angela Samuels (Bursar)
Others present:	Cara Starbuck (ESCC, Finance)

Agenda Item	Action
<p>Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Sami Howard & accepted.</p> <p>TJ thanked the clerk for arranging the first Western Road FGB meeting on Zoom & governors for their virtual attendance.</p> <p>Declarations of Interests There were no declarations of interests.</p>	
<p>Last FGB Minutes dated 27th January 2020 Minutes were duly approved. TJ would sign these electronically after the meeting.</p>	TJ
<p>Implications for WRCPS of the Coronavirus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities, vulnerable children & safeguarding Staff well-being Delegating powers to the Strategy Group <p>TJ thanked IW, RH, LA and all the staff for their calm, dedicated and professional management of the school since the onset of the coronavirus crisis. IW was then invited to update Governors.</p> <p>IW reported that Week 4 had been calm and measured. There had been children at school each day but numbers had fallen as the week progressed. Staff had been incredible. There was continuous liaison between IW and other local Head Teachers.</p> <p>Staff had ensured pupils remained calm. Teachers had been given preparation time for lesson and website resources. Suzy Bennett had come in on Friday and phoned all families with vulnerable children for welfare checks, to check if parents</p>	

<p>needed additional support or needed their children to be in school on particular days. There was also constant contact with keyworker parents. The school was being as flexible as it could be with all parents. A staffing rota had been put in place from 23rd March 2020 and there had been varying numbers of children attending each day. Noel Fadden, Head Teacher at neighboring Southover Primary School, had been very supportive and was allowing staff from Western Road to go to the Southover site each day, with parental permission, so that use of the Western Road site and staff was reduced.</p> <p>Governors asked about staff well-being. IW reiterated that that school staff had been incredible. There was a staff WhatsApp group to help share ideas and help keep spirits up. There had also been constant emails from staff with suggestions of what to include on the school website. IW reported that staff were very much missing their classes.</p> <p>In response to questions from Governors, IW said that she did not believe that the situation would change significantly over the Easter holidays. Governors were entirely content with IW's plan that, save for closing on Good Friday and Easter Monday, Western Road would continue to operate during the Easter holidays as in the last two weeks of term.</p> <p>Thanks were expressed for everything the school had been doing. Governors assured the Head Teacher that she could call the Chair, Vice-Chair or RW at any time with concerns or for support.</p> <p>Discussion turned to the conduct of governor business during Covid 19. Decisions would sometimes have to be taken without delay, for example around finalizing the budget. It would therefore be helpful if governors would agree to delegate powers to the Strategy Group for use when necessary in exceptional circumstances. The Strategy Group would report to the FGB any such use of delegated powers. Noting that some issues, such as the formal approval of the budget, required the agreement of the FGB, Governors agreed to delegate powers to the Strategy Group as requested.</p>	
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	<p>Budget Update & Approval</p> <p>Thanks were expressed to both ESCC and particularly to Cara Starbuck and colleagues in Finance for their help in preparing the Western Road 2020/21 budget and for assisting in the induction of the new Western Road bursar, Angela Samuels. Angela was warmly welcomed to the school staff by governors. Angela also expressed thanks to both Cara and Lewis at County for all their generous support during her induction. LA stated that Angela had had a challenging induction with both Ofsted & Covid happening at the same time.</p> <p>RW explained that the budget shared with governors ahead of the meeting was provisional and based on current available information. He stressed that it was essential that Governors set a 2020/21 budget that would not take the school into deficit. Some of the figures would need to be altered as new information became available. The school would continue to work on the budget with ESCC on the expectation that the Strategy Group would look at a fresh set of updated figures at their meeting scheduled for 27th April and be able to sign the budget off then. As noted above, the budget would then be circulated to FGB for formal approval.</p> <p>IW said that there had been significant staffing changes this academic year. Whilst the contract of the SENCo, Val Bradshaw, would cease at the end of the current academic year, with Kerry Bedford taking over the role on her return from maternity leave, the provisional budget allowed for the continued employment of a play therapist.</p> <p>Governors welcomed news that Friends of Western Road currently had £32k in their account. When the base budget was settled, the school would be able to consider the additional needs which might be met by FoWR funds.</p> <p>Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)</p> <p>RW explained that the SFVS was an annual exercise that all schools were required to complete and constituted an audit tool for governors. This had normally been a fairly standard process but in the current year additionally involved a dashboard allowing inter-school comparisons to be made. Cara Starbuck and IW had made their first attempt to complete this additional feature. RW reported that apart from staffing costs, the Western Road SFVS looked pretty reasonable. The FGB was content that, when any further amendments had been made, the SFVS would be sent to ESCC by the County deadline.</p> <p>TJ noted that the Funding Diversification meeting would be rescheduled. Many thanks were expressed to RW for all his input into the financial business of the school.</p> <p>Action – SG to send proposed final budget to FGB for formal approval.</p>	SG
	<p>Feedback from the Ofsted visit</p> <p>The Chair said that the current scheduled FGB meeting would normally have been an occasion for great celebration of the school's recent Ofsted report but other circumstances had necessarily dominated governing body business. The FGB</p>	

	<p>congratulated IW, RH and LA for their leadership during the Ofsted process. It had been a brilliantly-managed process with a fantastic outcome. IW added that it had been an incredible team effort: huge thanks were extended to everyone for their contribution to the whole Ofsted exercise.</p> <p>Curriculum Review</p> <p>While conscious of all else that was happening, TJ asked what might be done in the meantime to take the normal business of the school forward. IW reported that RH had done huge amount of work in a very short space of time with regards to curriculum development. The next step would be to finalise curriculum trials for Term 5 followed by whole school rollout for Term 6.</p> <p>Staff would also need to rag action plans in line with the Ofsted Report. In the light of the budget review, Subject leaders would also need to put in bids to support the development of their own subjects.</p> <p>The working assumption was that the school would not open in Term 5. IW would nonetheless ensure that staff had as much in place as possible before then. EM would convene a curriculum meeting with IW. EM also said how encouraged she had been to see written Ofsted Report.</p> <p>Planned joint training to prepare for the introduction of the statutory Relationships and Sex Education curriculum had been cancelled. The school was liaising with the Lewes Heads Group and would explore the scope for conducting the training in May/June so that it was in place for September.</p> <p>Safeguarding Report</p> <p>HTur had very kindly completed and circulated the SG Report. She reported no concerns. The Single Central Register was all up to date. IW stated that, while the coronavirus arrangements were in place there would be 3 check-ins a week with vulnerable families and that findings would be reported back to Governors. Records of those check-ins were being kept on CPOMS and Governors would be able to take stock of these in due course.</p> <p>Staff well-being</p> <p>RG & HTur had conducted some excellent work on the Staff Well-being survey. There had been a lot of positive feedback from staff and some very interesting findings too. Over the next period, as and when things settled, these would be explored further.</p>	
	<p>AOB</p> <p>A question was raised about what other ways curriculum material could be communicated to families if Term 5 does not go ahead. With this in mind, LA had been looking at Seesaw, a learning platform where pupils can share their learning with their teachers. She was currently looking at the cost implications of this and whether it was a best fit option for Western Road. RH would be setting up a blog for her class which whilst not a substitute for direct learning would at least help bridge the gap until a suitable learning platform could be trialled. RoK reported that at the school where she worked, they had been using both Seesaw and Tapestry with</p>	

<p>the older years using the former and the younger years, Tapestry. LP offered to help in assessing the suitability of online sites.</p> <p>RW reported that amongst all the other events taking place both he and IW had managed to conduct a Health & Safety Audit.</p> <p>The chair ended the first virtual meeting of the Western Road FGB by thanking everyone very much for all their ongoing assistance and support.</p>	
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Papers to accompany this meeting: Agenda, Attendance Register, Minutes of last FGB meeting, Budget papers, Safeguarding Report