

ST JOHN'S CHURCH
OF ENGLAND (VA)
FIRST SCHOOL

"LEARNING TOGETHER – AIMING HIGH"

The Governing Body

Minutes of the Full Governing Body held on the 2nd April 2020 at 1.30pm

Governors present

Mr David Daniels – Co-Chair, meeting chair and Foundation Governor
Mrs Claire Marsland – Headteacher

Mrs Alexia Loundras – Vice-Chair and Parent Governor
Mr Brent Milverton – Foundation Governor
Mrs Fiona Puleston – Co-Chair and Parent Governor

Attendees

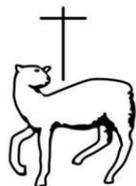
Mrs Rosemary Conway – Business Manager and Clerk to the Governing Body

Apologies

Reasons accepted for:
No reasons given for:

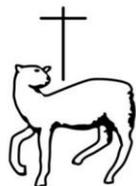
Key: **Decisions** **Challenge** **Actions**

Agenda Item	Discussion, decisions and actions	
1	<p>Standing items</p> <p><i>Opening prayer</i> Mr Daniels opened the meeting with a prayer.</p> <p><i>Apologies</i> Apologies were received as detailed above.</p>	
2	<p>Approve alternative arrangements for remote meetings</p> <p>The meeting was held remotely using the Zoom platform due to the COVID19 restrictions in place.</p> <p>Governors discussed the advice received from Governance Services that Governing Bodies should consider meeting remotely while the school was partially closed and COVID19 restrictions were in place. The Headteacher advised Governors that she had received advice not to use the Zoom platform due to data security concerns. Somerset County Council had advised using Microsoft Teams.</p>	



The Governing Body

	<p>Governors agreed to meet remotely while COVID19 restrictions were in place and to explore the Microsoft Teams platform for the next meeting.</p> <p>Action: Explore use of Microsoft Teams for future remote meetings.</p> <p>Governors discussed whether and how they would meet if there was an enforced complete school closure. Governors agreed that they would continue to meet virtually.</p> <p>Governors discussed the meeting calendar. The Headteacher suggested that Governors would need to meet to discuss the draft budget but one of the Business Managers had been on compassionate leave so the budget was not yet ready for discussion.</p> <p>Governors discussed the possibility of meeting once a month but agreed they did not want to meet for meetings sake.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Headteacher would notify Governors when the budget was ready for discussion and a meeting would then be convened.</p>	<p>Mrs Puleston</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Response to COVID19 situation</p> <p>The Headteacher provided a verbal update on action taken in response to the COVID19 situation and Governors discussed the situation.</p> <p><i>Numbers and staffing</i></p> <p>The school remained open to the children of key workers and some vulnerable children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There were 31 children on the key worker list• There were 18 children identified as vulnerable by the Local Authority (LA) but some based on historic information.• The Headteacher had identified a list of 6 of the LA vulnerable children and a further 9 identified within school as being most vulnerable and eligible to attend school. <p>A Governor asked if all those children were attending school. The Headteacher responded that there was a mixture. None of the children had to attend.</p> <p>A Governor asked if the numbers were going down. The Headteacher responded that not all 31 key worker children were in at once. A Governor asked how many</p>	



The Governing Body

were usually in. The Headteacher responded that the daily average had been 12, comprised of 4-5 key worker children and the rest vulnerable children.

A Governor asked if the Headteacher would like to see more children in school. The Headteacher responded that she would not and asked why the question was asked. The Governor responded that if vulnerable children were deemed to be better off in school then should they be there? The Headteacher responded that a few of the vulnerable children were self-isolating and so the number would likely increase after Easter.

A Governor asked if the school would remain open over the Easter break. The Headteacher responded that it would. **The Governor asked if there was adequate staffing in place.** The Headteacher responded that there had been 4-5 members of staff in each day so far and that she was planning to have 3 most days over Easter for a maximum of 10 children.

A Governor asked if the Headteacher felt able to take a break over Easter. The Headteacher responded that another member of the Senior Leadership Team would be in on Good Friday and that she would be in on Easter Monday. She had not invited the vulnerable children to attend on the bank holidays.

A Governor asked if there was a staff rota in place. The Headteacher responded that there was and that most available staff were required to be in school 1 or possibly 2 days over the Easter break. The Headteacher reported that there were currently 7 or 8 teachers, 3 HLTAs and 10 TAs available to participate in the rota. The rota was devised week by week but the Headteacher was hoping to put in a more fixed pattern after the Easter break. Staff at home had been set work to do as they were still contracted to work.

A Governor asked if any staff were having to self isolate. The Headteacher responded that there were a number self isolating and that one had returned to work after self isolation. There were a number of staff self isolating for 12 weeks due to underlying health conditions.

A Governor asked the Headteacher about her working hours. The Headteacher responded that the situation had created a significant workload.

A Governor asked if the Headteacher was satisfied with the pattern of the day with different staff in each day etc. The Headteacher responded that there was a minimal expectation on teaching and that the school was acting more as a childcare centre.

A Governor asked how staff had responded to the situation? The Headteacher responde that some had been brilliant and others who didn't want to be in. A



The Governing Body

Governor asked if there were enough. The Headteacher responded that for some it was an opportunity to leave the house.

The Headteacher informed Governors that she had tried to run the school without admin staff the previous week but it hadn't worked and the School Administrator had been in every day the current week. A Governor asked why it had failed. The Headteacher responded that someone was needed to answer the phone and front door. The school's telephone provider had been unable to divert the phone but the voicemail had been adjusted to advise callers to call the school mobile instead. In the previous week there had been a workload associated with vulnerable families who usually received donated food from Tesco via the school. It was difficult to predict what work may come in from day to day.

Safeguarding arrangements

The Headteacher provided a verbal update with the following of note;

- The Headteacher had contacted the families of all the vulnerable children on the LA list and was in either daily or weekly contact with those families. She stated that this work was taking a large part of the day. **A Governor asked if that level of contact was required.** The Headteacher responded that most schools were having to find their way as LA guidance had only come out a week after the school closures took effect. Most families had been asked to check in by email once a week. All families had replied apart from one. The final response was received once the school informed them they would ask police to undertake a welfare check if no contact was made.
- County had issued a model annex to the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy to cover the current situation. The Headteacher would email this to Governors for email approval once she had finished editing it.
- The Safeguarding audit had been completed. A Governor asked about the 0 score given to Female Genital Mutilation awareness training. The Headteacher responded that she didn't have the audit open in front of her but that it was likely a question that scores 0 unless every member of staff has completed the training.

Governors agreed to delegate further scrutiny of the Safeguarding Audit to the Safeguarding Governor.

Procedures in school.

The Headteacher outlined the system in place to manage pupil arrivals and ensure appropriate hygiene measures were taken. Only limited areas of the school were in



The Governing Body

use, with extra cleaning protocols in place. Social distancing had been maintained as far as possible, but it was difficult with young pupils as they often forget.

13.52 – Mr Milverton joined the meeting.

Lunches had been eaten outside whenever possible. The school's contract cleaner was currently starting at 1.00pm so a post lunch clean could take place if lunch had been in the hall.

Free School Meal arrangements

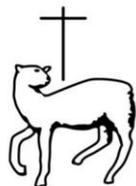
A Governor asked about Free School Meal arrangements. The Headteacher responded that they were not adequate. There were 51 children on the list entitled to a Free School Meal. The current offering was a sandwich packed lunch provided by the school's contract catering company. Fewer than 12 from the list ordered a lunch, of which 3 or 4 were in school anyway. Only half of those who ordered a lunch were collecting it. The school had signed up to a food hamper delivery scheme being set up by Somerset County Council.

A Governor asked about the national voucher scheme. The Headteacher responded that many Frome Headteachers felt that a food hamper was preferable to vouchers as they could then be confident that funding was going on food and also minimises the need for families to leave their house to go shopping.

The Headteacher went to state that she had a concern around communication with Free School Meal families. She felt that many were not engaging with the school's communication and payment system, ParentMail. In her opinion, families may not have been used to using the system as they do not usually pay for school trips or meals. She had therefore asked for individual emails to be sent to families from the school inbox. Families of vulnerable children had previously responded to other emails sent this way.

The Headteacher informed Governors that the school had been working with Frome's food bank, Fair Frome. Families usually in receipt of donated food and toiletry items no longer receiving these items had received a food parcel from Fair Frome and vouchers had been sent out to all Free School Meal families from Fair Frome.

Governors expressed their thanks to the Headteacher.



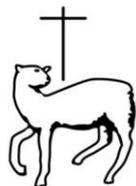
The Governing Body

Curriculum and Communication

The Headteacher provided a verbal update on curriculum and communication, with the following of note;

- Like many other schools, the initial offering had been very open.
- If the school closure was likely to last for a number of months, the Headteacher stated that the school could not continue to just revise established learning, but would need to introduce new learning.
- From after the Easter break, it was intended to set weekly activities for English, Maths and topic, incorporating new areas of learning. Maths would focus on areas that most parents should feel confident with.
- The school would try to provide learning that wouldn't need a lot of digital input as not all families had access to adequate technology.
- The Headteacher asked if Governors had seen the staff reading stories that had been uploaded to the website. It was intended that books would be used that would link with learning. A Governor mentioned that all his children had enjoyed the stories and seeing familiar faces. The Headteacher stated that she felt it was important that children had contact with familiar faces.
- The Headteacher stated that she wanted to find a way to give feedback on learning. She was considering having separate email accounts so that work could be sent in or messages sent. She had also been looking in to teachers making phone calls to families, but this would have to be done from school. A Governor mentioned that staff could block their number from being identified if calling from a mobile at home. The Headteacher responded that she didn't think it fair to ask teachers to call from home.
- The school had set up a Facebook group, which had gone down well so far. It was also continuing with a weekly newsletter of positive news and nothing related to COVID19.
- The Headteacher stated that she felt that the learning in school was in some ways more challenging than the home learning, as it had to cater for all year groups. She felt that the last two weeks had gone well but was planning a more structured timetable that would tie in with the home learning for after Easter.
- The school offering over the Easter Break would be delivered more as a holiday club than school.
- The Headteacher reported that she was intending to read the Easter story that would have been used at the school Easter service and include recordings of solos from the Year 4 children who had been scheduled to sing.

A Governor commented that it was good to be positive.



The Governing Body

Contingency Planning

A Governor asked the Headteacher what would happen if she became unwell and whether other members of the Senior Leadership Team would step in. The Headteacher responded that the other Senior Leaders had responsibilities at home that meant they could not be in school fulltime and the school did not have a Deputy Head. If the Headteacher needed to self isolate, she could continue to lead the school from home. If she became unwell, the Local Authority would need to step in and help. It may well be that they would suggest closing the school completely and moving key worker and vulnerable children to another school.

Governors expressed their thanks to the Headteacher for all that she was doing. The Headteacher stated that some staff felt that Frome should move to having a school hub rather than individual schools remaining open but she wanted to keep St John's open as long as possible as she felt vulnerable children may not cope in another setting.

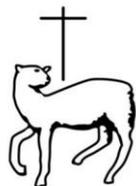
A Governor asked if any schools were closing over the Easter break. The Headteacher responded that not all were opening for the bank holidays. She went on to state that some had not had any children attending. The numbers at St John's were similar to other similar size first schools in Frome. A Governor commented that a hub situation would result in a larger number of people mixing. The Headteacher responded that that was already happening where families had children at different schools.

Governors discussed the plan in the event of a confirmed case of COVID19 with a direct link to the school. A Governor asked what was the advice? The Headteacher responded that she would contact Public Health England and follow their advice. As the situation was ever evolving, advice may be different at different times.

Agree Chair's action

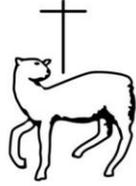
Governors discussed whether to allow 'Chair's Action' to allow the Chairs to quickly make decisions and approve some policies without needing full Governing Board approval.

A Governor commented that this may not be necessary as the number on the Governing Body was low. The Headteacher replied that it would make sense to have Chair's Action in place as things were changing very quickly. For example, the Safeguarding policy needed to be amended urgently in response to the situation. It would be helpful not to have to wait for Full Governing Body approval in such situations.



The Governing Body

	<p>Governors agreed that the Chairs could take decisions and approve policies when approval was required urgently during the COVID19 school closure period.</p>	
	<p>School Vision</p> <p>Governors considered the previously circulated draft school vision. The Headteacher stated that the vision used Christian values that all linked to the school 'Five Bs'. The links were not made explicitly.</p> <p>The Headteacher informed Governors that so far it had only been shared with Governors and teachers.</p> <p>A Governor commented that they thought it was inspiring and good and Governors were in general very positive.</p> <p>A Governor asked what the response had been from teachers. The Headteacher responded that they had liked it on the whole. A few tweaks had been made in response to their comments.</p> <p>The Headteacher stated that she was not sure of the next step and was considering how to share it with parents. A Governor suggested that something be put in the school newsletter. The Headteacher responded that she felt it should not be communicated that way. She stated that it needed to go out in the right way to ensure parents understood it and the need for a link to Christian values. A Governor suggested that it should not be sent to parents until the current situation had improved. All felt that most parents would buy in to the headlines but that some may struggle with the link to a bible narrative. The Headteacher stated that the previous statement of 'Learning Together, Aiming High' had been in place a long time so a change would be quite significant.</p> <p>Governors were happy with the draft vision.</p>	
	<p>Parent Questionnaire</p> <p>The Governor who was preparing the questionnaire apologised that she had not yet prepared anything. Governors in general felt that it was not pertinent to conduct a survey while the COVID19 situation was ongoing. The Headteacher stated that it had not been undertaken in a long time so it was important for it to be done at some point. Ideally it should take place before the summer holiday.</p> <p>Governors agreed not to undertake a questionnaire at the current time but to do it at some point in the current academic year.</p>	



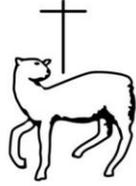
ST JOHN'S CHURCH
OF ENGLAND (VA)
FIRST SCHOOL

"LEARNING TOGETHER – AIMING HIGH"

The Governing Body

Meeting finished at: 2.30pm

Date of next meeting: tbc



ST JOHN'S CHURCH
OF ENGLAND (VA)
FIRST SCHOOL

"LEARNING TOGETHER – AIMING HIGH"

The Governing Body

Summary of actions agreed

Action: Explore use of Microsoft Teams for future remote meetings.	Mrs Puleston
---	---------------------