

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Body held remotely on Friday 24 April 2020, 1pm

The three core strategic functions of the Governing Body:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- b. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

In this meeting governors will be mindful of equalities issues in all agenda items

Present: Pier Anscombe, Paul Barber (Headteacher), Mel Fane (Co-Chair), Sandra Hogan, Blanaid McCauley, Giulia de Rosa (Co-Chair), Dee Simson, Helen Snow, Jessica Winter

Apologies: Emma Briggs

Not present: Ian Watson

Quorum: Six governors. 9 governors were present. The meeting was quorate.

Clerk: Ruth Ali

Minutes signed by: _____ Agreed on: _____

Action points: **bold** Questions to the school: **highlighted** Decisions: **bold italics**

1.	<p>Welcome The meeting was chaired by Giulia de Rosa.</p> <p><i>1.1 Prayers</i> The Headteacher opened the meeting in prayer.</p> <p><i>1.2 To consider Apologies for Absence</i> Apologies were received and accepted from Emma Briggs. No apologies were received and therefore not accepted from Ian Watson.</p> <p><i>1.3 Declaration of business interests or interests of loyalty in agenda items</i> None.</p> <p><i>1.4 To agree protocol for remote participation in meetings</i> Not discussed.</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of last meetings - 30 January 2020 and 3 April 2020</p> <p><i>2.1 To agree accuracy</i> Both minutes were agreed as a true record and will be signed when face to face meetings are possible again.</p> <p><i>2.2 To discuss any matters arising, if not on this agenda</i> Due to the change in circumstances and school closure, action points have become redundant and will be followed up later.</p>
3.	<p>To discuss the Headteacher's Executive Summary</p> <p>Prior to the meeting, governors had been invited to submit questions for the Headteacher to answer in his executive summary, which was circulated prior to the meeting. These questions by governors are listed under the relevant headings.</p>

- How the school is continuing to provide care for children of key workers and vulnerable children

In addition to the information provided in the Executive Summary, it was clarified that After School Club will run until 6pm.

- How the school is continuing to provide education for children/supporting parents in providing some education for children at home (to include discussion of parent survey)

How is the school managing remote learning? - The website remains the main portal. Results of the parent survey were circulated prior to the meeting and indicated that parents were overall happy with the provision. School therefore continues to provide work via the website, also utilizing other packages such as Talk for Writing, White Rose Maths, BBC Bitesize and Oak Academy. School has not moved into teachers delivering lessons remotely.

What guidance or support can the school give to parents about supporting their child's learning? – School has responded to the survey feedback. Some parents experienced increased anxiety about children falling behind, or that they are not doing the right thing. This anxiety increases as parents find it more difficult to cope with the emotions of the lockdown. The amount of resources on the class pages is therefore being limited, and parents were advised to focus on Maths, Reading and Writing. Further content is still available for those who would like to use it. This seems to be in line with what other schools are doing in the LA and nationally. There is a marked shift to mental health and safeguarding and a recognition that gaps will be wide when children return. The focus will then have to be on ensuring that children are emotionally ready to learn again, to enable the narrowing of the gap.

Governors agreed that the parent survey response is a credit to the school and recognised that some teachers are providing tremendous support. The development of wider skills as families spend more time together in the lockdown will also bring a form of learning and can be considered as a widening of the curriculum with scope for it being creative and enriching. Governors thanked the Headteacher for alleviating parental concerns and are aware that the situation in many homes will be such that parents do not have time to educate their children. Similarly, staff also have young children or elderly parents and therefore additional concerns and responsibilities, and some have worked during the Easter holidays. It is therefore important to have realistic expectations.

It was suggested that parental concerns about their children falling behind may be due to them being discouraged not to take their children out of school for a holiday. However, parents must realise that all are currently in the same situation.

SLT met at the beginning of the week and as a team agreed that it would be helpful to work to given parameters. They therefore set themselves a deadline for their planning for return to school of 1 June. They discussed the need to reconsider curriculum intent and the meaning of the Mission Statement, focusing on the narrowing of spiritual and emotional gaps.

Could you give us an update on sending resource packs to parents and the possibility of teachers recording video lessons? – Resource packs continue to be provided where requested. These are left on the front steps or the reception area for parents to pick up. School investigated families' access to IT and found that only two or three do not have access. The need for providing work packs is therefore very small. School has decided against doing video lessons, as there are

concerns around safeguarding, staff CPD and the ability and ease of doing this. School is keen to ensure consistency in the work that is going out to year groups. Some video messages have been sent, and the Headteacher will continue with video assemblies. The same channel may be used to pass on other messages to parents.

Governors asked whether school can access governments support for IT for children who do not have access. This is primarily aimed a secondary schools with a focus on Y10 and 12, and school is not expecting that any children in this school are eligible, as work is also provided for the two or three without IT access. Helen has been in contact with the INCo who had explained that staff make contact with children once a week by phone, ping or email, but that this is only possible when staff are in school, due to safeguarding reasons. She suggested that it may be helpful to communicate this to parents. Parents are in contact with each other through online platforms.

What guidance has been given as to how much work pupils should be doing? - At the beginning of the lockdown, an example timetable was published on the website. This was trying, as far as possible, to replicate school at home, but the longer we are in this situation, the less helpful replication is, as a lot of the success of learning has to do with being in a school building. Governors who have children support this, recognising that the home is the home, and not school. In conversations with parents the Headteacher has confirmed not to worry about curriculum coverage. This will be reiterated in the next communication to all parents. It was recognised, however, that, whilst some families need flexibility, others need structure, and their anxiety would be increased if no guidance around structure was given.

What is the balance of learning activities offered to pupils who are still coming into school? - There is a wide range of activities. Sport provision has been kept on through Simon working four half days per week. The sport activities take place in the playground which also helps with social distancing. This is not so easy. Children also undertake some learning activities, ie Talk for Writing and other academic work, as well as creative activities. This is kept fluid, and staff are responding to children's needs. Those older than Y3 are supervised in the IT suite to access online resources.

The day starts with PE with Joe, and the trim trail and forest school as also used well. Children appear happy.

Governors asked how school deals with the cleaning of the IT suite, and the building generally, especially in the absence of the caretaker. The Headteacher explained that areas used by the children are limited to the hall, toilets, Reception classroom and IT suite. At the end of the day all rooms are cleaned, including the computer keyboards. As the caretaker is on sick leave and another cleaner has recently retired, a temporary cleaners supplied through the LA covers this. They come in twice a week, undertaking deep cleans and reception area (public side), EYFS toilets and ICT suite. The Reception classroom is disinfected before the children arrive, and keyboards and whiteboard are disinfected every time they are used.

- *Safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils*

Will the new DBS arrangements have any impact on the employment of new staff? – A DBS can now be done remotely, and there are no concerns that this should have a negative impact.

What advice about online safety has been communicated to parents? – A ping was sent earlier in the week with advice from the NSPCC, followed by a letter from Sussex policy about Zoom. School will continue to communicate with parents. A further update was given on FSM provision. Asda vouchers were bought from the budget, with the intention of claiming the costs back. This is no longer necessary, as the government's Edenred scheme is now working. This initially involved a lot of work, and governors commended the INCo for her drive to ensure vulnerable children get the meals they need to have. Families now have enough vouchers for four weeks.

Nationally the numbers of vulnerable children attending school is much lower than it needs to be. Keyworker children have accessed the provision readily, but not so the vulnerable children. This was highlighted at the last SLT meeting, and provision will be widened. Children are contacted weekly, and there will be a change in the strategy for vulnerable children in that they will be invited in. The focus for them is to access counselling through the Play Therapist. However, there are vulnerable children with health issues, who it is not possible to have in school. Those vulnerable without health issues will therefore come in from 27 April to access counselling, increasing the number of children in school to 12/13. School is confident that social distancing can still be practiced with this number without having to augment the numbers of staff. The play therapist has ensured that safeguarding issues for this support are covered appropriately. Vulnerable children with health issues are somewhat out of the school's control, but this is being looked into on a continuing basis.

Helen, in her role as Safeguarding link governor, has been in touch with the INCo in order to ask further questions which were not submitted for the Executive Summary. She fed back that there are potentially more children in school who do not currently fall into the category of "vulnerable", but are likely to as an outcome of the current situation. The INCo confirms that these children are on her radar. Emails from parents asking for help are welcomed and addressed, but governors are mindful of her workload.

It was clarified that Play Therapy is only provided for those children who already had provision before the lockdown.

Governors asked what the Governing Body can do to support the INCo, and SLT generally, being mindful that staff had been working over Easter. This question led into the discussion of the next agenda item.

- *Wellbeing of Staff and Headteacher*

Staff welfare and morale appear to be high among class teachers and support staff. The arrangements in place mean that a vast majority work reduced hours in school, thus widening the opportunity for social distancing and enabling staff to take care of their own health and that of their families. SLT is aware of anxiety in some individuals. All staff have CPD and curriculum planning activities which they are asked to continue to work on at home, to a published deadline.

The Headteacher expressed some concern about the wellbeing of SLT, as they appear tired, which is due to them giving themselves so freely and in an overwhelming manner. Some of them had been in school over the Easter holiday and had therefore not had any break. The concern is for the longer term, and it is important to ensure the opportunity is given to have a break. SLT talk to each other about how they feel, and the situation continues to be monitored.

Pier confirmed that staff feel well supported by governors and the Headteacher. Governors recognised that SLT tiredness stems from their own initiative and

	<p>commended them for this, but highlighted that they must ensure that this does not result in exhaustion. The Headteacher confirmed that all SLT will step back from school related tasks over the weekend. He appreciates the support of governors, also through their prayers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Health and Safety</i> <p>What are the arrangements in place to maintain social distancing for staff and pupils on site? – This was covered above. It was recognised that social distancing is difficult for young children.</p> <p>What are the wider health and safety arrangements (first aider on site, increased cleaning rota, locking down parts of the building)? – Governors were satisfied with the answers provided in the report, and cleaning arrangements were discussed above.</p> <p>The continued safety of the school building, including any previously raised premises issues. – This is in hand as per report; front gate broke, but was fixed. Legionella is being prevented by circulation water (flushing toilets). Risks generally are small.</p> <p>Governors asked how the caretaker is doing. No progress has been made, due to NHS cancelling non-urgent appointments.</p> <p>Does staff need any further support? – Three points were highlighted in the Executive Summary as topics for prayer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of site staff. Temporary cleaner replacement was discussed above. When school opens again, the premises will need to be deep cleaned. • The energies of SLT, and also for staff to be kept safe. • Pressure from society to open schools again, being the most pressing issue. A united approach is needed that schools only open when it is safe to do so. <p>Governors gave their assurance that they would back the school not be open prematurely. They asked if there could be potential pressure from other schools in the Deans, or whether schools would work together to make this decision. The Headteacher suggested that coming out of lockdown may be similar to going into it, ie on a school by school basis, depending on what is right for the school community. Governors were reassured by this approach.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Policies</p> <p><i>4.1 To note Approval of Addendum to Safeguarding Policy under chairs action – FGB to ratify</i></p> <p>Agreed: <i>The Addendum to the Safeguarding Policy, necessary due to Covid-19, had previously been approved under chairs’ action and was unanimously ratified by FGB.</i></p> <p><i>4.2 Approval of Bereavement Policy</i></p> <p>Approved: <i>The Bereavement Policy was unanimously approved.</i></p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>To receive an update on Services to Schools</p> <p>The Headteacher advised governors that he had discussed the LA’s Service Level Agreements with the Business Manager. As they are both new to the school, they felt that no changes should be made to the provision this year. Governors agreed that this is a sensible approach. They were also advised that some schools had withdrawn from some services and that this may have repercussions on the remaining schools.</p>

6.	<p>To receive an update on Pupil Numbers for Reception September 2020 Reception is full with 30 children, all of which are first choices. This is a great outcome, considering the drop in numbers in the area. Congratulations were extended to everyone who had helped with the marketing efforts, and governors were delighted.</p>	
7.	<p>To receive an update on Teacher recruitment Interviews had been held remotely on the morning of this meeting for two vacancies in KS2. Two candidates had been shortlisted, and both did well in the interviews and were recruited. Governors asked whether any of them are Catholic. They are not, but part of the interview process was to explore their feelings around not being Catholic, but “walking with us”. Both candidates were comfortable around that, and they will also access relevant CPD.</p>	
8.	<p>Any Other Business Governors expressed their appreciation for the work the school is doing with the food bank. Looking ahead to May, governors asked what could be done in place of the usual May procession. Suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Videoing a procession with the key worker children (subject to parental permission), ie having a virtual procession for the rest • Add children’s activity resources to the website • Ask Fr Benny to dedicate a Mass to Mary on behalf of the school and to advise parents of the possibility of streaming – suggested dates were either 15 or 22 May • Using virtual assemblies to talk with parents and children <p>The Headteacher will contact Fr Benny to discuss the option of Mass. Helen explained that she had a suggestion for an activity to bring the whole school community together online during lockdown. This would involve singing and recording a song which is particularly relevant in the current situation. The clerk was asked to forward her email outlining the suggestion in more detail. The Headteacher closed the meeting with prayer. The meeting closed at 2.45pm</p>	<p>PB</p> <p>RA</p>

Documents circulated prior to and at the meeting:

- Virtual Attendance at Meetings Procedure
- Minutes of the last meetings (30 January, 3 April)
- Executive Summary
- Remote Learning Survey by Class
- Remote Learning Survey Summary
- CP and Safeguarding Addendum – and chairs action policy approval email trail
- Bereavement Policy