

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Body held remotely on Thursday 21 May 2020, 3pm

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), Emma Briggs, Mel Fane (Co-Chair), Sandra Hogan, Blanaid McCauley (until 4.15pm), Giulia de Rosa (Co-Chair), Dee Simson, Helen Snow, Ian Watson (until 4pm), Jessica Winter

Apologies: None.

Quorum: Six governors. 11/10/nine governors were present. The meeting was quorate throughout.

Clerk: Ruth Ali

Minutes signed by: _____ Agreed on: _____

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

1.	<p>Welcome</p> <p>The meeting was chaired by Giulia de Rosa.</p> <p><i>1.1 Prayers</i></p> <p>The Headteacher opened the meeting with prayer.</p> <p><i>1.2 To consider Apologies for Absence</i></p> <p>None, as the meeting was fully attended.</p> <p><i>1.3 Declaration that all participants are maintaining confidentiality</i></p> <p>All confirmed that they are in a situation where conversations cannot be overheard.</p> <p><i>1.4 Declaration of business interests or interests of loyalty in agenda items</i></p> <p>None.</p>	Actions
2.	<p>Minutes of last meeting – 11 May 2020</p> <p><i>2.1 To agree accuracy</i></p> <p>The 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></p> <p>None.</p>	
3.	<p>Finance Matters</p> <p><i>3.1 To receive a report from the Resources Committee</i></p> <p>The minutes were circulated prior to the meeting for all to note. .</p> <p><i>3.2 To note the final financial position for 2019-20</i></p>	

	<p>Governors were pleased that the year finished with a healthy surplus of £53,886 and thanked the Headteacher and the School Business Manager (SBM) for their work, especially as they had joined the school late in the financial year and were working with an unfamiliar budget.</p> <p><u>3.3 To approve the budget</u></p> <p>Prior to the meeting, a question was raised by email about whether there would be any changes to the School Meals cost as fewer meals have been taken due to the school closure. The SBM responded, also by email, that this figure is adjusted during the course of the year. Governors agreed that they will therefore continue to monitor Services to Schools (School Meals) by keeping this as a regular Resources Committee agenda item to ensure school does not pay for meals which have not been taken up.</p> <p>Approved: <i>The three year budget plan was unanimously approved.</i></p>	MF, RA
4.	<p>Headteacher’s Executive Summary</p> <p>An update was circulated prior to the meeting, with changes from the last summary highlighted.</p> <p>Providing updates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>How the school is continuing to provide care for children of key workers and vulnerable children</u> <p>Counselling sessions by the play therapist have now begun. She comes into school to work with vulnerable children. Particular consideration has been given to safeguarding.</p> <p>Governors asked if this is the only outside agency that is meeting with children in school. The Headteacher explained that the vast majority of contact takes place remotely via video links. Only one child comes into school.</p> <p>NGA guidance recommended that governors should monitor actions taken by the school to mitigate against concerns that the partial closure of schools will impact on the outcomes achieved by disadvantaged pupils and widen the attainment gap. The Executive Summary outlined that school is in touch with families for welfare checks. However, it is difficult to ascertain progress children are making. The Headteacher further explained that when children come back to school, consideration will be given to how the curriculum is structured and how disadvantaged children can be supported then. This will form part of further CPD for staff (Dylan William, Rescue Curriculum). Initially an audit will determine how much of the work that has been sent home has been done through some informal assessment and conversations with pupils, so that gaps in curriculum knowledge or softer skills are identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>How the school is continuing to provide education for children/supporting parents in providing some education for children at home</u> <p>No changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils (to include transition arrangements for Y6 to Secondary School)</u> <p>The phased return prioritises Y6, recognising their need to say goodbye and to have a good handover. They are also more able to socially distance. School has been in contact with CNCS, who will send over some transition videos, but have mainly left it to school to ascertain what is needed. The videos are a good place to start; a member of the Y7 team may also come into school for a</p>	

	<p>talk, subject to concerns around visitors to school being addressed. A governor asked whether the majority of pupils go to CNCS. This was confirmed; for those who are not, individual arrangements will be set up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Wellbeing of Staff and Headteacher</u> <p>No change from previous report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Health and Safety</u> <p>An additional H&S question that was asked to be covered in the Executive Summary was whether there are any issues arising from how the building is currently used and remote working for staff. The Headteacher explained that some staff do not have access to computers at home, or not the technical ability to use what they have. This is the main concern, but once school opens more widely, the expectation for teachers to update the website with pieces of work will be less, and therefore that parity will lessen.</p> <p>Governors noted that the Executive Summary did not contain any information about what advice on online safety has been communicated to parents and requested that reminders should be sent out regularly, as recommended in training undertaken by the Safeguarding link governor. The Headteacher confirmed that this will be done. There is also information about online safety on the Remote Learning page and dedicated Online Safety pages of the school website.</p> <p>Governors noted the visit report submitted by Sandra and thanked her for it.</p>	PB
5.	<p>To discuss issues relating to the re-opening of school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Update on discussions at the last meeting</u> <p>Not discussed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Risk Assessments, including Governor liability</u> <p>Numerous updates have been received from the DfE and the LA. A Headteachers' meeting with the LA took place on 15 May, where the need for risk assessing the school site against particular risks, prior to agreeing on wider opening and date, was emphasised. A draft risk assessment and timetable were shared with governors prior to the meeting. The risk assessment is based on a model shared between the Catholic Heads group. The final risk assessment will be sent to the LA, and once this is returned, will be shared with governors.</p> <p>A number of actions have been identified, mostly around cleanliness and routine cleanliness – a deep clean will be done w/c 25 May. This will be done by experts from the LA, at a cost of £3,000. The cost can be claimed back from the Covid capitation line from the LA. The LA can also assist with daily cleaning of the site. This has been agreed, but further details need to be confirmed.</p> <p>A model of how a phased return would work has been drafted and was shared with the NEU and NEU representative just prior to this meeting. The risk assessment and arrangements were discussed and have now gone back to staff.</p> <p>Limiting factors are the number of rooms in school, the footprint of the site, and the number of staff available. Guidance states that it should be ensured that there is provision for every single child in the year groups, and that classes are no bigger than 15.</p> <p>The following has been shared with staff - to keep provision for key worker and vulnerable children as before, followed by three phases which are not time dependent, but dependent on the previous phase being successful.</p>	

Phase 1: Key worker and vulnerable children, plus Year 6 (Year 6 to attend Mondays and Wednesdays)

Phase 2: Add Year Reception on Tuesdays and Thursdays – no extra children on a Friday, to leave time to review and evaluate and to deep clean in readiness for Monday.

Phase 3: Add Year 1 on Mondays and Wednesdays.

If it is possible to start on 8 June, and if each phase lasts one week, the third phase could start on 22 June. This model allows for the possibility to open for everyone four weeks before the end of term.

Each year group has a team of staff attached to them, who are not going to mix with any other group.

A parent audit conducted a few weeks ago did not include any details, and the Headteacher is therefore planning to send out another survey together with the draft proposal, determining on that basis how many pupils are likely to come back. If numbers are higher than indicated in the first audit, there may be an issue with children attending twice a week due to lack of rooms. Governors were grateful for the amount of work SLT has put into planning and understood the reasoning behind these plans. They ascertained that there would be a first aider in each group. **Governors noted that a great amount of cleaning needs to be undertaken and asked how much of this would be done by staff, and how they feel about it.** This was raised at the meeting the Headteacher held with the NEU rep, and this was because of uncertainty around LA support for cleaning. As it has now been confirmed that LA support is available, the requirement for staff to clean can be amended. The possibility that staff may have to clean something cannot be removed, but this would largely be according to the year group staff are working with and would be clarified in one to one conversations, so there is less requirement for Y6 than for Reception. Governors agreed that cleaning takes up a lot of time and is not what teachers are trained to do.

Sports provision has been secured and is set to continue, so all can do some sport outside in the afternoons. This will also give teachers some respite.

A number of teachers are relying on public transport, and the risk of this is limited by operating on a rota basis.

Governors asked how the first twelve children will be selected. The Headteacher explained that there must be equality of opportunity for provision. The outcome from the parent audit will inform this to some extent, and further consideration will be given to this when exact numbers for take up are known.

Start and finish times will be staggered in 15 minutes intervals to minimise infection, and staff are meeting children at the gate. The staggered start means the rest of the day is staggered as well for that year group, thus limiting possibility of contact.

Governors asked what parents should do if they have children in different year groups. This would depend on the number of families for whom this is the case and will be considered at the time.

Next steps:

Governors agreed that they are happy with the generic element of the phased return. Parents will now be consulted again on whether they wish to take up a place. The model will then be finalised and brought before governors again, followed by a joint letter to parents from the Headteacher and governors.

The government is expected to confirm on 28 May whether the required five tests are in place.

Parental views on the need for social distancing may vary, with some wanting it in place, but there are others who would not wish to send their child back into such an abnormal situation. This was confirmed by the staff governor who reported that parents had expressed concerns around news reports from other countries where children were required to sit in “boxes”. This appears to be the main concern for parents. The plan is here to distance children as much as possible but encouraging them to behave as normally as possible. For example, they will be made aware that they cannot play certain games, but they will be encouraged to play other games.

Governors highlighted that various webinars had highlighted some concern, and scaremongering, around governors’ liability. This was taken further by communication from the NEU stating that any staff member contracting Covid 19 should sue the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. A thorough risk assessment, which does not allow any room for negligence, is therefore essential. Any governors who are concerned about this were advised to seek advice from governor support groups. LA advice was that governors should not be concerned, as it is the government that insists on schools opening. Governors are aware that the risk assessment is vital for everyone’s protection, and they therefore see the need for giving it thorough scrutiny, but were aware of their limited understanding and may find it challenging. However, they were reassured by the details of what the school is planning to put in place.

- Update on parent/staff consultations

This was covered under the second bullet point.

- GB Communication with parents

As discussed above, when a definite proposal has been drawn up, a joint letter from the Headteacher and governors will be sent to parents, explaining that the model has been scrutinized by the LA and governors.

Governors asked:

- **Will there be a cut off in the consultation with parents, as some may change their mind?** - The survey for parents will close on 27 May, leaving five days for parents to consider whether or not to take up a place. There is no further room for flexibility in this situation.
- **Will teachers be able to teach in class and also offer remote learning? How will this be managed?** – Children who are not coming into school will be directed towards Oak Academy. As phases will move gradually from one to three, provision will gradually reduce over time. Y2-Y5 teachers will still be involved in supporting key worker children. This provision will also be evaluated at the end of each week.
- **When you get to phase 3, will the numbers from each class still be limited?** – Yes. This is based on the children who expressed a preference in the first place. Once they have either accepted or declined the place, they are locked into that decision.
- **Have we had any staff members expressing anxiety about coming back? What can we do to support them if they are feeling that they cannot come back?** - One staff member has approached the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher about feeling anxious. At that point the models had not yet been drafted. The current thinking has

	<p>been shared with staff on the day of this meeting. Some are experiencing anxiety, mainly those who already have issues with anxiety. One staff member has requested a period of unpaid leave until September, and advice is being sought from HR. The aim is to ensure that staff know that the decision is not rushed, and that school is able to respond about how anxiety can be alleviated, to ensure that school is ready to open not just because of the robustness of the risk assessment, but also because staff are ready.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If one staff member comes back and then finds they cannot cope, will the plan allow for that staff member to work from home? - Such a situation might stop us moving to the next phase. • Do staff know how the Governing Body thinks about opening? – Yes, this was mentioned in the meeting with the NEU. They are also conscious of the supportive position of the Governing Body because of its wider behaviour. The relationship between the Governing Body and staff is such that this support does not need to be articulated, as it is plainly visible. The staff governor confirmed that staff are very aware and appreciative of how supportive governors have been, and that they have not exerted any pressure to return, but have everyone’s best interests at heart. 	
6.	<p>Meeting Close</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Any other business</u> <p>Referring to the impression given by the media that teachers are “not doing anything” during partial school closure, a governor asked whether it would be helpful if parents were made aware of what teachers are doing while they are not in school. However, such a response is unlikely to solve this kind of problem, and engaging in such a conversation almost validates it. The Headteacher is confident that teachers are spending their time meaningfully. Some are also teaching their own children and looking after elderly parents. It may be possible to drip some information into regular correspondence. A governor who is a parent has been made aware by other parents with children in different year groups that the amount of feedback from teachers to families is not always consistent between year groups. In such a case parents should be advised to follow the school’s complaints policy, ie to raise any concerns with the Headteacher. A likely response to such a concern would be that teachers are working in dramatically different ways and in different circumstances, depending on their own family situations.</p> <p>The Headteacher will encourage parents to contact him if they have any concerns about the school’s provision.</p> <p>The Headteacher and staff governor conveyed the thanks from all staff for the kindness and generosity expressed on Thank the Teacher day, including the collation of parents’ and pupils’ contributions on a new web page. This was a great morale boost.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Prayers</u> <p>The Headteacher closed the meeting with prayer. The meeting closed at 4.45pm.</p>	PB

Documents circulated prior to and at the meeting:

Minutes of the last meeting

Resources Committee minutes

Outturn Forecast Month 13

20-21 Budget

Chart of accounts Review cost centres

Cumulative expense analysis

Headteacher's Executive Summary

Risk Assessment Minimising Infection

Covid timetables

SEND Visit report