

COTHAM SCHOOL
Extraordinary Meeting of the Academy Governing Body
Monday 8 June 2020
MINUTES OF MEETING

Governors Present:		
Jack Barber, SG	Andrew Chadwick, PG	Lucy Hunt, PG
John Bass, PG	Jane Chamberlin, PG	Morag Pirie, SG
Jim Bowyer, LA (Chair)	Jo Feather PG	Richard Puttick, PG
Jo Butler, Headteacher	Sandra Fryer, Co-opted	Rebecca Reid, PG
Ed Carpenter, SG		
In Attendance (non-voting) Allison Crossland, Business Manager Chris Reed, Deputy Headteacher Domini Leong, Deputy Headteacher	Apologies Dora Alderson, CG Absent: David Yorath CG	Governors in Post: 15/19 Quorum = 5 (1/3 rounded up) CG = Community Governor PG = Parent Governor SG = Staff Governor SLT = Senior Leadership Team

Item	Minutes of Meeting
1	Welcome, Apologies for Absence, declarations of interest and notification of AOB JBo welcomed everyone. No declarations of interest. One AOB from JBar.
2	Preparations for Wider Opening JBo thanked SF, JBu and SLT for the reports. The key primary agenda item for this meeting is the health & safety aspect of re-opening the school for Year 10. It is possible we may have to revisit our decision making if there are changes in health information / infection rates etc. Need to sign off the decision log, propose to do so section by section. JBu talked through the key points. The provision plan has not changed much from the previous version, except that we are no longer allowed to use a split day rota. This is believed to be in order to try to minimise transmission in the community. This week we will brief students, parents/ carers. There is also the risk assessment. Beneath this there are a number of protocols and other documents and plans. These have all been shared with staff. Will also be planning to brief staff for their return to the school site this week. This will be done remotely ahead of opening on Monday. There is no indication that there will be any change to the current DfE guidance, and we are expecting to open on Monday 15 June 2020. PPE – the guidance in schools is that PPE is still not required. Have decided to be relaxed about students or staff who wish to wear their own PPE. We will provide it in circumstances where we have been told we must do so. The Decision Log details a number of actions that the SLT have methodically worked through and actioned to ensure we are in apposition to open the school more widely as safely as possible.

The FGB worked through the Decision Log section by section.

Q – Do Governors have access to the other protocols, such as PPE? Not currently, but they can be made available. Discussion around the use of PPE and when the guidance says it needs to be used. Most of the plans have been through other committees or have been discussed with JBo, SF, and AC.

AC to link the Covid-19 facilities handbook to this document.

Q – Will PPE be added to first aid kits? Yes, this has already happened.

Section 1 of Decision Log signed off

Q – How often do you intend to survey parents? For vulnerable students and children of critical workers we are surveying them every week to find out numbers. For Year 10 parents, an indicative text message was sent last week. On Friday, we wrote asking for more information. This also asked questions to ensure that we have not missed any student who is highly clinically vulnerable, clinically vulnerable and whether they are shielding anyone in the home.

The response to the text message, about 75% of the year group responded and about 80% said they would take up the offer. However we are not sure how many of those students might now be clinically vulnerable (outside of our existing records) or living with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable.

We have had responses to the letter and currently around 10% have said no, they will not send their child to school at this time. This seems to be predominantly about parents feeling uncomfortable to do so rather than clinical vulnerability. If the numbers that come in are much lower than anticipated, we may need to go back to parents. Attendance will be kept under review.

Q – Has the critical worker survey been sent out weekly up until now? It has been sent to cover a two week period, but we have been flexible and allowed parents to change their mind. Have changed it to one week to make it less complicated and because feelings change. This has been going out on a Monday. We have about 70-80 parents who said they were critical workers. There is now a small number of parents who have now contacted us to say they are critical workers and have been added.

Some parents have been removed from the list as it was clear from their response that they did not want the offer. Wrote to them to explain this and that they would be included if they wished to be in future.

Some parents have felt stressed by the amount of communications. The Government's expectation now is that all children of critical workers should be in school, although there is no punishment if they are not sent in.

Section 2 signed off

Q – What is the number of staff still wishing to self-isolate / shield? Ahead of closing on 23 March, a significant number of staff were sent home based on underlying health conditions. There is a large number of staff who have not been working in school, but have been working in school. There is a small number of staff who have been working in school. There is also a small number of staff, funded through other income streams, who have been furloughed.

In opening more widely, there is a need to bring more staff back into school, both teachers and associate staff. Have been surveying staff to establish the situation. Staff who are extremely clinically vulnerable are not available to work on site. There are some staff who are clinically vulnerable and some who are shielding a family member who is extremely clinically vulnerable or clinically vulnerable. Have been risk assessing those members of staff, where they are needed, to staff the wider opening, to ensure it is as safe as possible for them to be on the site.

Have also decided not to ask BAME staff or pregnant staff to attend the site during Term 6. Those staff that are able to work from home will still do so.

Are confident that will be able to staff the additional planned provision.

There is an Equalities Impact Assessment that looks at additional measures. This can be linked into the documents already shared.

We are not in a position to undertake a risk assessment for every BAME student. Can risk assess the most vulnerable students – those with safeguarding concerns, underlying health conditions and other risks. There has been no guidance from the DfE on how we should risk assess for the BAME community, just that we should take this protected characteristic into account.

Q – Has test and trace guidance been specifically referenced? Yes, there is a protocol around this which can be linked. The guidance is being updated frequently.

Q – What staff training is required for staff before returning to school? There will be staff briefings on Thursday and Friday of this week, these will cover new routines around behaviour management, safeguarding etc.

Section 3 signed off

Q – Does every student that needs technology have it now? We assess, probably not. We have not had the Government laptops and do not know when they will arrive. We have provided reconditioned desktops and Chromebooks for our most vulnerable students, for Year 10 and some Chromebooks for Bursary students at Post 16. It is unlikely that we have covered all of the need.

Section 4 signed off

Q – Could there be a parents' surveys about the curriculum and the remote work and how it is landing? There has been a survey already and feedback was shared with the Learning and Wellbeing Committee and parents/ carers. The feedback was largely positive. There is always work that can be done to improve our remote learning provision and this is happening.

We will survey parents again as it is possible that we will need to continue with some kind of blended learning, to include remote learning. However, there are issues with live lessons – if a family has four children, with only one device, only one of them may be able to access their lesson for example.

Many of the staff providing on-line learning are also looking after families etc. This will change – teachers are critical workers and will be able to send their children to school.

Section 5 signed off

Q – Are there any other policies that are currently under review? No, but this is something that will be constantly under review, especially with reference to DfE guidance. It is possible that we may need to circulate policies on line for approval.

Section 6 signed off

Q- What were the actions for suppliers knowing and understanding social distancing etc.?

This mainly applies to the cleaning contractors, Glenn Cleaning. They have provided significant work with their staff. They have provided toolbox talks, have provided us with a presentation of how they have trained the staff and how they will respond to any reported or suspected cases etc.

In terms of other contractors, we either have a risk assessment provided by them before they come on site, or we provide one to them. If any of their staff develop symptoms within 14 days of being on site, they must inform us.

Q – With Caterlink on hold, is there a threshold number of students on site for them to start?

The start date is 1 September. AC will present to FGP on 30 June the plan for the contract to start on 1 September. This may need to change, but AC feels it is best to plan on this basis.

Section 7 signed off

Feedback about the communication with parents could be discussed at LWB

Q – Have staff responded positively to the communication? Do they feel they are being kept informed? Staff Governors fed back. This is generally the case. Most cases where there are questions are where we / JBU do not know the answers.

Q - What do Parent Governors think about communication? Feel that it has been fine and the level has been appropriate. The weekly mailings have always been useful and it is good that they have continued. The information available has answered the questions it has needed to. There has been some concern among critical workers who do not need to send their children to school that they do not want to add to the workload of the school – this has not caused upset. Some feel that there have been some ambiguities in communications, but acknowledge that this is reflective of the general situation rather than the school's position.

Staff have felt that parents have valued contact from teachers and tutors.

Discussion around the issues of 'ambiguity' from DfE, the difficulties of keeping up with changes in the guidance and some of the things in the guidance that are difficult to make sense of.

Section 8 signed off

The financial situation will be kept under review and there is an FPGP meeting on 30 June.

Section 9 signed off

Q – Are we likely to have to pay the money for food vouchers over half-term? No.

Section 10 signed off

Q – How will we be able to scrutinise these arrangements and what will we scrutinise? CR talked through the process for assessed grades at the last LWB and will give an update tomorrow.

We are piloting a different approach to teachers' appraisal this year, due to the difficulty of using a single set of exam results to judge teachers' performance. It is now called professional development and appraisal. No changes were required to the policy to reflect the guidance from the DfE as this new procedure is reflected in the new system.

We are still not sure what the exam season for 2021 will look like. Discussion around the possibility of external inspections such as Ofsted etc. There will be a need to look at the SLT targets and appraisal. There will be no Progress 8 or Attainment 8 this year and we do not yet know what this will look like next year. There will be no Progress 8 in five years' time as the current Year 6 will not have done SATs to allow the calculations.

Q – Are you expecting to have to take any measures based on expectations of results / unexpected results? There is currently no guidance on what an appeals process might look like. Normally there is the option for a marking review and CR would go through the raw grades to decide who this should apply to. Ofqual have been clear about the statistical methodology that should be employed and that they will employ. They will check to see if results fit national norm distributions, and checking results per centre per subject to make sure they are in line with what they would expect.

There is no guidance on what schools should do if they are unhappy. There is currently only the reference to an exam season at the beginning of next year, so that students who are unhappy will be able to sit an exam at the beginning of 2020-21, or in summer 2021. Typically exam entries are made in January for May/June. If this is to take place in September / October, this is a very short window when results are due at the end of August. There have been discussions about this being only for certain subjects and around the impact on exam boards.

We have been very thorough in our process. The advice is that schools will see their centre assessed grades go down. CR feels that our grades take account of historical performance as well as the other things that need to be taken account of.

This has been a huge undertaking for staff, especially CR, Aimi Potter and Eileen Quirke in Post 16. This does not allow for a school to show an upward trajectory from last year. This has made it really

	<p>challenging. Can only hope that students are not unfairly penalised. To have not been through an exam season in Year 13 could be a significant disadvantage for students moving to university</p> <p>Section 11 signed off</p> <p>Governors agreed that the Decision Log could be signed off.</p> <p>Discussion around the R rate. The South West figure of 1 includes Weston (Weston Hospital outbreak). For Bristol it is 0.4. There is no guidance for a level at which we should change strategy. JBu feels it is unlikely that we will be locally locked down in Bristol with our current R Rate.</p> <p>Unless we were instructed not to open, it would be problematic not to open on Monday. Any instruction from the contrary would probably come from the Government rather than the LA.</p> <p>Governors approved the plan to open the school more widely from Monday 15 June.</p> <p>JBo to write to staff to inform them of the Governors' decision.</p>
3	Minutes of last meetings – 21 May 2020 – Agreed as correct.
4	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Take a knee campaign – JBar proposed that the school support Bristol City Council's, 'Take a Knee' campaign, by taking photos of themselves with placards / taking a knee that could be combined into a collage.</p> <p>The feedback to the letter drafted by DL and AT has been overwhelmingly positive both from parents and staff. There has been a very small number of parents who have objected to what they perceived to be the overly political tone of it. People have different views about the protests. JBu did not perceive the letter as political because it is factually correct that we live in a city that is one of the most unequal in the country if you are BAME. Over 50% of our students are BAME and the student population in general is very divided along the lines of socioeconomic class.</p> <p>We do need to think about how we build on the letter with the students in terms of how we support students to engage with events and discussion around events. DL is working on the curriculum.</p> <p>JBu is unsure and is very conscious of the possibility of us being accused of being overtly political or tokenistic.</p> <p>DL feels that the letter set out the position of SLT on the issues. It is important that staff and students are allowed to continue to protest etc. It is important for the leadership to focus on the strategic and structural changes, such as staffing and curriculum, that need to be made and that they are able to be taken seriously in these areas.</p> <p>DL feels that we are the only school in Bristol that have taken such a strong stance – other schools have been in touch to ask if they can use some of the information in our letter.</p> <p>We received an e-mail signed by over 500 alumni, pleased with the letter, asking us to do more, which we are already doing, but have not widely publicised. DL was able to write back to raise this.</p> <p>It would perhaps be sufficient to make all of the work we are doing more public, and to share this with students.</p> <p>Q – What age group were the alumni? They seem to be younger – 2015 although some from further back, although not from significantly further back.</p>

Meeting closed at 8.00pm

Next Meeting –

Signed

Date

Initials: