

Low Trenchard Church of England Primary School



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01/07/2020

Minutes – Summer Term – 2020 **Local Governing Board; Low Trenchard Church of England School** **Wednesday 1st July 2020/1pm remotely via zoom**

1. Join Meeting

All participants confirmed with audio and video.

2. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Amy Crompton (Chair), Emma Bending, Alan Hobbs, Jayne Biddle, Sharon Thorp, Liz Davey (HoS), Louise Hussey (EHT)

Apologies: Doug Honey

In attendance: Toni Martin (Governance Officer)

3. Declarations of Interest Relevant to this Agenda

None declared and no changes to annual declarations.

4. Confirm Minutes of LGB last meeting Autumn (18th November 2020)

No actions, less working group and visits in spring term – see notes or visit reports. Spring term meeting cancelled due to Covid 19 lockdown and school closures. Working group held on 21st May remotely via zoom. LGB agreed minutes and a copy will be provided for Chair to sign when normality resumes.

5. Current Situation Update

LH noted the latest weekly update, and even with the flooding, LD has managed some very solution-focussed ideas to keep the school open to those that want to attend. Currently 51% of children are in school for some of the week and that is every child where a parent has requested that they return to school. The weekly update includes a great deal of detail of what is going on in school at the moment and all staff have been utilised on one way or another.

LD updated on remote learning including on line sessions, zoom one to one, and visits to children's homes to go for a walk with the child. She also highlighted the support for SEN children and vulnerable children. The number of vulnerable children has actually increased due to lack of work or closure of businesses, and this has included support with food vouchers and links to information on universal credits and the like. The HoS has liaised individually with children on an EHCP. Staff have also been liaising with parents that don't have a network of support in the area to provide additional support.

In general, the support has been above and beyond, and really shines through the church ethos of the school. The silver lining in all this is the relationship built up with parents and it is important to maintain this going forward.

A governor noted the support in place but challenged whether this support has extended to educational provision too, particularly for the vulnerable families? LD confirmed yes, and noted an example where a TA who is shielding at home has been doing one to one zoom sessions with specific children, covering particularly English and Maths. It has been ensured that every child has been engaged with but it is very specific to individual parents because every family is in a very different position. LH noted that if pupils aren't engaging in the remote learning, it is chased up so that, although it might take different forms, all children are involved in learning in one form or another, and it is checked and followed up. LH noted that there has to be an awareness that all families are in different positions and we cannot force one form of learning on them (some parents are working, some have only one device or a data package that doesn't allow for hours of zooming, or some families are sharing only one device such as a phone). The aim is to be supportive to parents in order to engage children in educational provision and this fits with the church ethos of the school.

The same governor challenged that the weekly reports show that numbers of children engaging have dropped off, that Class Dojo only allows for positive feedback (with only a like button), and therefore do we have an understanding of why the remote learning has dropped off? LH and LD explained in detail, including the individual messaging that occurs between various staff and families and that this is not made public on Class Dojo. Sometimes it happens after holidays, or when the sun is out but there are various reasons and all families are engaged with. LH noted that there is also a national trend and that it is very hard for some families. **The same governor noted this but stated that the reasons for drop off are not included in the weekly updates** and LH noted that the reasons are both operational and confidential between families and staff, and will not be shared on the weekly updates. The Chair requested that the conversation moved on to the next area for discussion **and the same governor challenged that from a strategic perspective, given that there are any number of reasons why the learning might drop off, one might be that parents may not be getting what they require fed to them and if we don't understand that, we can't do anything about it?** LH noted that the provision has adapted and changed constantly since 20th March, for example, the introduction of some zoom lessons, and all the changes have been as a result of feedback. The feedback has been positive but feedback is always looked at, assesses it and adds new things or adapts it where possible. LD confirmed that all staff have been very pro-active with this and several different types of provision have been provided. If requests are made, they are looked at in terms of feasibility to ensure it is manageable for the staff given their already high workload. LH noted that the school is offering well above the national picture in terms of provision and contact with parents, and the take up is very good. ST noted that the zoom lessons are fantastic and this is a new thing based on parent's feedback.

The same governor challenged that while the zoom sessions are a great development, it seems that we are focussing on the constraints of what we are able to deliver and made a comparison with a secondary school provision? LH noted that this is an unfair comparison to compare a large secondary school with a small primary school with 4 teachers and that LD has answered the questions regarding provision. **The same governor then challenged that it isn't just a primary school but a MAT with a larger number of pupils, so there is a need with a certain number of children and a number of resources that can be used.** LH noted that the children would not respond to well to a zoom session with a teacher they don't know from another school and that the zoom take up is relatively small compared to the take up on Class Dojo. **The same governor challenged that as a governor, the focus is the children, have we really grasped what the parents require, and are we focussing on the requirements and how can we provide it and then considering constraints, or are we starting with the constraints and going from there?** LH completely disagreed that the focus is on constraints and that LD has been

very solution-focussed, opened the school to 51% of the children despite Covid 19 and the school flooding, and the provision is what a majority of parents want. There is no feedback saying that we need to provide extra, the challenge has been answered in that the school is focussing on what parents want where it possibly can.

LH and LD left and then rejoined the meeting.

The remaining governors insisted that the conversation move on and other governors were given the opportunity to voice their opinion.

A different governor noted that the adaptation of the remote learning has been fantastic given that individual family circumstances are very complex indeed. Some families have different aged children, some in school some not, some parents returning to work, some still working from home, some shielding and so on – the complexity of it is enormous. LH also added that the transport to school has also not been available and noted that it is not realistic to expect the same thing every day from every parent as it is not supportive of parents. **This governor also noted that many parents are trying to be all things to all people and dealing with a multitude of different issues, that this is hard work and it shouldn't be a surprise that there is some drop off. In her opinion from exposure to what a few schools have done in various other parts of the country, her feeling is that LT staff have done a phenomenal amount to help families and it is impossible to have a one size fits all. The relationship building with families may be the most important thing that has happened during this period and going forward, everyone is going to have to continue to be very flexible.** LH feels strongly that the staff need to be thanked for their hard work and flexibility during this time.

Another governor noted a point regarding zoom protocol that allows everyone to contribute and then noted that the school has gone above and beyond, particularly under LH and LD's leadership. It has been phenomenal to engage with 51% of children in school while maintaining links with everyone else, dealing with Covid measures and floods, it is incredible what has been achieved. It was also noted that the easy option would have been to close the school after the flood but this didn't happen, and children are in school. LD noted that she has an incredible team.

6. Future Plans

It was noted that any future planning will depend on further government direction that is yet to be issued. LH noted that scenarios are being looked at but it is difficult to go firm until government direction is issued. A key focus is to get the school building in a useable condition following the flooding so that the school can open to all the children. The planning is based on all children being in school full time in September. LH noted that a recovery school improvement plan and recovery principles that will be MAT wide and used to guide the leadership team.

A governor challenged whether the repairs required from the flooding will incorporate other capital funding for school improvements? LH explained the work that is being planned under insurance funding and the successful CIF bid for the fencing has also been received, therefore a number of improvements are being looked at around the school. A governor queried if the Lew Trenchard hall is still available and it has been confirmed that the village hall can continue to be used and it was confirmed that it can be.

A governor challenged how quickly this work will be completed and are we certain it will be done by September? Intention is to do work over the summer holidays so it is complete for September but it depends on insurance and company availability due to Covid 19. It is also being used as an opportunity to re-arrange the school for the better and also have a de-clutter around the school. The latter is also helpful in terms of infection protocols. LD is very ambitious for the school in terms of how to improve things for the better of the children.

The Chair enquired about the well-being of the staff. LD noted it is peaks and troughs. Generally everyone has been very supportive and there are good days and not so good days. LH noted that the staff are also going through the pandemic with their own families and it is entirely normal to have a down day now and then. But there is good communication between the staff via WhatsApp, zoom or face to face.

7. Any Other Business

TM noted the SEND local offer requires approval. LH confirmed that there are unlikely to be any changes but it will be run past the SENDCO. The governors were content with the local offer to be published.

Date of next meeting will be confirmed once TM has put the MAT meeting programme together and we know more about the situation in the Autumn term. It is intended to revert back to a working group in first half of term and main meeting in second half of term, with monitoring visits if safely possible but meetings can revert back to remote meetings if need be.

A governor apologised if any upset was caused, the intent was an objective focus on what is being done and was not intended negatively.

8. Confidential Staffing Matters

There is now no requirement for discussion on this matter at this stage. LH will update governors later as required.

Meeting closed at 2.10pm

Toni JH Martin
Governance Officer

Distribution List:

Amy Crompton – Chair & Parent Governor
Alan Hobbs – Parent Governor
Jayne Biddle – Foundation Governor
Doug Honey – Vice Chair & Co-opted Governor
Emma Bending – Co-opted Governor (to be Foundation Governor)
Sharon Thorp – Staff Governor
Vacancy – Co-opted Governor
Vacancy – Foundation/Co-opted Governor
Liz Davy – Head of School
Louise Hussey – Executive Head Teacher

Graeme Barriball – ADMAT Board of Directors Chair
Will Hermon – Executive Head/CEO