



**MINUTES OF THE DISCOVERY SCHOOL
FULL GOVERNING BODY MONDAY 29th MARCH 2021**

This meeting was held virtually via Teams due to the coronavirus pandemic.

PRESENT

- Miss Tina Gobell (Head Teacher)
- Mrs Annabel Cornall (Chair and Parent Governor)
- Mrs Catriona Stringer (Vice Chair and Co-opted Governor)
- Louise Connelly (Parent Governor)
- Mr Dave Waller (LA Governor)
- Mrs June Budd (Co-opted Governor)
- Dr Tina Ivanov (Parent Governor)
- Roland Parrott (Co-opted Governor)

In Attendance Gina Donaldson, Chair of Governors, Blean Primary School

Clerk - Mrs J Roe

Apologies Kelly Dey, Jenny Baker (in her capacity as DHT)

ITEM NO	ITEM FOR DISCUSSION	ACTION POINT
PROCEDURAL		
1	<p><u>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></p> <p>1.1 The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming Gina Donaldson to the meeting. Gina attended as part of the CoG National Governors Chair’s training course to observe the CoG informally.</p> <p>1.2 Apologies were received and accepted from Kelly Dey and Jenny Baker (in her capacity as DHT). The CoG informed the FGB that Tony Steel had resigned. The CoG was mindful of the challenges that governors faced in the current circumstances and thanked them for their ongoing support. The CoG would be sending a card and a small gift on behalf of the FGB to Mr Steel to thank him for his contribution to the FGB. The CoG would review the skills audit to ensure that the next co-opted governor has, where possible, the right skills for the role.</p> <p>1.3 The meeting was quorate</p>	
2.	<p><u>REGISTER OF BUSINESS INTERESTS</u></p> <p>The Register of Business Interests was up to date. No business interests were declared.</p>	

3	<p><u>FINANCE AND BUDGET.</u></p> <p>The Finance Committee minutes from 19.03.21 had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair of the committee provided the FGB with a report on the committees discussions. The overall end of year financial position showed that the school would have a predicted out turn of £3,000 (three thousand pounds) versus the plan which with a near 3 million (three million pounds) budget had shown how well the SBM and HT had managed the budget. Although there had been an increase in the overall cleaning costs a change in the cleaning contract had reduced cleaning staff costs.</p> <p>The finance committee had discussed at length the use of iPads during the lockdown for pupils with financial need and how to best asset manage this. They had also been mindful that moving forward home learning could be required again and wanted to ensure that the school was in the best position to be able to facilitate the supply of ICT to those in need. The Asset Management Register would be reviewed at the next finance meeting.</p> <p>The committee had a long discussion around school trips and had agreed a plan to recoup the deposit from PGL.</p> <p>A member of office staff had taken a six month career break and based on previous experiences the committee had expressed their concerns over the use of a member of staff from Schools’ Financial Services. They had been reassured by the SBM that this time they were being supported by a senior member of staff.</p> <p>The committee had meticulously reviewed the schools’ benchmarking having bought in the services to do this. Universally the costs were still relatively low. Although the gaps were closing and the school was trending upwards, there was a good story behind this with the school still growing.</p> <p>One area of concern that had been highlighted through the benchmarking had been the utility costs which were relatively high, and this was something that the committee would be following up on.</p> <p><u>Pay Committee</u></p> <p>The Pay Committee had met to review support staff pay. The recommended increases were affordable although there was not much room for discretion. The use of the existing Pay Policy would enable staff who have performed exceptionally well to receive an additional payment. The FGB approved the support staff pay.</p>	

	<p>The Chair of the committee drew the FGB’s attention to the fact that FODS had raised over £3,000 (three thousand pounds) for the school during the pandemic. The FGB agreed that this was an exceptional amount of money given the fact that they had been unable to rely on their usual fund raising activities. The HT said that she had already written formally to FODS on behalf of staff and governors to thank them for all their hard work.</p> <p>The clerk reminded the FGB that submission of the SFVS had been delayed this year due to the pandemic and that the Finance Committee would be meeting on the 12th May to review this.</p> <p>The Chair of the Finance Committee thanked the HT and SBM for all their hard work, with particular reference to keeping abreast of all the Covid changes and the additional work that this had created.</p> <p>The Clerk reminded governors that following Mr Steel’s resignation a governor would need to join the Finance Committee and that best practice recommends that three governors had financial matrix training.</p>	
4	<p>4.1 <u>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</u> The minutes from the FGB meeting of 01.02.2021 had been circulated prior to the meeting and were agreed to be a true record of the meeting. These will be signed by the CoG when meetings resume in school.</p> <p>4.2. <u>GOVERNOR ACTIONS.</u></p> <p>3. <u>SFVS for review</u> – Finance committee to meet 12.05.2021 to review the SFVS</p> <p>4.2. <u>Finance Committee to review School Business Plan</u> – this is an ongoing action</p> <p>4.2. <u>H&S monitoring pair to circulate monitoring reports on H&S Policy and associated documents</u> TI had reviewed the policies on the website and ensured that they were up-to-date, and all links were working. The clerk will re-send the list of statutory policies.</p> <p>6. <u>HT to provide governors with link to Safeguarding training</u> The link had been circulated and the CoG reminded governors that the training should, if possible, be completed by Easter.</p> <p>School Improvement Plan – HT and CoG to review monitoring to <u>align with SIP priorities and targets</u> The CoG confirmed that this was an ongoing process and that during a monitoring leadership and management meeting there had been</p>	<p>School Business plan ongoing action</p> <p>Clerk to re-send list of statutory policies to TI</p>

	<p>discussion around the action plan for terms 5 and 6. The CoG thanked the FGB for their recent monitoring reports which would be discussed later in the meeting.</p> <p>13. <u>Wellbeing questionnaire</u> - This had been sent out to parents, the results would be fed back to governors at a later date.</p> <p>15. <u>Staff wellbeing</u>. HT to contact Inclusion Manager re <u>bespoke governor wellbeing questionnaire</u> Governors had received a bespoke wellbeing training session from Hannah Pullen, Inclusion Manager, prior to the start of the meeting. Copies of the presentation are attached to these minutes.</p>	<p>Results of wellbeing questionnaire to be reported to FGB</p>
5	<p><u>GOVERNING BODY MATTERS.</u></p> <p>There were no governing body matters to discuss as governing body vacancies had been recorded under item 1.3 of these minutes.</p>	
6	<p><u>GOVERNING BODY MONITORING VISITS</u></p> <p>The CoG asked governors to give a short verbal report on their recent monitoring visits prior to them submitting a full written report.</p> <p><u>Wellbeing</u> The Wellbeing monitoring pair had met virtually with the Inclusion Manager and reminded governors that the school had achieved the Wellbeing Award for Schools. They had also congratulated the Inclusion Manager on achieving her award for becoming a MHFA (mental health first aider) for both adults and children and reiterated how this puts the school in a strong position moving forward with supporting wellbeing.</p> <p>The Inclusion Manager had said that as would be expected school had been a little chaotic after Xmas when the lockdown had been announced due to the various changes. However, the school had learned lots from the first lockdown and as such were in a strong position to support home learning. The FLO (family liaison officer) had supported families over the telephone to ascertain what help they required, and this had been fed back to school staff to support the children.</p> <p>Staff had shared advice and offered support to each other. The Inclusion Manager had shared wellbeing resources with staff.</p> <p>There had at one point been an issue in school between some of the staff in school and the teachers providing remote learning, but this had been worked through quickly once the roles had been explained and staff were able to support each other.</p> <p>Governors were mindful of the additional workload on all staff and the stresses the lockdown had placed on them.</p>	

The Inclusion Team had been able to support families through various ways, with risk assessments continually being tweaked and the team able to offer bespoke family to family support. The FLO remained in contact with external agencies and no specialist support was lost.

Live sessions had been provided weekly including a BEAM session which was recorded for families to access. The school had worked hard at providing these sessions.

If pupils had not joined in these live sessions school had reached out to better understand why they were unable to join in.

Prior to re-opening the school staff had inhouse training and there were wellbeing risk assessments carried out.

Staff had been using home testing kits and there had been no issues with this.

The first week of returning to school focussed on re-connection to the curriculum with wellbeing checks for the first couple of those days.

Moving forward there were plans in place for those transitioning to secondary school as they would not be able to have the taster days at their new schools.

The monitoring pair were really impressed with how the staff had coped, especially as many of them had their own children that they were home schooling.

The CoG thanked the wellbeing governors for their report and felt that their report triangulated with the monitoring from the Quality of Provision and Learning and Management visits.

EYFS

The EYFS governor had met with Nicole Aiston, EYFS lead. The focus on the visit had been to seek reassurance on how the children were getting on since returning to school after the lockdown.

There had been good engagement in the online learning with 27 out of 30 pupils attending. When engagement had not been happening there had been follow up by the school in terms of providing advice and support. It was clear that the learning provided had been high quality and kept children engaged.

Initially there had been 9 key worker children in school during the lockdown period but this gradually increased to 28 and was it felt that this was due to the pressure felt by parents struggling to work and commit to the home learning.

The EYFS team opted to have more teachers than the rest of the other year groups to provide appropriate learning for each group. This had clearly worked well as children seemed to be making exceptional progress. The EYFS governor had thanked staff for the hard work they had been putting in.

The return to school for EYFS pupils had gone well. Parents clearly felt safe as 99% of pupils had returned, with one child absent as they were self-isolating. Pupils were happy to be back in school and with their peers although understandably some had taken time to adapt to being back in the classroom.

In terms of interventions staff were focussing on speech and language until after the Easter holidays.

Staff had commented on how many of the children had flourished during the lockdown, although a challenge moving forward would be closing the gaps.

The EYFS governor had thanked staff for all their commitment during a very difficult time. The next EYFS monitoring visit would be towards the end of term 5 and would focus on assessment of pupils.

The CoG commented that listening to the report it reiterated the amazing work that had been carried out by staff.

Leadership and management

The monitoring pair had used the guidance questions from the DfE document, Review Your Remote Provision, Jan 2021

The monitoring shared key points of the visit.

The Remote Education Plan had been divided into two parts, with the HT responsible for the statutory duties and fulfilling the legal requirements, and the DHT reviewing the practicalities of the quality of provision. This was then communicated to all staff.

Senior leaders had discovered that developing You-tube videos had been detrimental to staff wellbeing. As a result, the HT had meticulously researched other options of remote access. DfE best

practice had highlighted the use of Microsoft SWAY. This was found to be a very workable and useable framework with children becoming independent users of SWAY.

Systems were in place for children having to self-isolate, with two cover teachers allocated to support those children off school.

Parents had been sent a questionnaire for their views on the home learning and feedback is expected after Easter. There had been 146 responses so far which was higher than normal for parental engagement. It was felt that the higher response rate was as result of parents being pleased with remote provision. The results of the questionnaire will be shared with the GB.

There are daily staff updates with mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate management information. The DHT had put in a considerable amount of work into this.

Home environment. Before lockdown the SLT had a safeguarding meeting and looked at each individual pupil in the school to see if they would benefit from in-school provision. Invites were sent to all pupils who would benefit from being school. Governors were mindful of the amount of time and effort that this would have taken.

Pupil engagement was reported to the HT twice weekly by the class teacher. If there was a lack of engagement, options were considered and acted upon to ensure the best outcome for pupils.

Capability and Capacity. The HT used best practice to disseminate updated guidance to staff. Staff had access to laptops as did TA's so that they were able to support the home learning.

After the Easter break staff will be questioned on how they felt supported during the lockdown.

ICT Provision. The SLT had devised a short, medium and long term plan on how to build up the ICT structure sufficiently. Paul Robinson, the ICT Leader would be involved in this.

Partnerships The HT had informed the monitoring pair that there had been a sharing of best practice at collaborative head teacher meetings. The collaborative group consisted of Discovery School, Ryarsh, Kings Hill, Offham and Mereworth primary schools. This had provided a good opportunity for the HT's to support each other.

A governor had asked the HT whether the schools could share resources. The HT had responded that this was not an option due to GDPR requirements.

The collaborative partnership continues with all the schools taking part in a Mr Motivator workshop recently.

The HT's are looking at the possibility of setting up a collaborative School Council so that children from the local area have a facility to express their views and thoughts. This was thought to be a good way to build the support of the collaboration.

Wellbeing In terms of wellbeing all families were directed to any resources needed. The use of the Dojo App enabled instant feedback for pupils.

Governors were reminded that although there had previously discussions around live lessons, research had shown that these were not the gold standard for learning. The pair learned from the HT that some parents were anti live lessons as they felt they would be an invasion of their privacy.

School Community Events

- Weekly music assemblies run by the AHT
- Book week
- Star of the week
- HT and DHT award stickers still sent remotely
- Safer Internet week
- FODS still communicated with parents.

Safeguarding The CoG had signed the amended Child Protection Policy as a Chair's action. Child Protection reviews did not stop with weekly SEN meetings.

The monitoring pair commented that staff had gone above and beyond.

Moving forward the pair would look at how the catch up funding was being used to ensure any gaps were being closed and whether the gaps were for PPG pupils or gender specific.

The School Improvement Plan was on hold from January – April and was being amended to reflect Covid. Part of the monitoring pairs action plan was to look at how targets could be addressed.

It was noted that the gap between PPG and non PPG pupils had widened but this was a national issue not just related to the school. The monitoring pair wanted the FGB to be aware of the amount of work that staff were doing on closing this gap.

All the points covered in this visit met the requirements of the framework.

Quality of provision of learning. The monitoring pair had met with the DHT. The DHT had the oversight of the remote education for the school and the core offer of meeting requirements. This had been changed and tweaked as required. Staff had been offered CPD in order to develop their skills with coaching sessions and additional PPA time for staff.

The DHT had looked at every year groups learning on the Dojo App and then fed back her evaluation to the year group leads. This had enabled staff to be coached effectively in developing the learning. Parents had commented on the constant improvement.

English had been affected during the last lockdown. The class teachers focussed on this and delivered the English lessons themselves rather than signposting parents to the National Academy website.

The monitoring pair had been delighted to learn of the innovative ways interventions had happened online, and thanked Paul Robinson IT Network Manager for his contribution.

The pair commented that pupils were having formal assessments but stressed the importance of using the correct language at staff meetings when talking about the children's progress. The SLT were mindful that it was necessary for a long-term plan and it wasn't going to be a quick fix.

The term 5 monitoring visit would focus on teaching and learning, looking at transition and how best to support those year groups affected.

Key worker children had been supported by 2 TA's in class using SWAY in the same way as those home learning. Towards the end of the lockdown period the class teacher came in once a week to work with the key worker children. The school had recognised the fact that many of the key worker children had parents with extremely busy jobs and had felt that it was important for the children to feel a connection with school staff.

	<p>A governor commented that the Lunch Time Supervisors (LTS) should also be commended as they had played a big part in keeping the children happy at school.</p> <p>The CoG once again thanked governors for all their monitoring and thanked the staff for meeting with the monitoring pairs.</p>	
7	<p><u>GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT</u></p> <p>Governors had already discussed safeguarding training under item 4.2, governor actions from minutes of 01.02.21. There were no further training updates.</p>	
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT		
8	<p><u>HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT</u></p> <p>This had been circulated prior to the meeting and a copy is stored with these minutes. The HT informed governors that the figure for attendance on page 2 should read 98%. Governors agreed that this was an outstanding figure and reflected the confidence that parents had in sending their children into school.</p> <p><u>Policies and procedures</u> would be discussed and recorded under item 9 of the minutes.</p> <p><u>Pupil numbers</u> The school was budget setting for an increase in pupil numbers. Although the school had additional capacity for 13 children in KS1, as classes in KS2 were oversubscribed, there were only 6 unallocated spaces. Governors were reminded that this was a big improvement compared to the last financial year.</p> <p><u>PPG report</u> This had been circulated prior to the meeting and a copy is stored with these minutes. Governors learned that the CoG had looked at the interventions occurring along with the attendance and the PPG pupils were outperforming non-PPG pupils nationally. There had been innovative approaches to support those PPG pupils whose punctuality was affecting their attendance; for example, invitations to breakfast club. There is a detailed monitoring visit report written which will be shared with the FGB.</p> <p><u>PE fund report</u> This had been circulated prior to the meeting and a copy is stored with these minutes. There had been a large amount of carry forward as the school had been unable to spend the additional sports funding due to the national school closures. However, the Government had granted permission for unspent PE funding to be carried forward into the next academic year. The school were looking at using the funding to develop the outside area including an all-weather surface and running track. The addition of astro turf and this new area would add much needed capacity to the</p>	

	<p>playground. The SBM was taking this forward as a main piece of work to develop over the next 12 months.</p> <p><u>Covid Catch up funding.</u> The report had been circulated prior to the meeting and a copy is stored with these minutes. The HT did not feel that there was anything further to add to this at this stage, but informed governors that it would be amended with the assessment data and would then be shared with the governors.</p> <p><u>Attendance</u> Attendance remained high. However, attendance had been negatively impacted as during lockdown the school had been asked to make places available for any vulnerable pupils and once an offer of a school place had been made by the school the DfE expected attendance. If these pupils did not attend, they were marked as absence. The cumulative figure for attendance was 97% which was above the national average.</p>	
9	<p>POLICIES Copies of all policies were circulated prior to the meeting and these are stored with the minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lettings Policy – This had been reviewed at the Finance meeting on 19.03.2021 for agreement by the FGB. The FGB agreed the Lettings Policy • Finance Policy – This had been reviewed and approved subject to some minor changes at the recent finance committee meeting on 19.03.2021. • Before and After School Club – This had been reviewed and no amendments were required. • Freedom of Information – Governors learned that the HT had thoroughly checked for any amendments required, particularly in view of Brexit. There were no amendments required. • High Interest High Skills – The Inclusion Manager had reviewed this policy. It was noted that this was not a statutory policy. The FGB agreed the policy. • Relationships and Sex Education – The governors were asked for a member of the FGB to be part of a working party on the new requirements. Mrs Catriona Stringer agreed to take on this role. • Virtual FGB meetings Standing Order – There were no amendments to this Standing Order. However, the HT asked for governor agreement in adding an addendum that in line with Government recommendation, governors (who would be visitors to the school) are asked to take a lateral flow test before visiting. Governors agreed to this and the HT will ask the Office Manager to make kits available for the governors. • Home School Agreement – The HT had liaised with the CoG to put forward some recommendations. It was agreed to send the HSA off to the publishers so that it was in line with 	<p>Clerk to add addendum to Virtual FGB SO to reflect introduction of lateral flow tests for governors</p>

	other documents developed over the last 18 months. This was agreed.	
12	GDPR No breaches to report	
13	SAFEGUARDING The Safeguarding monitoring governors would be arranging a visit after Easter and would email their requirements.	Safeguarding visit after Easter
14	<p>SEND Governors received assurance from the SEN governor that the lockdown hadn't negatively impacted on the SEN pupils and that 38% attendance of these pupils was testament to that. This was significantly higher than non-SEN provision. Class teachers had liaised with the SENCo to adjust resources for home learning and held Microsoft Teams and telephone conversations. Some children had individualised plans and the example of BEAM being delivered via recorded video was an excellent example of continuing with an intervention. Statutory processes such as annual reviews and referrals to outside agencies still continued to take place.</p> <p>On returning to school staff had delivered individual return programmes to include social stories etc. All lockdown provision had been appropriately documented.</p> <p>Teachers would be assessing to see what additional things need to be put in place. The Team 5 monitoring meeting would focus on the targeted support put in place for children so that SEN children make the progress they deserve and meet the outcomes on their individual plans.</p>	
15	STAFF WELLBEING Following the delivery of wellbeing training by Mrs Hannah Pullen, Inclusion Manager, prior to the start of the meeting there was no further discussion.	
16	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT The LA governor reported that there was to be a community art project involving the Artist in Residence for Kings Hill, Yinka Llori in collaboration with the Turner Contemporary Art Gallery. The art was to be displayed at each of the six entrances to the linear park. The involvement of schools within the collaborative group was discussed. The HT felt this was something that would not only provide a good opportunity for pupils to be involved in for the community, but that it would enrich the curriculum and the children's creativity. The HT would speak to the other HT's within the collaborative group and the LA governor would provide further details on the project.	<p>HT to speak to HT's within collaborative group re community art project.</p> <p>LA governor to update on community art project</p>
17	<p>IMPACT OF MEETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellbeing training delivered prior to meeting by the Inclusion Manager, Mrs Hannah Pullen Financial updated provided by chair of finance committee. Mrs. Louise Connelly to join the Finance Committee Approval of support staff pay awards following pay committee recommendation 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust monitoring from governors (written reports to follow) all of which highlight the outstanding support provided to all pupils during the national lockdown • Policy Review – Review and approval of policies as set out in item 9. Governors to be offered lateral flow tests when visiting the school to be added as an addendum to the SO for Virtual Governance meetings. Mrs Catriona Stringer to join the working party for the review of Relationships and Sex Education policy. • HT report – Continually high attendance confirming parents confidence in pupils returning to school • SEND monitoring visit reiterated that lockdown had not had a negative impact on the learning of SEN pupils. • Community engagement – School keen to work with Artist in Residence to be part of a community art project. • Governor monitoring pairs 	
18	ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS None	
19	<p>CHAIR'S ACTIONS/CORRESPONDENCE The chair had signed the return to school risk assessment as an urgent chair's action. This had been circulated to the FGB and a copy attached to these minutes.</p> <p>Governors were reminded of the need to have replacement for Mr Tony Steel on the Finance Committee. Mrs Louise Connelly who has attended finance training for governors agreed to join the committee. Mrs Catriona Stringer kindly agreed to replace Mr Steel as a Health & Safety governor.</p> <p>The CoG had also attended the FODS AGM and discussed with the FGB that they were having to be very innovative in the way that they raise funds for the school. The CoG was mindful that the school should be seen as being part of the local community. At the FODS AGM she had discussed various suggestions of raising the profile of the school within the community at future FODS events. Governors agreed that it was important to support FODS in whatever ways they could.</p> <p>The Chair asked governors if they would kindly complete the NGA 360% appraisal for part of her NGA Chair's course.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Gina Donaldson for attending the meeting. Gina commented that she had found it very useful and how the discussion had shown how well governors know the school. GD left the meeting.</p>	
20	CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS 4.2. Update on governor actions from FGB meeting 01.02.21. Please refer to confidential items part 2 of these minutes.	

21	<u>UPCOMING DATES</u> Nothing to record	
22	<u>UPCOMING IMPACT MONITORING VISITS</u> CoG to action a plan for monitoring visits in line with SIP	
23	<u>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.</u> Monday 24 th May 6.30 pm to discuss the new school budget	

Signed Chair/Vice Chair

Dated

Governor Actions

<u>Item No</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
3	SFVS for review by Finance Committee 12.05.2021	Finance Committee
4.2	School Business Plan for review by Finance Committee	Finance Committee
4.2	Clerk to send statutory list of policies to H&S governor	Clerk
13	Wellbeing questionnaire results to be fed back to FGB	Wellbeing governor/DHT/HT
6	Monitoring Visits – for all governors to submit written reports on monitoring visits	All governors
8	Head Teacher’s Report – Covid Catch up report to be amended to reflect assessment data and to share with FGB.	HT
9	Virtual Governance Standing Order – Clerk to add an addendum to SO to reflect request for lateral flow tests for governors when visiting school. HT to request Office Manager arranges for a box of lateral flow tests to be available for governors. Relationships and Sex Education policy – CS to attend working group to review	Clerk to governors HT CS
13	Safeguarding – Monitoring governors to email their requirements for a monitoring visit after Easter	Safeguarding governors
14	Community Art Project – LA governor to provide HT/FGB with updates on Community Art Project. HT to communicate details of community art project to the HT’s within the collaborative group	DW HT

