

LYDGATE JUNIOR SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11th MARCH 2021

Present: Rosemary Fletcher (Chairperson); Stuart Jones (Headteacher); David Kyffin; Julie Farrell; Andrew Hogg; Toyin Aderiye; Mark Alexander; Alix Wall; Simon Hamilton; Tom Finnemore; Ruth Tully

In Attendance: David Smith (Clerk to the Governors)
Jo Drury

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Marelize Joubert and Maureen Neill these were accepted.

2. Declaration of pecuniary interests relevant to this agenda

Governors were asked to declare any pecuniary interests relevant to the agenda. There were no pecuniary interests declared.

3. Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting and report on matters arising from the minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2020 be approved and signed.

Matters arising from the minutes

Page 3 – Simon Hamilton agreed to be vice chair
page 5 - Training re RRS sent out but will sent again
Page 6 – Skill audit – will be discussed at next meeting

There were no other matters arising from the minutes.

4. Conduct of the meetings in the coming year – whether to continue virtual attendance.

The Headteacher spoke on this item. The possibility of face-to-face meetings was discussed but version 12 of the Risk Assessment advises on virtual meetings. The possibility of blended meetings with face to face and some attending via zoom was discussed and the Headteacher said that this was technically feasible at little extra cost. The Headteacher said that virtual while not ideal, was easier and more efficient in terms of time and travelling. Simon Hamilton said that it was preferable to hold face to face meetings as contact prior and after the meeting is always valuable and, in his experience, holding meetings when some are in the room and others on-line did not work

ACTION

Alix Wall

well.

The meeting concluded that the next meeting would take place virtually via Zoom and review the situation in the summer.

5. **Review of Governing Board membership and vacancies**

The meeting thanked Jacqui Hoole who had resigned in January for her contribution to the governing board. The chair welcomed new Parent governors Tom Finnemore and Ruth Tully. The meeting in December was informed that there were an additional 3 Co-opted governor vacancies. It was agreed that these be left vacant until the results of a skills audit of governors was conducted. This was agreed and approved by the Governors.

**Headteacher –
Governor skills’
Audit**

6. **Committee minutes and reports from governors with curriculum links**

There were none to report.

7. **Headteacher’s report**

Prior to the meeting the Headteacher had emailed a comprehensive document and spoke through the salient points of the report at the meeting and invited questions. The COVID restrictions in the last 8 weeks had caused disruption and difficulty for children, parents and staff. The school had approximately 31% of children attending, not all fulltime.

REMOTE LEARNING - Details of the delivery of remote learning were shared with the governors and also the outcome of a parental survey. The survey showed an overall very positive picture, with over 80% of respondents happy, or better, with what the school offered. The problem was managing expectations for all. The focus was on individualisation as far as possible. The learning curve for staff was steep as the school did not have the time from Sept to December to really develop remote learning as the vast majority of children were in school. There were no great changes planned as a response to the survey, and all remote learning had currently stopped with all children back at school.

HEALTH & SAFETY – COVID added to the worry and anxiety and had a whole range of impacts on Health & Safety management. Very low numbers of pupils or staff had to isolate, and as far as the school can tell there has been no transmission at school. LFD tests indicated one positive test result. Pupil attendance in the autumn term was 98%, when the national average was 88% for Primary School pupils. The school had taken every reasonable measure to protect staff, despite this a serious allegation of improper practice and coercion of staff to attend the workplace was made to a number of authority bodies by a member or members of staff through their Trade Union(s). This resulted in investigation of the complaint by the local authority, Health and Safety, Public Health and South Yorkshire Police. No action was taken by any of these bodies after their investigations.

SAFEGUARDING - More 'vulnerable' children had attended school during the period of restricted attendance than previously, a deliberate action to ensure the school had close contact with particular children and families. Almost all children with recognised additional needs, and those attracting Pupil Premium, attended. Others were contacted frequently and directly by teachers and leaders.

Simon Hamilton asked if the school had concerns around sharing sensitive information in a remote world.

The Headteacher replied that the school was working with Lydgate Infants and using the same system so data can be stored in a similar way (CPOMS).

TEACHING & LEARNING - Focus and effort has been on provision during the pandemic, and much less on curriculum development. The school is aware, however, of the need to rapidly gauge where the children stand in relation to their prior learning position and compared to expectations. This data, as soon as it is available, will shape provision change.

TRAINING - Training was taking place for a number of support staff and specific teachers from a variety of specialist agencies. At a training day in February Teresa Heathcote had worked on English and leaders are meeting with senior staff to discuss next steps. Mandy Lee was taking a teacher training course to achieve qualified teacher status (QTS). School is covering part of the course fees, and approving leave to complete a second school placement. National Award for SENDCOs - Three teachers have asked to take up the training and school will benefit from improved knowledge and skills.

Simon Hamilton asked if the school had a broad training strategy for developing skills or was it just what the teachers wanted to do?

The Headteacher replied that it is both. The English training was as a result of the gender gap in writing which was an issue that needed to be addressed. The SENCO training is what the staff wished to do, but also a priority for the school. The workload of the current SENCO Beth was increasing therefore it is sensible to develop a 'team'.

SITE ISSUES – FOLA are looking to develop the playgrounds. The outcome is a drive to improve / renovate the lower playground play surface and to transform play markings. The school was trying to run interventions, PPA, remote learning and actual in person teaching, all from the one set of buildings, however this was proving difficult. Some activities had not run as there were no rooms available, or spaces were not ventilated and so were marked as out of use. The school was still finding it impossible to restart peripatetic instrument lessons due to lack of spaces.

PARTNERSHIPS - these had continued on-line. Some activity has had to continue, such as moderation of SEND assessments, while others, such as peer partnership in school review, has been postponed or stopped. Some partnerships, such as the Headteacher local S10LP is strengthened through

sharing practice and learning during the pandemic response.

COSTS – COVID changes had been costly but not at a level that had made the school eligible for extra funding. To maintain in-class provision the school had to engage more supply staff than budgeted for. Enhanced cleaning had seen huge increases in ancillary costs – gas, water, cleaning materials are significantly higher (by as much as 30% year on year).

Income has dropped • Trips are currently embargoed, • Visitors are discouraged and therefore limited, • Music provision is changed, and the music room is out of use, • Lunchtime activity is reduced to prevent groups mixing, • Out of hours enhancements have stopped.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENTS – Julie Farrow and Jo Drury led on this item. They discussed the introduction of the RSE curriculum in September and the necessary steps that needed to be completed in time for its successful launch. A requirement of its introduction is that a consultation process be conducted, and this would soon be undertaken with parents. They would receive a curriculum overview and an explanation of how this would fit into the current RRS school ethos. Parents would then be asked for their opinions and if they would like other items to be covered. In April /May a group would be set up to discuss the outcomes of the survey and inform the curriculum. By June a final policy would need to be created and then teachers would work to integrate with the RRS model. This needed to be finalised for delivery in September. Jo Drury then gave greater detail on the elements of the RSE curriculum and how it linked with current PSHE and RRS activities that the school was already delivering. Julie stated that staff were in agreement with these changes and training and developments were already in place.

The Headteacher stated it was difficult to hold a consultation process in the middle of a pandemic but that it was necessary. A few schools had already started and some of the content had raised concerns and passions were raised about what should or should not be delivered. The focus is not to promote any issues but to raise awareness.

Simon Hamilton said that it would always be a problem as parents would have a wide range of what they would consider should be in the curriculum. Is there any guidance on how to resolve these potential disagreements?

Julie Farrell replied that the only thing that can be done is to have an open discussion and allow sufficient time to consult with parents. The only optional item is the nature of sex education.

The Headteacher stated that RRS would be part of the national curriculum so the school is not allowed to opt out and neither are the children, however he was aware that some parents may have different opinions.

Toyin Aderiye asked if the governors would need a specific link to the RSE curriculum.

Julie Farrell stated that this would be a good idea and give a voice to the governors.

Simon Hamilton agreed it was a good idea and this would show that a proper consultation process had been followed.

Julie Farrell agreed to email governors with details of the consultation process.

Julie Farrell

The Chair thanked Julie and Jo for their detailed presentation.

PLACES PLANNING – The Headteacher outlined that there was potential to lose up to 16 children for the intake over the next 5 years. However, the infants were at present full. This situation would be monitored.

PUPIL PREMIUM GRANT and Catch-up funding

Julie Farrell gave an outline of the pupil premium spending report and indicated that the report was now on the website. It was an historical document covering the previous year. The Headteacher discussed the current spending including the catch-up funding. January to March had increased staffing to provide three bubbles and to deliver quality remote learning, hopefully minimising the need for intervention activity. This would mean by Easter 95% of the funding would be spent and senior leaders had begun conversations on how to progress post Easter. The focus would be on identified need.

FAIR ACCESS – pupil admission

The Headteacher gave an account of 2 children who had recently joined the school under the ‘looked after’ criteria.

SEND – The Headteacher outlined the sustained and increasing demands on the school SENCO and suggested that more provision was needed. The workload was increasing in assessing and then dealing with the demands of bureaucracy, he outlined three cases to highlight the difficulties faced.

Simon Hamilton said that in his ‘Governor visit’ he saw an increase in numbers but more importantly the complexity of needs, and that this was a long-term problem.

The Headteacher stated that demands on time had increased but this was not unique to the school. He welcomed the opportunity to discuss at the resources committee meeting.

Resources Committee

The Chair thanked the Headteacher for the report.

Data Progress

Julie Farrell led on this item and discussed the table from the December assessments:

Y3	Reading	Writing	Maths	Combined
2019	73%	67%	73%	59%
2020	60%	52%	67%	47%

Y4	Reading	Writing	Maths	Combined
2019	84%	74%	81%	65%
2020	81%	79%	79%	65%

Y5	Reading	Writing	Maths	Combined
2019	79%	74%	73%	61%
2020	78%	64%	75%	60%

Y6	Reading	Writing	Maths	Combined
2019	71%	64%	71%	57%
2020	79%	71%	73%	61%

The colour coding shows the passage of cohorts – the 'green' year group was in Y3 in 2019 and is now the Y4 year group, and so on.

There was no formal data for the current Y3 cohort from KS1.

The data could be used to indicate how groups may have progressed, in line with expected standards i.e. a drop in percentage between year groups might indicate a loss of learning.

Y4 – up in all three areas from the previous year

Y5 – down in all three areas

Y6 – steady: at the same level as the previous year

The plan was to focus on Y5 and check the daily lesson engagement during lockdown and in next two weeks undertake formal assessments. This would inform Parents' Evening discussions and was the reason for the delay in Parents' Evenings.

Toyin Aderiye stated that parents would be anxious of testing due to the differences in engagement and their ability to help. Would the children also be anxious?

Julie Farrell replied that the children should not be worried as this is normal in school and happens 3 times a year. It would be important to assess the gaps especially with the differences of engagement and experiences of remote learning. The school

needed this data to close the gaps in learning.

The Headteacher said that these assessments would be spread over a 3-week period and combined with fun activities and the parents' consultations would be conducted when the school had the data.

Andrew Hogg asked if there was any national or local data to benchmark against the school?

Julie Farrell indicated that up to date data is not available at a national level and that the school was comparing with where it was the previous years.

The Headteacher indicated that there would be some S10 partnership moderation as national data would be delayed.

Simon Hamilton suggested that this made it difficult for governors to assess the school.

The Headteacher agreed and a further complication was that some of the staff would also have difficulty in assessing as they were lacking the experience, and this was why in school and partnership moderation was important. The Headteacher agreed to send the results of the forthcoming assessments to governors as soon as possible.

Headteacher

8. Receive report on spend of Pupil Premium and Sports Premium Grants in previous school year

This was covered in the Headteacher's report.

9. Review of School Improvement Plan

COVID disruptions meant that the priorities were the same.

10. Review of Governor training opportunities

The Chair discussed the training on offer and directed governors to the recent email giving training details.

11. Any other urgent business

The Chair thanked the staff for their hard work and dedication during the recent disrupted term. David Kyffin echoed these sentiments and stated that the staff had been amazing.

There was no other urgent business.

12. The date and time of the next meeting

Agreed that the next meeting be held on 8th July 2021 via Zoom.

Meeting closed at 21:10