



**Minutes of a meeting of the full Governing Body  
of William Fletcher Primary School  
on Friday 15 May 2020 at 10.30 am**

***Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, this meeting was held online using Microsoft Teams***

**Present:**

Andrew Lister (AL) (Co-opted)  
Anna Isles (AI) (Co-opted)  
David Hinde (DH) (Parent)  
Oliver Petter (OP) (Local Authority)  
Daniel Wickham-Jones (DWJ) (Parent)  
Rosie Staniland (RS) (Staff)  
Deborah Nind (DN) (Headteacher)  
Kate Hopcraft (KH) (Parent)  
Kate Thorpe (KT) (Parent)  
Trish Amesbury (TA) (Co-opted) (Chair)  
Vicky Ball (VB) (Co-opted) (Vice Chair)

**In attendance:**

Evie Lonsdale (EL) (Clerk)

This virtual meeting took place while lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic was in progress.

**1. Welcome**

**TA** welcomed governors to the meeting and expressed her hope that everyone was keeping well.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies.

**3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests**

No declarations were made.

**4. Plan for 1 June 2020**

**DN** told governors that there had been a considerable amount of guidance published since the announcement on Sunday that the government wanted children in Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 6 to return to school from 1 June. **DN** reported that she and her team had drafted a plan which had been shared with the SLT. **DN** said that she had been ringing TAs who had not been in school since lockdown, and talking through the plan with them,

checking whether they were able to return to work. She confirmed that the plan had also been discussed with class teachers who would experience changes in their roles after the half term holiday. She suggested that governors consider the plan first, before going through the risk assessment.

**DN** introduced the plan by explaining that the government guidance recommends small groups of no more than 15 children in each. She explained that she had created teams of children and teachers and that she had assumed, for the moment, that all of the children in the Foundation, Year 1 and Year 6 would return, although she would be writing to parents and carers to ask for an indication of what they intended to do after the May half term break, so that the school can obtain a clearer idea of numbers.

#### *Team 1: Foundation Stage*

**DN** explained that this would be divided into two groups. She told governors that there are currently 31 in Foundation Stage, so if all the children returned, an additional group would have to be created.

**DN** said that Hannah Haynes would lead one group, with the support of two TAs. Emma Coulson (the Kestrel class teacher) would take the other group. She explained that this had not yet been shared with parents.

One of the groups would stay in the classroom, while the other would move either into Swallow classroom or into the Howard Hillsdon Room.

**DN** confirmed that there had been particular planning around children arriving and departing to minimise the risk of contact. As a result, she said, the Foundation Stage children would be asked to arrive at 9.15 am and to leave at 2.30 pm.

**DN** referred to the discussion at the last governors' meeting concerning a possible one-way system around the school site. She reported that she had contacted the nursing home and that they had agreed to the school using the nursing home lane, so that the children would come up the lane, in through the top gates and be taken to class by their parents; the parents would then leave the site via the pedestrian entrance onto Rutten Lane. She emphasised that the parents would not be able to come into the classroom itself with their children in order to minimise the number of adults coming onto the school site, as referred to in the risk assessment. She added that she would ask that only parent should accompany a child.

**DN** recorded her thanks to the nursing home for allowing the use of their lane, and commented that the new system would initially require some volunteers to guide parents and children into and out of school. She asked whether the governors would be able to give their time to help facilitate this.

#### *Team 2: Year 1*

**DN** explained that Paul Austin (KS1 Lead) would be with his usual class but that they would be accommodated in the Owl classroom so that the Foundation Stage children could use the Swallow classroom.

She confirmed that **RS** would remain teaching in Kingfisher class.

**DN** reported that Liz McDonnell was shielding, so would be unavailable to teach her class in school but that she would be working from home, supervising the online learning for the Year 2s and for any Year 1s who remain at home.

**DN** said that Kelly Parsons and Sarah Buchanan would be teaching Nightingale class between them – Kelly works two full days and an afternoon, and Sarah would cover the other days.

**DN** confirmed that these classes would have 2 full time and 3 part time TAs joining them, and that Karen Chambers would also join this team as SENCO, as well as supervising the Year 3 and 4 online learning. She explained that when Sarah is not teaching Nightingale class, she would also be supervising the Year 3 and 4 online learning. She added that this is a new role for Sarah who has never taught KS1 children before, but said that she would be working alongside a very experienced TA.

#### *Team 3 – Year 6*

**DN** told governors that Caeron Philips, Emma Brown and Amy Lancaster would work with their own classes and that there are two full-time TAs and three part-time TAs to support them. She said that **AL** had been asked to support Year 5 online learning, but that it was becoming clear that children of key workers who have not been in school until now had been starting to ask for spaces on 1 June. As a result of the increased demand, she said, **AL** may have to have a 'bubble' of these children to work with.

#### *Team 4 – Vulnerable and key worker children*

**DN** reported that one of the most experienced TAs, Rachael, had been asked to manage the vulnerable and key worker children who were already in school. She reminded governors that the DfE guidance states that if there are insufficient teachers to manage a class, a school can use the teaching assistants, if they are supported by another teacher. As a result, **AL** would be working alongside Rachael in Kestrel class with these children. **DN** commented that this group is an undefined number at the moment.

**DN** emphasised that it was important to keep children in their own groups, not mixing with other groups. She said that the children would play in their own group of 15, in a specific part of the playground or field. She added that they should have their own play equipment, only used by children in their own group. Year 6 would be arriving at 8.45 am and leaving at 2.45 pm, and there would be no early morning or after school clubs, in accordance with DfE guidance.

*PPA guidance*

**DN** referred to the PPA (Planning, Preparation and Assessment) time of half a day a week, saying that there is no guidance around how this should work at the moment but that the plan was for TAs to support classes to allow teachers time to plan as they normally would in PPA time.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda'.

Dated: October 14, 2020

### *Lunchtimes*

**DN** explained that lunchtimes would have to be staggered so that children in Foundation Stage and KS1 would have lunch in the hall; in between sittings, there would need to be a deep clean before the next group of children came in.

### *First Aid*

**DN** confirmed that all school staff are first aid trained, referring to the additional concern now about children who might come into school presenting with symptoms of Covid-19. She proposed that any children with symptoms should be sent straight to the medical room, where **DN** or Sandra would manage them. She told governors that the school had ordered face masks, aprons, and gloves, as well as two visors, for the protection of staff in case they did need to manage children with symptoms.

**DN** referred to the guidance which suggested that staff regularly clean surfaces with disinfectant. She commented that this is a whole new way of working and that the staff would have to work very hard with children in terms of managing hand washing, but that hopefully parents had been reinforcing this message with children at home.

### Governors' questions

**KH** asked whether there would be sufficient lunches for the children, and whether these would be taken indoors. **DN** replied that the school had already been in contact with Fresh Start about setting up lunches for FSM children. She said that it looked as if it would be a cold service (ie sandwiches etc) and that, if the weather was nice, children would sit outside on the grass. She added that all of the advice suggests that being outside as much as possible is preferable.

**DWJ** asked whether there was a plan in place in case the teachers managing the Year 1 and 6 children became ill. **DN** answered that there were different contingencies for the different teams: for Foundation Stage, she would take over; for Year 1, it would be Karen Chambers; for Year 6, it would be **AL** (depending on how many vulnerable and key worker children there were). She said that if there were insufficient teachers to cover, parents would have to be told that their children would not be able to come into school, although there were TAs in Year 6 who could be used as cover. She added that, as this is an unprecedented situation, the contingency plans could not be set in stone – for example, there would be concerns about TAs taking on whole groups of children long term.

**TA** asked whether the school would be able to access bank staff, and **DN** answered that the advice was to contact the local authority to see whether they could share staff from other schools.

**DH** raised a question about the content of the curriculum for Year 6, particularly as SATs would not be taking place. **DN** replied that the guidance from the DfE states that for Year 6, there must be work around supporting their mental health and any emotional issues that crop up from having spent time away from school, and living through this worrying time. She also said that the DfE guidance is to prepare the Year 6 children for transition eg

discussing making the move to secondary school, what the changes will feel like, and things they need to prepare for and think through. She confirmed that, as the children will not be able to go and visit the secondary school this year, the staff were looking at setting up a virtual session with the secondary school teachers, to enable the children to have at least some contact with secondary school teachers.

Referring to the DfE guidance, **DN** explained that the school would review where the children were in English and Maths – identifying which areas need further work on to get them back to where they would have been. She said that this was going to be a challenge.

**DH** asked whether the Year 6 classes were likely to be full, or whether they would be run on a rotation with 15 children in school and 15 out of school. **DN** replied that each of the Year 6 classes had 12 children, so even if all the parents sent their children in, there would be no problem with numbers.

**KT** asked about the children remaining at home, saying that during school hours all the members of staff would be teaching children in some capacity. She asked what provision there would be for the children who could be in school but whose parents have chosen not to send them back, as well as the other year groups who are still at home. **DN** set out the plan for children at home:

*KS1:* Liz McDonnell would be managing Year 2 online learning, and supporting children in Year 1 who were still at home;

*Years 3 and 4:* Karen and Sarah would be supervising the learning;

*Year 5:* **AL** would be supporting these children.

*Year 6:* the teachers will have their children in school, and will also have TA support, so will have the possibility of contacting any children at home, during the day, to review their work.

**DN** reported that Emma Coulson had discussed keeping in touch with her children in Kestrel class, and said that, with the support of the two TAs, it should be possible for her to find time during the school day to check their online learning.

**DN** added that she was keen for the staff to leave the school site as soon as possible after the children go home, for three reasons:

- 1) The cleaners need to have access to all areas without having to come into contact with other adults on the school site;
- 2) The teachers need to have a chance to think about what will be happening the following day, and to have a look at what their children have been doing online;
- 3) The need to reduce meeting times to a minimum, and meetings will be done virtually. There had been two virtual meetings since lockdown, and that these had worked well – there had been CPD training, and last week they had discussed some of the content of this meeting. **DN** explained that it is an imperfect solution, but that she was trying to support teachers and create times when they might be able to communicate with the children who were continuing to work from home.

**KT** asked whether the school could use the BBC platform rather than preparing its own resources, to alleviate pressure on teachers, and **DN** replied that the staff had discussed using the Oak Academy Resources, a good resource for KS1. She told governors that she was confident that, as a lot of the TAs were very experienced, they should be able to support children with their home learning throughout the day.

**KT** referred to families with children in more than one year group, asking whether they would have to go all the way around on the one-way system. **DN** confirmed that staff would speak to families individually to negotiate how to manage this, and that it was important to maintain the sense of community while adhering to safety guidelines.

## **5. Risk assessment**

**DN** drew governors' attention to the risk assessment, saying that the school could not allow people to stop off at the school office to chat, hand things over etc. She said that there would have to be communication via phone or email, and that she had been looking at how to make at how to make the school office safer, for instance a social distance between the two desks has been created.

**DN** referred to the earlier discussion about contact between children, saying that the staff had put up posters around school reminding people to wash their hands. She said that it was important to ensure that they had good air circulation around the school, so windows and doors should be open as much as possible. She commented that there was an issue with having doors open so that people do not have to touch them, and not having doors open because they are fire doors. She said that she would need to talk to the Health and Safety team about this problem.

**DN** told governors that the staff had discussed having entrance doors to the bathrooms open and ensuring that only one child goes in at a time.

She announced that the Year 6 end of term celebration would have to be cancelled, saying that there would be no school assemblies, but said that she would be looking at how to mark the end of primary school milestone for the Year 6 children.

**DN** concluded by referring to the earlier mention of staggered breaktimes, saying that it would also be important to ensure that in locations like the staffroom and the photocopier area, adults were clear about the guidelines for those spaces.

**DN** invited questions from governors.

**AI** said that many of the children would be looking forward to seeing their friends, and asked whether this had been borne in mind in deciding how to divide the groups up. **DN** replied that Hannah Haynes would be deciding on the groups and that she would group them around friendships. But **DN** emphasised that it would be difficult to enforce social distancing with young children, and she referred to the government guidance which states that it is impossible to get young children to physically distance themselves – they cannot do it. She

told governors that it was important to be realistic about that, and to make it clear to parents that the school could not guarantee that any of their children will be physically distanced from other people. She emphasised that this will be part of the parents' own risk assessment when thinking about whether to send their children back to school.

**DH** asked whether the parents were obliged to send their children back to school; **DN** answered that they were not, and that it was a matter for parental choice. She told governors that the DfE had said that if the parents chose not to send their child to school at this time, they would not be penalised. She confirmed that, when she and **TA** send the letter out to parents, it should make it clear what the school could and could not do. She said that, for instance, the school could organise children into groups of 15 and keep these groups separate, and they could ensure that they were in contact with only a small group of adults, but they could not guarantee that the children would be able to physically distance themselves from each other and the adults. She emphasised that this meant it was the parents' responsibility to make their own risk assessment, with no pressure from school.

**DH** pointed out that some parts of the country had higher R numbers than others. **DN** replied that in Oxfordshire the numbers were relatively low compared to other areas, adding that it was the North East which had been worst hit. She agreed that it was something which the school should monitor, but said that at the moment it was not something which the local government authority was advising on.

**DH** asked about the Kowazaki risk (the inflammatory response which seems to be related to children). **DN** answered that this was a worry, but that it was a small number of children that have been affected. She said that it seemed to have so many different symptoms, but emphasised that the staff were being hyper-vigilant about symptoms that children might display. By way of example, she referred to the high pollen count, citing one of the children who had severe hayfever. She said that, at the start, the staff had wondered if this was Covid-19 and he was sent home as a result. She agreed that, because of the present unsettling times, the staff were being hyper-vigilant, but pointed out that there was an expectation upon parents too – parents should check their children daily for symptoms which may be concerning. If any symptoms were present, the parents would be asked to keep their children at home.

**DH** asked whether there should be a symptom tracking resource signposted in the letter to parents, and **DN** agreed that there should.

**TA** asked whether teachers and pupils would be expected to wear masks throughout the school day. **DN** answered that the DfE guidance so far is that neither staff nor children will need to be wearing face masks in school. She said that the only time PPE had been mentioned was in dealing with children displaying Covid-19 symptoms.

**OP** thanked **DN** for her thorough plan and risk assessment, and asked whether, if a student came down with symptoms, the whole class would need to isolate. **DN** replied that the child should go home straight away. She said that the DfE had guidance on how to notify other

parents and members of staff, and that, if a child displayed symptoms, the other families should be notified, but that children would still be able to come into school if not displaying symptoms.

**OP** asked whether, if staff were presenting with symptoms, there was a way in which they could be tested as key workers. **DN** answered that the school had been told that staff would be getting a test if they displayed symptoms. Parents would be notified and later informed of the results.

**KH** asked what would happen about a staff member's family if they displayed symptoms; **DN** replied that the DfE advice was that the whole family should be tested. She commented that this area should be reviewed and added to the risk assessment.

**DH** asked where the staff would get tested, and **DN** replied that there were testing centres all around the county, some set up in park and ride car parks etc. She added that there was one in Bicester village, and said that only key workers could be tested.

**KT** asked how the staff felt about coming back on 1 June. **RS** answered that they were feeling confident about the approach being taken, and said it was clear to everyone that the school would only open while the safety of staff and children could be achieved. She said that a big concern for teachers was whether the focus was more on social distancing or on wellbeing, and that the government was not being clear on that. She said that they wondered whether, as teachers, they should be trying everything possible to social distance, or instead be focussing on calming the children's anxieties. **AL** referred to the union advice that teachers should not be engaging in any planning, because the unions were being very negative about it. He commented that the school staff were engaging with the plans and that it was assumed everyone would be making themselves available, other than those shielding. He added that the advice from the union is out there and that the union was supposed to be in talks that day, and that this should be considered, but he could see that people did not seem to be following the union line. He emphasised that everyone is in a position where nobody knows the true risk factors and it seemed that people would go with their own feelings.

On behalf of the governors, **TA** extended sincere thanks to the teachers, and especially to **DN** and Sandra for taking responsibility for any children displaying symptoms of Covid-19.

**DN** told governors that there had been considerable discussion around the changing roles, and that she hoped it had been clear to all teaching staff that there was no pressure to do anything that they did not feel able to do. She emphasised that, if a member of staff said they did not feel able to do something, then they should feel they could say so, and it would be managed. She added that if this meant there were some children who would be unable to come into school, then that was a situation that the school would deal with.

It was agreed that in the letter to parents it should be said that this may all be subject to change.

**DN** told governors that the staff had discussed having only Year 1 children in on the first Monday, and that the day is spent settling them in. The following day, the Year 6 children would be in, and then Foundation Stage children a day later, so that the return to school is staggered and the adults could get used to managing the groups.

**DH** asked whether there had been any children of keyworkers who have presented with symptoms, and **DN** replied that there had not.

**VB** asked if there had been any parents contacting the school about their response. **DN** answered that there had been three key worker parents who had not yet sent their children to school but who would want to do so in June; other than that, she had had no correspondence.

A governor commented that because it was only seven weeks until the summer holidays, perhaps many parents would not take up the offer of sending their children back, as it was understandable that parents would be anxious and needed to feel confident. Governors discussed how the letter to parents could help them in making their decision. **DN** agreed that she would include a link to the DfE guidance on what should be taught to the children at this time. Governors agreed that this was a good course of action. **Action: DN** to include the link to the DfE guidance in the letter.

**DN** commented that the question of how to manage children's anxiety is an interesting one and that these feelings could manifest themselves in very different ways eg for children who live in flats without a garden, the experience of lockdown will have been very different to that of other children. She emphasised that there were nuances not just between schools, but between individual children and their experiences of lockdown, and said that the school had to consider the differences and ensure space was given to those feelings.

**DH** asked whether children would be able to run around at playtime. **DN** replied that break times would be difficult as social distancing goes against children's natural instincts. She referred to the earlier discussion, saying that the groups would each be using their own equipment and have their own space, and she confirmed that games where children have to touch each other eg tag, would be discouraged.

**OP** asked whether the school would be actively discouraging adults from socialising at drop off and collection times. **DN** replied that the school likes to encourage socialising but that at the moment parents should really be discouraged from talking around the school gates. She acknowledged that how this was enforced would be challenging. **KH** suggested that parents were kept at the end of the lane rather than congregating around the gate. **DN** commented that the staggered pick up times should help, as the 15 minute slots should be enough to move one set of parents off the site before the next set arrived. She said that staff would need to be present to encouraging social distancing during these times.

**TA** thanked **DN** and her staff team for their considerable work on the plan and the risk assessment, and noted that **DN** would be meeting with the partnership teachers on Monday to share the plans. **DN** reported that she hoped to send the letter to parents by Tuesday, as the school needed to have an indication of how many children would be coming back after half term.

**AI** asked when other groups of children might be introduced back into school. **DN** said that there was a lot of anxiety about the next step, because it would not be possible to stick to 15 pupils per class, so a rota would need to be implemented, and that is discouraged by the DfE. She said that she was awaiting advice from the DfE.

**KT** commented that in normal circumstances, there would be children coming into Foundation Stage in September entering a transition process, and she asked whether this would be happening this year. **DN** said that families who would have been doing this have been written to, but that there would not be any induction evenings for parents. She said that it would have to be paper-based this year, and that the school was in contact with the pre-school manager at Yarnnton because the hope was that the children who will be starting school in September would be visited at home, to help with integration. She reported that there had also been discussion about an online session with parents.

**DN** told governors that there would be interviews via MS Teams for a new Year 3/4 class teacher during the following week, and that, if an appointment was made, this would be shared with governors.

Further questions were encouraged.

The meeting ended at approximately 12.00 pm.

*Draft Minutes prepared by Evie Lonsdale  
Rewrite/final version prepared by Clare Saunders (20.06.2020)*

