

ELM GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL
Extraordinary Full Governing Board Meeting

2nd April 2020 11am



Present: Diana Boyd (Chair), Louise Willard (Head Teacher), Laura Haynes-Copp, Phil Kelly, Chris McNeill, Emma Sutton

Quorate: 6/12

In attendance: Anna Johnson, Clerk

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Leigh Ward, Hugh Mehta, Natalie Dodds and Sue Margolis
i. Declarations of any Interest in the Meeting - None

2. Business critical decisions: 2020 budget

- Penny Alexander from the local authority finance team had been supporting the school in the absence of Val Gates, School Business Manager.
- The Head reported that Covid-19 had had a negative impact on the school's finances due to loss of lettings income and a halt in PTA funds; in addition a high level of supply cover was required prior to school closure. The local authority had stated that supply arrangements put in place before school closure must be honoured and so this continued to have an impact. The school was also paying the council for the extra support with finance.
- The final outturn was not yet available as the finance team was handling a high volume of work. The last forecast had shown a deficit of £22,000, which was in contrast to the healthy underspend predicted at the last finance meeting. However, the final outturn is expected to be closer to a balance due to low expenditure since the school closed.
- A teaching assistant has given notice and the Head decision was not to appoint to the position as staffing requirements were uncertain in the short term.

Q. Would the school be able to implement furlough through the government's Job Retention Scheme?

A. The council has stated that this is not available for local authority employees but further advice may be received as time goes on.

- The Head had sent Hugh Mehta and Chris Adams an update on finance and would forward the end of year outturn when it is received. The deadline for the budget was confirmed as the 28th May.

Q. Is security of information being exchanged with the council being considered?

A. All communication was taking place through the secure council systems.

3. Provision of care for children who are vulnerable, children with ECHP plans, the children of key workers, associated risks and issues

The Head described her pride in the staff's positive, generous and efficient response during the Corona crisis.

- A spreadsheet listing all vulnerable children had been established by Sam Barfoot and Tammy Bowles, Inclusion Mentors and they had been contacting the parents of these children, asking what support the school could provide to assist them. Learning resources had also been sent to homes.
- Parents of some vulnerable children had been offered places for their children as respite.
- The PTA had donated money for a food bank and staff have been distributing food to homes. Parents and carers also donated items for food hampers.
- Social workers had contacted the school with information about safeguarding cases at the school which included a RAG rating for level of concern. The Head was leading safeguarding responsibility during the period of school closure.
- Children with Educational Health Care Plans would continue to participate in Zoom meetings with their Individual Needs Assistants.
- The Head was ensuring that a personal conversation with the children and families of all vulnerable children was taking place weekly.

Q. Has there been a tension between the care outlined in EHCP plans and the reality of providing it in the current circumstances?

A. There are 6 children with plans in the school. One pupil with an EHCP comes to school every day. An Individual Needs Assistant had provided support in the school for a while until they needed to isolate. Another INA had been attending a pupil's home following a risk assessment. One child in Reception with an EHCP was waiting for placement in a non mainstream setting.

Free School Meals

Ailsa Hickman had been very effectively supporting administration in relation to food vouchers.

Families were collecting lunch boxes from the school and following the closure of the school kitchen (due to kitchen staff needing to isolate), Woodingdean school had been delivering lunches to Elm Grove.

During the Easter holiday period, children attending the school would bring in their own pack lunch.

General information

The Head reported that attendance had been between 6-15 children a day. Essential key workers have used the booking system for their children.

The Holiday Club would be closed over the Easter holiday and the Head had asked staff to volunteer to provide care for children of key workers in school from 7.30 to 5.30. The Head explained that there were many key workers living in the local area. Cover required the presence of a teacher, a teaching assistant and an office worker, working in two shifts (morning and afternoon) and this had been quickly established. Following a more structured day during term time, the holiday provision would be play based.

4.	<p>Any issues arising from how the building is currently being used</p> <p><i>Q. What are the arrangements for cleaning the building and preventing spread of the virus?</i> A. Only two classrooms are being used and these are provided with lots of anti-bacterial spray and paper wipes. Cleaners have been directed to be extremely thorough in these areas.</p>
5.	<p>Support being given to parents and carers to help them educate their children at home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers who were self isolating had been creating learning opportunities on the website and were pleased to have time to develop their skills in this area. • The school had given out packs with a book, pencils and rubbers for all children prior to the school closure for them to record their work. • Governors praised the online learning provision available on the school website as well as the other resources for wellbeing in isolation and how to talk to children about the coronavirus. They agreed that creating a structure for the day via learning was helpful for families coping with social distancing and self-isolation. <p><i>Q. What feedback has been received regarding the online learning and the amount?</i> A. The response has been positive both to the content and the message about how to approach home learning.</p>
6.	<p>Monitoring the wellbeing and welfare of pupils, staff and stakeholders</p> <p>Governors noted that many mainstream support services for example the Samaritans were not operating normally or at all and this should be kept in mind in relation to the school's support for families.</p> <p>Diana Boyd agreed to send the links for Amaze's FAQs and information about BHISS offer for placement on the website. Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Head explained that teachers had invited parents to send any queries about the online learning by email and parents had been using this facility but not to an unworkable extent. • Teachers were attending the school according to a rota set up. A WhatsApp group has been set up for communication of operational information amongst staff. • The Head explained that she was being careful not to overload staff, but would be reminding them ahead of time to upload spring progress, as well as SEND and Edukey data. • The Head was monitoring the wellbeing of staff and checking in on those who are self-isolating. Those staff on sickness absence are also being contacted. • The Leadership team has decided that class reshuffles will not take place next academic year as full information would not be available and it would be too disruptive. • A leavers day for the current Year 6 is being planned citywide for a date in October. <p><i>Q. Have parents received information about safe use of the internet?</i> A. The Head confirmed that this was already on the website.</p>

	<p>Governors agreed that parents should be reminded of where information on how to manage this risk could be found regularly during school closure. Action</p> <p><i>Q. Has the new SENCo been able to have a handover?</i> A. Yes, Cara and Alexandra Graham had met for one day and had also had a virtual meeting. When the school required supply, the Head had been requesting Alexandra from the agency to give her more time to get to know the school and she was being copied into all staff emails.</p> <p><i>Q. Is video communication being used for contact with staff?</i> A. This would be too time consuming at the moment but the Head would consider cascading this to other team leads.</p>
7.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Head had appointed a new Reception teacher following an online interview process with three of the candidates out of six applications in total. The Head was delighted to announce the appointment of Hannah Mehta to the position. • Schools have been required by law to have a staff member with paediatric first aid training present for any children under 5. This applied to one child of a key worker who was attending the school and no staff currently able to attend school have this qualification. The mother works next door to the school and has confirmed that they have no other childcare options. <p>It was agreed that a risk assessment should be done as soon as possible and online paediatric first aid training should be investigated for the first aiders at the school. Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk to check general availability of governors and arrange a further online meeting in April. Action • The Chair directed governors to check BEEM website for guidance for governors. Action Areas covered on BEEM were levels of delegation, the impact on school priorities and consideration of a change in vision. It was agreed that revision of the committee work plans should be considered in advance of the next meeting. • Governors discussed whether regular communications from the board to parents during the closure should take place. This item would be added to April meeting agenda. Action • The Chair had talked to the Safeguarding governor and Health and Safety leads. These leads to check BEEM for information on their areas of monitoring. Action • Chair to contact Chris Adams and Tammy Bowles to check if they are able to participate in governance. Action <p><i>Q. How will the admissions process be affected?</i> A. Places would be emailed as usual and information and communication with new parents would take place online.</p>
8.	<p>Next meeting: April tbc, 21st May</p>

Chair's signature:

ACTION LOG OVERLEAF

ACTION LOG				
	Date	Action	Owner	Due Date
1.	02.04.20	DB to send links for Amaze's FAQs and information about BHISS offer to LW for placement on the website	DB/LW	
2.	02.04.20	LW to send regular reminders re Safety Net and online safety.	LW	
3.	02.04.20	LW to do risk assessment re paediatric first aid training and seek online training the first aiders at the school	LW	
4.	02.04.20	Clerk to check general availability of governors and arrange a further online meeting in April. Governor communication with families and work plans to be added to agenda.	AJ	
5.	02.04.20	All governors to check BEEM website for guidance for governors and for role specific information e.g. Health and Safety, Safeguarding	All	
6.	02.04.20	Chair to contact Chris Adams and Tammy Bowles to check if they are able to participate in governance.	DB	