



MINUTES OF THE LGB CATMOSE PRIMARY MEETING

Thursday 2 July 2020, 5PM
Via Microsoft Teams

Present

Kelly Jackson, Rachael Coyne, Sam Hearth (Chair), Sally Kirkby, Mel Pitkeathly, Mark Tinkler, Barney Thorne, Adam Lowe and Jim Burns.

In Attendance

Suzi Green (Clerk), Natalie Ray (Chief Finance Officer)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence

Sam Hearth welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Stuart Williams and Mike Cumming.

2. Declarations of Interest

Adam Lowe declared an interest due to his role at the Local Authority.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12 May 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2020 were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.

4. Matters arising from previous minutes

There were no matters arising.

5. Clerk's Update

Governors were reminded to complete their register of business interest forms which had been uploaded to the portal. These needed to be sent to the clerk as soon as possible. The governors were also directed to the code of conduct which was ratified by the Resources committee in May and will form part of any induction for future governors. The clerk asked governors to read the ESFA Academies Financial Handbook, particularly from page 60 which covered the schedule of requirements, ('the musts').

6. Covid-19 Update

Mrs Jackson explained that since the start of lockdown in March key worker and vulnerable children had been able to attend school using the facilities at Catmose College. The staff had been on a rota, although some staff were classed as vulnerable so they had not been required to attend. Attendance was 14/16 pupils.

After the half-term the DfE announced a wider offer for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils, meaning a return to Catmose Primary. The Reception and Year 1 pupils were placed in bubbles of a maximum of 15, plus there were two key worker/vulnerable bubbles limited to 15 places. Year 6 pupils were placed in 15 pupil bubbles located at Catmose College, offering excellent transition.

As time progressed more key workers asked for provision as they returned to work. The DfE guidance was then updated to allow more places in schools if schools had the capacity. Year 5 were invited to return, based at Catmose College. This in turn freed up more space in the key worker and vulnerable bubbles to meet parent demand. Year group teachers planned for classes in school, with home learning lessons set for year groups remaining at home. Many other primary schools are pointing parents in the direction of Oak Academy, however Catmose Primary are still planning weekly and using Class Dojo to keep in touch. All the children who hadn't yet returned to school had been invited to say goodbye to their current teacher, which would take place outside.

Question – What has been the biggest challenge?

Mrs Jackson explained that both the children and staff had been amazing at coping with the challenges, however some parents remained unhappy with the provision. They had asked the school to provide lessons via Zoom, but this was considered a safeguarding issue. Mrs Jackson stated that she subscribed to a Head Teachers' Forum and that it was considered that zoom lessons were not appropriate as children are not able to use this independently. Teachers are instead sending more bespoke learning which is more easily controlled.

Question – What was happening with regards to transition for the new reception pupils?

Mrs Jackson explained that all the new pupils had received a video with a welcome from herself plus a tour of the classroom from Mrs Hemming-Taylor, plus they had also received a letter and activities to complete. The first three days of the new academic year will consist of a staggered start. The 'Meet the Teacher Evening' which usually happens each September will be replaced by a Power Point for each class, with a classroom tour and teacher introductions which will be available on the website.

Question – How are you thinking of managing the wellbeing of returning children?

Mrs Jackson said that the school was expecting quite a lot of fall out following the closure of schools and this had been foremost in the teachers' minds. There would be the usual Forest Schools time, learning mentor times, as well as a Pixl focus on emotional health and wellbeing. Assemblies will be slightly different, and will take place on Microsoft Teams three days a week. The Stars Assembly will take place remotely for the foreseeable future.

Question – Is there any policy for the new term and for children whose parents choose not to send them back to school?

Mrs Jackson explained parents will have to send their children back to school and each class will be a bubble of 30. Reception children will be walked to their classroom door by parents. For other classes they will be met by their teachers and walked to their classes from the KS1 and KS2 playgrounds. Each class will have a row of tables in the lunch hall and their own assigned playground area. Resilient Rutland have donated money which has been used to purchase a parachute for each class as they will be unable to share equipment. There will also be two staff assigned to each bubble and each bubble will have access to their own toilets.

Mrs Jackson explained they were happy with the plans so far, but now they needed to look at wraparound care. The guidance stated that this doesn't have to be in the bubbles, but should be small, consistent groups. The computer suite and library will not be able to be used; the computer suite will be used as an isolation room, if required. However, each class has computers, so the children will not miss out.

Question – Have the vulnerable children been attending school and if not, have the school kept in contact?

Mrs Jackson confirmed most of the children were back in school, along with those pupils on the behaviour steps programme. They hadn't necessarily attended every day, but staff had kept in touch and closely monitored the situation.

Question – Had there been any downturn in behaviour?

Mrs Jackson said that some children had been nervous, however once they were back in school, they had been fine.

On behalf of the governors, Mrs Hearth thanked the staff for all their efforts and congratulated them on what an amazing job they had done.

7. Scorecards

Mrs Jackson explained that the outcomes for pupils were based on teacher predictions. The DfE do not require any outcomes.

Question – Looking at Year 6 data, was this cohort a lower achieving one?

Yes, this was going to be a year of good progress. Mrs Jackson explained this was by showing what they had achieved in KS1 and then what the aim was for KS2.

Question – Year 2 Reading and Writing greater depth SATs look slightly concerning, what are the plans?

Mrs Jackson explained that some of the children were nearly greater depth, but not quite. It was noted that a large proportion of Year 2 had not yet returned to school, so the teachers were not privy to that level of learning and understanding which would enable them to say that they were categorically greater depth.

Question – How many children are we talking about?

This would be 2 or 3 pupils.

8. Staffing

Mrs Coyne explained the rationale behind the staffing for the next academic year.

Question – What was happening with the Science Technician role?

Mrs Jackson responded that the member of staff had a separate timetable. The plan was to restart Science in the Science lab with KS2 classes each afternoon, building to include KS1.

9. Surveys

Mrs Jackson reported that both the pupil and parent surveys were positive. Any concerns raised on the parent survey were actioned by Mrs Jackson holding conversations with those parents to see what the school could do to help.

Question – How seriously does the school take the children’s survey responses?

They were taken seriously as they have come up with some good suggestions, e.g. dance club which is open to all and the idea of a gardening area. Mrs Jackson then spoke about the science responses which hopefully would have been more positive had the pupils had a whole year of using the lab. It was a shame as many exciting things had been planned, however these would now happen next year.

Question – With regards to After School Clubs, presumably these wouldn’t take place next year?

Mrs Jackson said that the sports clubs wouldn’t be able to take place as things were currently. Swimming has been booked, although not until after Christmas.

10. Policies

The following policies and procedures were ratified by the Governors:

- Looked After Children
- Examinations 2020
- SEN 2020
- Checking / identifying visitors 2020
- EYFS transition 2020
- Sick child 2020
- Handwriting 2020
- Presentation 2020
- Failure to collect child procedure 2020

11. A.O.B

Natalie Ray, Chief Finance Officer, thought it would be a good idea to give the governors an idea of the current financial situation for the primary at this point of the year, which is forecast to 31/8/20. As the majority of expenditure is staffing the estimate should be fairly accurate. The current prediction was for an in-year surplus of £20,000 which is very good. The only area where there is a loss is in catering, due to no income. The planned forecast for the next academic year was for a £2,000 slight recurrent deficit, however there would then be capital grants of around £6,500 so they were forecasting a broadly break even picture of around £4,000. If the situation remains the same, this would bring the portfolio of reserves to around £290,000. This is notwithstanding the recent investments in the science lab and the computer suite.

Question – What is driving the recurrent deficit?

Mrs Ray explained that it was simply the expenditure in and out.

Question – Do we need to keep a specific level of reserves?

No, the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) have the view that the annual budget should be spent on the existing students and the Federation does really well at that and broadly break even. The surplus has been there a while, from previous grants since we became an academy.

Mrs Jackson then directed the governors to the dates of the meetings for the next academic year and said that she also intended to set dates for the key events that would take place. If these key events were held, then all governors would be most welcome, these would be shared as soon as possible.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 29 September 2020 at 5.00pm (venue TBC).

The meeting closed at 6.10pm