

Minutes of the Governing Body 10th December 2020

Part 1

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| <p>LA Governors</p> <p>Laura Butterfield, (LB), <i>Chair</i></p> <p>Head Teacher Governor</p> <p>Evelyn Davies, (ED), <i>HT</i></p> <p>Staff Governors</p> <p>Mitchell Browning, (MB)</p> <p>Thomas Amoako, (TA)</p> | <p>Parent Governors</p> <p>Richard Spitz (RS)</p> <p>Lindsay Dearden (LD)</p> <p>Douglas Blackwood (DB)</p> <p>Others present</p> <p>Ewan Marshall, (EM), <i>DHT</i></p> | <p>Co-opted Governors</p> <p>Annette Thurgood, (AT)</p> <p>Fay Jackson, (FJ)</p> <p>Dan Walker, (DW)</p> <p>Helen Da Silva (HD)</p> <p>Ted Lowery, (TL) <i>Vice-Chair</i></p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Nia Harding-Rickards</p> |
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Apologies for absence

There were no apologies.

Register of interests

There were no changes to the register.

Minutes of the previous meeting 24th September 2020

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Chair's Verbal Report

The GB have been kept informed about goings on in school and therefore LB moved on to the HT's report.

Head Teacher's Written Report

COVID 19 situation – staff absence due to COVID requires ongoing management. We have another 3 staff self-isolating today.

The school has closed 4 classes to date which is fewer than other schools locally. Some local schools have closed completely.

Staff are tired and looking forward to end of term however, they are worried about having to self-isolate over the Christmas break and not being able to see their families.

We have reduced curriculum at the moment (no IT or MFL) and are focusing on the main subjects. Teachers are finding this easier as there is less to fit into the timetable. There is also more time for reading and discussion with children in their class.

We have had 3 tragic deaths recently within the school community. Alex Sapirstein, Learning Mentor, has been working really hard with children affected.

1 family are currently withholding their child from school due to COVID 19. There are no apparent health issues. The school has informed them that, if they do not return on 14th January as agreed, we need to take them off roll as we have 11 children waiting for a place that year group.

Despite the pandemic, attendance at Coldfall is still higher than national average.

Some children have fallen behind further than others. Those affected are having Friday afternoon catch up sessions when other children have been dismissed. Those children will be reassessed at the end of this term, particularly Year 6, to assess their progress. We are hoping to increase the availability of these sessions from next term.

The Parents' evening Zoom was, on the whole, successful. We had very few issues and it was very well managed. Ana Clave worked hard to organise it.

Working with children around road safety, stranger danger etc.

BAME agenda – this is a big area of focus for Coldfall and the LA. The children have produced some lovely projects for Black History Month. During anti-bullying week we focused on anti-racism. We are looking at how to make curriculum more representative and fair. EMs training day notes from the TAD were included in the GB pack.

Youth climate summit - this is a UK wide initiative. Clare Bunston was featured on the site with a workshop about plastic pollution. The February TAD will be sustainability focused.

PM and CPD – We are focusing on 3 targets: closing the reading gap, BAME and sustainable development.

Every teacher has had their PM meeting. NQTs had their first formal assessment. Both doing extremely well.

Christmas at Coldfall - we are still trying to do the usual concerts etc. in a COVID friendly way e.g. recording the concerts, nutcracker, nativity, singalongs. The recordings will be sent out to parents once edited.

Children will be making the usual Christmas crafts next week but as gifts for family rather than for the Fair.

Staff have done a mini staff panto video and the Friends of Coldfall have paid for a virtual panto as well.

The Friends have done a wonderful job under the circumstances. The auction, Christmas Eve boxes and wreathes were a great mm success.

Admissions – We are full across the school and have a waiting list for every year apart from Y6 as we just filled a place.

Nursery applications are low so far but they aren't due until next year. We need to keep an eye on admissions due to lowered birth rate and people leaving London.

Remote learning – info included in papers.

Questions

TL asked whether Coldfall will be taking up the additional TAD and ending the term on 17th December?

ED - As it is only a half day and we would have to have a catch up day to make up for it we will not be doing this. It was offered very late in the day and schools had previously been refused when asking if they could finish early.

HD asked what are the specific issues with regard to the BAME students which holds them back? Specifically, the 14 BAME children in the catch up scheme.

EM – those 14 children are based on the most recent round of assessments which are from last year. For some the issue is a gap in learning, attendance and lateness, confidence or access to learning. Some Year 6 children have been given an additional Saturday Maths session online. 4 of 5 of the parents EM discussed this with were BAME, and were really happy to receive this support. We are trying to find a way to give individuals what they need. Teachers will prioritise children who are vulnerable to under achievement so that they get more time to address those needs.

HD – Is there an issue across the board? As there seems to be the same problem year on year, should we make parents aware what is needed early on?

ED – “The Gap” is a Haringey wide issue that has gone on for a long time. Parent teacher engagement, teacher knowledge, curriculum, catch up, individual coaching is all necessary to closing the gap. We try to target these children straight away from Reception onwards.

Committee reports

Finance and Site

ED asked for comments and questions on the Finance and Site minutes.

LB asked about the budget for School Direct trainees?

ED – Unfortunately, the Government have withdrawn the funding and therefore we do not have the budget to pay our trainees any more. All SD trainees will now be unsalaried.

On a positive note, we are still receiving applications and have interviewed 6 candidates last week and all were successful. We would like to hire 8-10 trainees.

TL commented that the Budget is going to break even which is much better than we had hoped.

ED – although this is positive, we usually have a carry forward which we use for staffing costs that we don't have this year. We are operating on 12 less staff this year which is unlikely to change.

Site Manager Vacancy – we have changed the salary and hours and re-advertised. We now have 2 applicants and are hoping for more before the closing date Thursday 17th.

TL discussed the planned work to roof which is going to be paid for by Haringey. Although they intent to do the majority of the work in the holidays, it is a big job which will require porta cabins in the playground.

Teaching and Learning

Remote learning – RS's daughter in one of the classes that have had to close. He felt the remote learning was a more effective than in the summer. He would suggest a little more online interaction among peers.

The main part of meeting was discussing the EM's BAME training video. HD had asked some probing questions and the committee had a very good discussion.

EM - thinks it was a very good discussion, providing food for thought. There are always more questions to ask and to be asked.

HD left the meeting to collect her son from school.

Parent Survey

The results of the Parent Survey were sent to the GB earlier this week.

We have had a high level of response this time.

Comments around teaching and learning at Coldfall are positive. The contentious issues were remote learning, Friday lunchtime closure and school food. The negative comments were from only a few parents and concerned Office communication, SEND, uniform.

School food – this is very difficult as we now have so many children with dietary needs. Some schools are providing hot meals but this would not be practical for Coldfall at the moment due to the amount of children.

Remote learning - we are encouraging children to use remote learning on a Friday afternoon due to the need for them to become confident with using this in case of class closures.

Friday lunchtime closure – all but one local school are doing this and are keeping it going. There are good reasons for this including finances, staff wellbeing, and cleaning. Children are not missing any learning time. Parents have concerns about child care but as staff have a lot of additional responsibilities, PPA time etc. they need this Friday afternoon. If our children are to have the best learning our teachers need to be at their best as well.

LB - the additional duties expected of teachers need to be considered.

ED – schools are the most difficult institutions to manage during the pandemic. Staff are putting themselves at risk every day and their wellbeing needs to be a priority.

RS told the GB that if the school is going to continue with this he is in support but we should let parents know that this will be the arrangement for the rest of this year with the reasons why.

DB agrees and we should review in the summer. As long as we make that clear hopefully parents will be supportive.

ED to write a letter to parents regarding this.

FJ and TL agree.

TL mentioned the parent comment regarding cultural celebrations. He feels our cultural celebrations are vast. Perhaps parents don't realise what we do in school.

Pay Policy

LB talked through the pay policy and pointed out the changes made to the model policy. The changes were agreed by the GB.

Governor Training

FJ said attendance is increased due to zoom.

HD has attended some training but so far no other GB members have. The GB were reminded that it is very important to attend training.

AOB

ED read card from MJ who has now stepped down.

Reminder about date of next meeting full GB meeting on Thursday 11th March.

Committee meetings:

HR – Tuesday 23rd February

Finance and Site – Wednesday 24th February

Teaching and Learning Thursday 25th February