RICHARD TAYLOR CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF LOCAL GOVERNING BODY UPDATE MEETING**

**held on Wednesday 22nd July 2020 at 4.30 p.m. via internet conference facility.**

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| **Governing Body Core Functions**  Ensuring Clarity of Vision, Ethos and Strategic Direction  Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff.  Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.  **Present:** Andrew Symonds (AS), David Sanderson (DS) - Chair, Lynsey Barraclough (LB), Jan Johnson (JJ), Laura Singleton (LS), Jean Atkinson (JA), Kris Starkey (KS), Victoria Amella (VA), Steve Scarisbrick (SS), Susan Lemmetyinen (SL), Simon Dowson (SD), and Noel Duke (ND).  **In attendance:** J Rennison (JR) – Clerk, Emma Crisell (EC)   1. **Head teacher’s update – Final Week and Return of Year 6.**   All the Year 6 pupils returned, and the week was a huge success. AS and the year 6 teachers received many words of thanks and the Leavers’ Service produced by Carmel wake was fantastic.   1. **Admissions, including New Starters**   The new starters are all ready, each has had a letter regarding the staggered start times plus a personal phone call from their prospective class teacher. On their first day each will also have the opportunity to book a socially distanced face-to-face meeting with the teacher. There are four children joining higher up the school and each has had a personalised video to welcome them. We will need to create a virtual tour for those who would normally be arranging visits to school in preparation for their 2021 admission applications, along with a short video from the governors by VA or DS. The diocese has altered the Supplementary Information Form to reflect the fact that churches have not been open, by saying that church attendance figures will take into account the time when families could attend church. This rewording did not need consultation and it was viewed by DS before agreement was made.   1. **YCST Update**   Other schools in the Trust are mirroring our approach to the September re-opening, although some have taken a slightly different approach to the creation of bubbles.   1. **Catering**   The TUPE process has gone very smoothly. All three staff have moved across as employees of RTS and are ready to start work in September. New menus have been created, suppliers are on-board, and the new uniforms have been ordered.   1. **Arrangements for Holiday Club**   Holiday Club is up and running and they are happy with the set up as is AS. They are working in groups of 15 and will not be open on Fridays to enable the groups to be reset for the next week if necessary. There are additional groups on Tuesdays and Wednesdays to fulfil demand and the club is running at full capacity. This is great news for the school which will benefit from profit share income. The Holiday Club will not run during the last week of the holidays to allow for staff to start preparing for the new term following a thorough clean.   1. **Arrangements for Full Re-opening September 2020**   The plans in place assume the situation remains as it is at the moment with a declining R-rate and successful use of the Track & Trace. All schools across the country will be open for all students and RTS opens on Tuesday 8th September following a Staff Training Day. Parents will be furnished with comprehensive instructions on when and where to access the school and what to expect. This will be similar to the plans we’ve had in place since June 1st on a larger scale.   1. **Draft Risk Assessment**   AS has been drafting Risk Assessments using government guidelines, in which there are very few ‘MUST DO’ directions. The overriding premise though is that nothing should get in the way of re-opening. There are no fixed bubble sizes we must just keep them as small as possible and where this isn’t feasible due to access or lack of staff supervision, we can increase the bubble size or allow staff to move between class bases. The school must offer the full curriculum and stagger the daily timetable. Inside the school building groups will be in class size bubbles; outside classes will be paired up and kept within zones. If we tried to restrict each class to their own area of the playground each space would be too small, and we would not have the staff to make it workable. The risks are considered to be small when outside, so we simply need to be able to use Track & Trace and know who each child has been in contact with. Fun Club will be operational using two distinct groups of 15, again allowing for easy use of Track & Trace.  Q: What happens if a child tests positive in breakfast club who has also been in a class bubble?  A: We contact Track & Trace and they advise us. They may advise us to close both bases or if there was limited contact within one of the groups, only one will need to be sent home. We will be guided by them. It will be rare to have to close a whole school. This might occur where there has been more than one case across more than one class base over a two-week period. This is conceivable in the case of siblings. What we will need is a quick turn round in testing times. Once a closure is in place, teachers must be ready to teach online from the morning of day 1.  Q: How quickly can you notify parents?  A: As quickly as needed using the systems already in place – Text, Email and Telephone.  Q: Will you notify parents of children who will remain at school?  A: We don’t want them to hear second-hand, so AS will write a letter giving the circumstances of the closure, when we will contact them further and what they need to do.  Q: What if it is a member of staff who tests positive?  A: Children are more likely to be asymptomatic so staff must remember to socially distance where possible and if they test positive, they are part of the bubble so that bubble will close.  Q: Would you use a supply teacher?  A: If a teacher has symptoms, we could get a supply in if the test negative and shut the bubble if positive.  Q: If that member of staff is unwell with the virus who will deliver the online learning?  A: We must make provision for someone else to do it. There is a lot of government suggested content on the internet which staff have used and heavily personalised up to now, but a supply teacher could simply use more of the government aides that are there. And if a child is not engaging with the online platform, we will keep contact, keep them learning and send out hard copies if necessary.  Q: Two weeks of self-isolation is a long time. We need quick test and result.  A: The closest testing station is the Park and Ride at Poppleton. There is no longer a base at the Hydro as it wasn’t used enough.  AS confirmed that of the three families who have been tested so far, all the results came back within 24 hours.  Some information is now available regarding the catch-up funding, which equates to approximately £80 per child. AS will send home a letter next term detailing how this programme will be delivered. There will be clear guidance from the government about the priority points to catch up on for each subject. EC confirmed that Maths and Science have been included so far and that the documents are excellent. There is a separate amount of money for individual tuition for the disadvantaged and vulnerable learners. We will need to find out how much the tuition costs and how it will be delivered and then pay 25% of the cost before the rest of that funding can be accessed.  Q: How much will that 25% amount to?  A: It will be in the £100’s rather than £1000’s and depends on the length of the course. We will investigate it after half term and once the individual governing committees are functioning as before, we will discuss this at committee level.  As a member of the Richard Taylor Education Fund board, SD reminded AS that the school could apply to the fund to cover some of those costs.  The school knows this will be a small group and have identified some of the children who will gain from the programme. The Education Foundation have given advice in this area, which may not be new but it is useful, impactful and cost effective. They are an organisation we use already in relation to best practice in school.  Q: Are the children who are not engaging with online learning, the Pupil Premium pupils?  A: No, only 3 of the 15 are Pupil Premium children. And it hasn’t generally been difficulties with technology but being unable to engage those children. Each member of staff has prepared a RAG rating for their pupils specifically in this area. Looking at attendance now, and although attendance is a statutory requirement now, we can expect some families not to come back. Some will be due to shielding family members, others will be out of concern, but we must address all of these fears and we hope to produce personalised risk assessments for these children before going down the route of fining parents.  Q: Do you believe some will refuse to return?  A: A few maybe, some have just been very happy learning online and will need reassurance. We have the full range of feeling amongst parents from having no fears or concerns, to those who are highly anxious. We know that once children returned, they settled in quickly. Indeed, we must ensure that members of the school don’t become over familiar with the situation and careless. It was seen somewhat in the last week when the one-way system was occasionally ignored, and parents stopped to chat and overcrowd the exits and pathways.  One of the parent governors confirmed that her child is highly anxious because, as a family they have hardly ventured out and have had limited contact with the outside world. AS reassured her that the year 6’s who returned this week were anxious too, but it didn’t take long to get back to some sort of normality. We have run the system with 125 pupils. We can run it with the full school of 280 but it will need reinforcing and policing and we must address concerns swiftly.  Q: Are you still saying to parents not to wait and speak to the teacher at the door to the classroom?  A: Yes, we must do. This lapsed as time went on from June, but we will be strict again. Parents can make an appointment through the office to speak to a teacher.  Q: What happens where siblings have different drop off and pick up times?  A: As stated in previous communications – parents with siblings can use the earliest time stagger for both children, staff will be ready in classrooms for such cases.  Q: Will the school day start earlier, at 8.30am for example?  A: No, the first stagger will still be 8.50am and we have decided to take 5 minutes off the start and end of lunchtimes to fit the school day into the allotted time. Classes will be allowed in in three’s, one from each of the front, side and back classroom entrances and late comers will enter through the front office.   1. **Individual Staff Risk Assessments**   Individual staff risk assessments have been sent, although not confirmed yet as there maybe changes before we return. Additionally, we have Health Care Plans for some children where there may need to be a different focus to meet their needs.   1. **Any Other Business**   AS confirmed that there will be no Section 5 Ofsted or SIAMs inspections before January 2021, although Ofsted will be visiting schools to assess their Covid-19 response procedures.  Q: What will happen with parents evening?  A: It’s too early to judge. The new starters had their first meeting via Zoom but we intend the second to be outside and face to face. We may have to stagger the parents evenings but it will be important to have one to inform parents how their child has settled in.  Q: Are peripatetic music teachers returning?  A: As stated in the risk assessment, they will be welcome back after the October half term. That first half term we need to concentrate on settling the children in, giving them uninterrupted time in class, getting the basics secure. When they do come back, lessons will look different. It is possible they will be held in the bungalow so that the teacher isn’t coming into the school building; or they’ll be small groups rather than individual; or after school hours. The LA also wants to look at video learning. The trouble with that, is that each lesson will need supervising from school and we don’t have the number of TA’s to release for each music lesson.  Q: What about swimming lessons?  A: Again, this won’t be organised from day one. The Hydro isn’t ready for school groups and the issue of transport will relevant too. Likewise, after school clubs will not run for the first half term. We need to access the school immediately at the end of the day for enhanced cleaning and we will be encouraging outside learning throughout the day anyway.  Q: Some primary schools appear to be concentrating on Maths and English and not opening the full enriched curriculum, what about RTS?  A: The government have provided guidance on the core skills that schools should be concentrating on, but we won’t be teaching only Maths and English. We will use outside as much as possible and try to encourage motivated learners with a broad curriculum.  EC commented that there are lots of ways of teaching other subjects through English and Maths – like teaching Science through Maths and History through English. AS reiterated that our staff are aware they must teach the core skills, focus on pupil well-being and retain a sense of community at a time when we cannot hold large whole school gatherings. It is no surprise that the theme for our September worship plan is belonging to a community and being part of a wider family.  Q: Are you continuing to have a clergy video as part of worship?  A: Yes, all clergy have been asked to send in a video which the school will watch in their bubbles at the same time as each other. Our plans extend to Harvest and Christmas. This separation will last beyond the end of the year.  Q: When do you envisage returning to the normal school uniform?  A: The uniform was altered from trousers and skirts/dresses to joggers or leggings because staff are unable to help pupils change and we want to use the outside space as much as possible. We want to return to as soon as possible but it might still be after the February half term.  Q: Can governors still come on monitoring visits?  A: It’s an unnecessary complication at this point in time. You could have an online meeting with the member of staff you wish to speak to and we will still have Zoom LGB meetings, moving to committee meetings soon.  Q: Are external trips back on?  A: Yes, although they will be local for the time being.  AS stated how much thought had gone into the risk assessment but that it could be reassessed once the children return and we see how well it works. Governors commented on how well the systems had worked so far for those that abide by the rules but that there will always be some families who need reminding. The school is not aware of when Bob O’Neill the crossing patrolman will return so extra care may be needed. This will be included in the letter going to parents in September.  Q: With regards to school meals, will there be a limited menu?  A: There won’t be a salad bar but there will still be three choices. KS1 will eat in the hall which will be divided with screens and their lunchtime will be split in half so that half are eating whilst the others play and vice versa. KS2 will have meals delivered to their class bases and will eat in there. All plates and cutlery will be delivered and cleared away by staff. We don’t want children wandering the corridors, in fact they won’t be allowed to use them unless they are going to lunch. The pinch points will be the start and end of day and lunchtime and we won’t really know how well it works until we try it.  Q: How will it work when staff want to take smaller groups of children to work in the corridor?  A: We will see which rooms are available and how safe it is still to use the desks in the corridor. We have already considered the maximum number of children that can be taught in breakout groups in each breakout area.  Q: Could Arkendale be used to teach?  A: Possibly, pupils could certainly be sat more than 1m apart. We do also have a portable smart board now which can be taken to areas such as the library or Arkendale. The library is also being used as a staff room though. We must remind staff to keep socially distancing and we will continue to hold staff meetings via Zoom.  AS asked SL and LB, as parent governors, how much notice parents need of the information for returning in September. The crucial elements of any communication will be the start and end times and how to access the school. The other information guides parents to how we reached those decisions but is not essential for the first day back. Both SL and LB felt that more than a week was needed as the stagger times mean that parents may need to collect their children at 2.50pm which is a vast difference from the 3.15 they have been used to and impacts on childcare needs.  AS understood this and felt that a message should go out this week stating that parents will get more accurate timings closer to September, but that access will be between 8.50 and 9.10am at the start of the day and 2.50 and 3.10pm at the end.  Having worked through the risk assessment AS confirmed that governors do not need to approve it, but simply to have had the opportunity to discuss it in detail.  As someone with a year 6 child at the school, VA wanted to thank the year 6 teachers for an excellent year 6 week. It did feel like a celebration of the end of their time at RTS. Also thank you to the reception/ year 1 parents who kept their children home to enable it to go ahead. AS felt that we have lovely staff who wanted to put the effort into that last week; kind parents who helped that happen and good pupils who were keen to come back. We kept up as many of the traditions as possible with a reasonably sized cohort.  AS confirmed there would be no school communications throughout August to allow staff and governors a break from school issues. | AS |
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