



# Minutes

Spring Term 2021

## Meeting of Greenfield St Mary's Primary School (DLP) Governing Board

Wednesday 24 March 2021  
via Microsoft Teams  
at 7.00pm

Present:	Dr Mark Rahn	Parent Governor (Chair)
	Mr Graham McGuffie	Foundation Governor
	Reverend Barbara Christopher	Foundation Governor
	Mrs Ruth Broadhurst	Foundation Governor
	Ms Sara Keaney-Duckworth	Foundation Governor
	Mrs Sarah Roberts	Foundation Governor
	Mrs Suzanne Hall	Headteacher
	Mr Courtney Reece	Parent Governor
	Mr Sam Dainty	Parent Governor
	Mrs Rachel Swanwick	Foundation Governor
	Mrs Debbie Dorobat	Foundation Governor
	Mr Ryan Selby	Staff Governor

<b>Also Present:</b>	Miss Maria Unwin	Clerk to the Governing Board
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<b>Absent:</b>	Dr Letizia Alterno	Parent Governor
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Prior to the start of the meeting, the Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate, and all governors had consented to a virtual meeting.

### 1 **Welcome/Introductions/Opening Prayer**

The Chair welcomed everyone present and The Reverend Barbara Christopher opened the meeting with a prayer.

The Headteacher advised that she had received a notification from the Governor Support Service to advise that Mrs Rachel Swanwick's term of office had come to an end, however upon inspection of GovernorHub, the Clerk advised that the term of office should end on 7 March 2022, not 2021. The Clerk would update GovernorHub.

**ACTION:** Clerk/Governor Support Service

## 2 Apologies and Consent for Absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

## 3 Agree Any Other Urgent Business

There were no items of Any Other Urgent Business to discuss.

## 4 Register of Business, Pecuniary and Personal Interests

Governors were requested to complete the declaration section on governors' personal profile on GovernorHub and list:

- Any business, pecuniary and personal interests relating to companies (goods and services) and/or;
- Personal relationships with pupils, volunteers and members of staff associated with the school where a matter may be discussed at the meeting;
- Details of any other schools where they are governors.

Governors were reminded that they are required to update GovernorHub with any new declarations whenever any circumstances change.

No declarations were made.

**ACTION:** All governors

## 5 Minutes

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2021 be approved as a correct record and marked as signed by the Chair on GovernorHub subject to the following amendment:

Item 13 (Management of Health and Safety), the damage is to the outside classroom, not outside of the Year 1 classroom, as stated.

## 6 Matters Arising

6.1 Arising from minute 21 ([Governing Board Health Check](#)), the Headteacher advised that some Committees had not put the Health Check on to their agendas, so this must be done at the next Committee meetings.

**ACTION:** Committees/Governor Support Service – agenda item

6.2 Arising from minute 24 (School Lettings), the Headteacher advised that, with the support of the Church, the school does not need to close for polling this year, as this will now take place at the Church. It was advised that this was a temporary measure for one year, as a result of COVID-19 restrictions making it difficult to manage on school premises.

The Headteacher and governors passed on their thanks to the Church for their support with this matter.

## 7 Return to School Update

- 7.1 The return to school has been very successful, with high attendance rates from pupils. Attendance is averaging 98%.
- 7.2 Children have come back to school really positive; they want to be in school and parents are happy to have the children back in school.
- 7.3 All classes have settled into the routine of school life.
- 7.4 Bubbles are being kept separate and not mixing. Control measures are continuing to be effective.
- 7.5 There have been no bubble closures or COVID-19 infections in school since the return.
- 7.6 There has been one teacher who has tested positive for COVID-19 since the return to school, following a positive case within their family bubble. This has not affected any children in school as the member of staff was self-isolating for a period of time before they tested positive themselves, so had had no contact with pupils. The member of staff is reported to be managing the illness. They have still continued to work and provide PowerPoints and videos for their class through the online portal, and the Teaching Assistant has been covering the class, following the instructions given on Google Classroom from the teacher.
- 7.7 Schools currently receive no funding to cover staff absences and there are therefore financial implications as a result of this.
- 7.8 The school continues to offer a broad curriculum across the year groups. There has been a greater emphasis on PHSE and wellbeing activities. Some difficulties have been noted with children struggling in large social circles after being in isolation for so long.
- 7.9 Some children have been identified for additional pastoral support to manage their anxieties around COVID-19.
- 7.10 There have been a few Early Help referrals submitted for some children, and there is support in place from a few different external agencies.
- 7.11 The development of the children's ethos of learning is a focus for the classes. There has been a lot of retraining on learning how to learn. Concentration skills have also needed some development as routines have been completely different for all children.
- 7.12 Mr Selby commented that overall, children are delighted to be in school. There are some anxieties but they are being managed well. Concentration levels do need some work. Friendship groups in the older children groups are struggling in that children are having to re-learn about the give and take in a friendship.
- 7.13 **Governor Support/Challenge:** A governor asked if the Senior Leadership Team has had the time and support required to sustain their resilience following a long 12 months.

The Headteacher explained that she has been part of a Department for Education (DfE) pilot for Headteachers' wellbeing. She had attended six sessions over a six-month period. This was something that was offered because Oldham is an Opportunity Area (OA).

She explained that she has been connecting with the other Headteachers and a Coach who works very closely with the DfE. Once the Headteachers have been provided with resources and coaching techniques, this has been fed back into school. The Headteacher said that this had been invaluable support during turbulent times.

The Headteachers from the DLP are also in regular contact, providing support for one another.

- 7.14 **Governor Support/Challenge:** the Chair thanked the staff and leadership team for a highly successful return to school, and a highly successful lockdown period where the bridge between keyworker care and Google Classroom worked really well.

## 8 Finance Working Policy

- 8.1 A working group had met to discuss finances. The group's aim had been to think out of the box a little bit and be a bit more transformational about generating funds, rather than focussing on where money can be saved.
- 8.2 Apprenticeships across the DLP were discussed as a possibility.
- 8.3 Teacher training discussed. This can add an extra person in the school, but there is then a responsibility for somebody in school to look after them and assist with training and development.
- 8.4 The group had talked about the interplay between fundraising and the PTFA. The group also discussed resources available amongst parents.
- 8.5 **Governor Support/Challenge:** a governor noted that another school had offered parents the opportunity to "buy a window", with a £25 contribution for a windowpane, to assist with window replacements that were needed.

## 9 Communication Working Party

- 9.1 Governors had discussed communication and how the school represents itself in communications.
- 9.2 The group had captured a number of useful actions.
- 9.3 **Governor Support/Challenge:** governors commented that they had enjoyed the video that was part of the prospectus for new parents last year. It was a valuable thing to do regardless of whether schools are in lockdown or not. It was agreed that it would be worthwhile doing again in future years.
- 9.4 The group had also talked about the parental questionnaire.

9.5 The group had felt that there were some reviews that needed to be done, for example, on the most appropriate ways to use social media, the tone of the website and whether it is consistent and sending the right messages.

9.6 **Governor Support/Challenge:** governors had talked about parental communication that come directly from the school and how this should be streamlined, for example, e-mails coming from only one e-mail account.

It was noted that a member of the PCC, who is also a parent of a child in school, has 15 years' experience of working in Communications they are keen to offer support.

9.7 Mr Selby commented that it would be great if each class could have a class blog on the school website for parents are home to see what has been done in school.

He continued that he is very keen to develop a blog, to show the children how the internet should be used to model positive celebrations.

**Governor Support/Challenge:** The Chair asked what needs to be done to enable Mr Selby to do this.

The Headteacher advised that she will speak to the technician to organise this, and then Mr Selby can go ahead with the arrangements to put this into place.

Governors agreed that this should be progressed.

**ACTION:** Headteacher

9.8 **Governor Support/Challenge:** A governor asked if the blog would be public or private.

It was advised that it could be either. It would be nice to have it public facing, with care being taken not to publish any photographs of pupils unless the correct consent is in place.

9.9 It was agreed that it would be worthwhile to create a link governor role for Social Media. This would be included when the roles and responsibilities are next reviewed.

9.10 It was agreed that the social media usage is important. There is a new generation of parents with children entering the school who use Instagram and other platforms. These platforms can be great for showcasing the school and for sharing some important messages with parents.

9.11 Governors had discussed past pupils being involved in a video to share their memories of the school. Mr Reece commented that there are some past pupils at his school Blue Coat, who are very keen to be involved. Reverend Barbara Christopher also commented that as a pupil some 50 years ago, her experiences at St Mary's are still with her; attending the school is a lifelong benefit and an experience that never leaves you, and she would be very keen to be involved with this, too.

- 9.12 All governors were asked to review the website for the subjects to which they are linked and to send any comments to the Headteacher.

**ACTION:** All Governors

- 9.13 It was noted that a vacancy remains for a Local Authority governor and governors agreed that it would be helpful for this governor to have social media skills.

It was suggested that the parent who has offered their support with communications might be worthwhile approaching to gauge their interest on them applying for the role.

## 10 Catering

- 10.1 The Headteacher advised that there have been some developments with catering in schools recently. The school currently buys in to the Local Authority's catering service.
- 10.2 Work has been carried out with the other Headteachers within the DLP to navigate through other potential suppliers due to upcoming changes. She explained that currently, schools receive £2.34 per meal for a Free School Meal (FSM). School dinners currently cost £2.40 from the catering service, with the 6p shortage being made up from the school budget. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, the cost of school dinners will increase to £2.55, meaning the school must make up the difference of 21p per meal. From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021, it is proposed by the Local Authority that the cost will increase to £2.60.
- 10.3 As a partnership, the DLP have looked into bringing catering in house in each of the schools. It was noted that there are 25 other Oldham schools who have given their notice to withdraw from the Local Authority's catering service.
- 10.4 The Headteacher explained that the Manchester Local Authority has withdrawn their catering service with little notice, with all schools having to arrange private catering from March 2021.
- 10.5 The Headteacher had circulated a report detailing the costings for remaining with the Local Authority and for bringing the service in house.
- 10.6 The Resources Committee have looked at this in detail.
- 10.7 The cost to the school for the current catering service is £12,831. There has not yet been a Service Level Agreement (SLA) from the Local Authority, so the cost of the SLA could also increase.
- 10.8 If the service is brought in house, using a company called Dukefield, and if the catering staff are TUPE transferred to the school, the new cost to school would be £7,024. These are approximate costs based on the average costs of meals.
- 10.9 The Headteacher cautioned that this is not a risk-free proposal. If there is a further lockdown, staff would need to be placed on furlough. Whilst not risk-free, there are many benefits to the proposal. The catering team are an excellent team and they have been with the school for 30 years.

They could do so much more with the school meals if moved to Dukefield than they are currently able to because they are limited with the types of food they can order from the Local Authority. The quality of food will increase if the service is brought in house.

- 10.10 It was noted that the projected figures are based on 57 paid school meals, whereas there are currently around 35-40 at the moment, so there is some work to be done to increase the number of parents buying into school meals.

**Governor Support/Challenge:** a governor proposed that an exercise could be arranged whereby children and parents are invited to try the school meals in order to encourage them to buy into the service.

- 10.11 **Governor Support/Challenge:** a governor asked if there is any evidence that the attitude towards school meals have changed since COVID-19.

The Headteacher advised that there has been a decrease in school meals but that is because the provision has not been there for parents to buy into.

- 10.12 The Headteacher advised that if Oldham follows what Manchester did and withdraw the service with little notice, schools may well be forced to take the services in house anyway.

- 10.13 The school has had confirmation from the Local Authority that there will not be a charge for the kitchen equipment if the service is brought in house.

- 10.14 Services, maintenance, and repairs have been included in the projected costs.

- 10.15 All governors voted in favour of moving the catering service in house.

**RESOLVED:** that the school's catering service be brought in house.

**ACTION:** Headteacher

## 11 Five Point Report from Committees

- 11.1 The Five Point Report had been posted on GovernorHub prior to the meeting and was taken as read.

- 11.2 It was noted that the Pupil Admission Number for Year 5 has increased to 31.

## 12 Clerk Update

There were no new updates from the Clerk at this point in the term.

## 13 Date and Time of Next Meeting/Future Meeting

**RESOLVED:** that the next meeting of the governing board should be held on:

Wednesday 12 May 2021 at 7.00pm.

**ACTION:** Headteacher/Governor Support Service

14 **Any Other Urgent Business**

14.1 Mrs Broadhurst noted that she had posted a Health and Safety update on GovernorHub for information.

15 **Confidentiality**

There were no items of confidentiality.

(There being no further business, governors were thanked for their attendance and the meeting was closed with the saying of the Grace at 8.12pm).

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_