



RAINHAM MARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2020 6.00PM – Virtual Meeting**

PRESENT:

L Bourne	Co-opted Governor
L Cox	Parent Governor
S Griffiths (Chair)	Parent Governor
A Gerhke	Co-opted Governor
M Harewood	Co-opted Governor
L Lanipekun	Parent Governor
J Mayes	Staff Governor (joined at 18.09)
A Moore	Headteacher
S Reynolds	Co-opted Governor
S Roe	Co-opted Governor
T Scott-Fox	Parent Governor
K Shah	Co-opted Governor
C Wallis	Staff Governor

IN ATTENDANCE:

S Decker	CEO
M Brighton	School Business Manager
C Collyer	Clerk

Item	Main discussions and agreed actions	Action/When
Procedural		
1	The Chair welcomed S Reynolds and A Gerhke to their first LGB meeting. Due notice had been given and the meeting was quorate. There were no apologies.	
2	Declarations of Business interest	
	2.1 There were no new declarations of interest and the Clerk confirmed the register had been uploaded to the school website	
3	Code of conduct and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)	
	3.1 The Clerk confirmed all were completed and had been uploaded onto the school website	
4	Notification of items to be discussed under AOB - none	
5	Minutes of the previous meeting on 29 June 20 and signing thereof	
	5.1 The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair when next in school	
6	Matters arising not covered by this agenda	
	7.1 The staff elections had taken place and C Wallis was returned as the staff governor	
	9.1.6 The finance monitoring pair confirmed that written reports would be submitted going forward.	
	13.1.9 The HT confirmed that he had amended his HT report format to include comparative data, Saturdays and internal exclusions.	
	All other items on the action log were complete or agenda items	
Updates		
7	Covid 19 Update	

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7.1	<p>The HT had included an update in his report but answered questions that had been submitted by governors prior to the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will the impact of remote learning be monitored and have there been any benefits for the students (resilience/independent learners for example)? During Term 6 there had been a survey and in-depth analysis of student, staff and parent feedback. Using this data, departments were now focusing on getting students back to learning. Students overall were thriving but there were some students, who needed more support, had found it more difficult• Did you have any issues with parents when Year 11 were sent home? The HT confirmed they had followed the DfE advice and parents had been very supportive of the way the school were managing the situation.• What plans were in place for when teachers were ill as providing supply teachers would be problematic? The HT advised that they were trying to cover any gaps in-house rather than use supply. If there were too many staff absences, they may have to send a year group home. He praised his staff who were going above and beyond doing additional duties they were not contracted to do. He had weekly meetings with the unions, who were also very supportive. The leadership were very conscious of teacher workload. It had been challenging but seemed to be working well.• What were the key issues associated with lockdown? The HT stated that the trickiest issue was the Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs). There had been very clear guidance from DfE and Ofqual on how grades should be assigned. Grades were not expected to change very much and schools were instructed to use objective data to produce a rank order for students and superimpose this on last year's grades. If they had used the DfE algorithm some students would have been negatively impacted. The outcome was that the vast majority of students got the grade expected. RMGS had achieved a better value-added score than last year. He acknowledged the additional and substantial stress for staff caused by the last-minute decision to use CAGs rather than the algorithm. This directed the anger any parents had back to the school. There had been several complaints dealt with across all levels. 1 parent had gone to the exam board alleging malpractice but the HT was confident they had followed process.• Transition into 6th form – the HT confirmed the school had accepted lower grades on subjects for some students but only for those that had met the entry criteria for the 6th form and based on work completed during the summer. There had been some appeals for 6th form and one had been upheld.• Students going onto university – they were still finalising destination data and he was pleased to report that the large majority were happy with the	
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	<p>progression they have made. Some had accepted their second choice before the government U-turn on CAGs but the school assisted those students where possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governors asked if staff had been able to identify those students who were last minute crammers and the HT advised they had followed due procedure, creating a rank order on work and mock exams completed. The guidance didn't allow schools to assess on this basis and it would be too subjective and open to bias and allegations of malpractice• Governors asked what percentage came back with an appeal and how upset were parents? The HT explained 30 out of 210 in the year group had queried or asked for additional information. Approximately 10 at A-level and 15 at GCSE. These had been divided it between the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) so there were only a few per person but some were very difficult.• Governors asked if there was any need for more pastoral input as they were concerned about student's wellbeing? The HT confirmed staff were supporting students in each year group albeit online not face to face.• If another lockdown occurs the HT explained that they had adjusted their approach based on what they had learnt previously. The school had migrated to Microsoft Teams and teaching practice and delivering online learning had evolved. Staff and students could follow their normal timetable.• IT constraints – the school had tried to make content as accessible as possible by enabling streaming by phones. If a year group went into self-isolation teachers would be in the classroom where they taught that group and would deliver the lesson virtually. If an individual student or parts of a group had to self-isolate, this would be difficult as teachers were teaching all day. The expectation was for these students to mirror what's being delivered in school. All students have a map on what's being delivered in the lessons with signposts to the resources for those lessons. All were accessible on the website. <p>The day to day running of school was complex with staggered start and end times which have worked well. Lunchtime was split into 2 sessions and three bubbles in each session. There were 20 lunchtime duty slots to be covered by staff. All staff, including supporting staff, were volunteering to cover these additional duties. The HT and each member of the leadership group also provided 2.5hrs of supervision two days per week, and 1.5hrs on each of the other three days. There was also additional cleaning carried out during the day. The staff team had been excellent and students were overwhelmingly pleased to be back both for academic and personal development.</p>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors asked whether teachers could include those self-isolating students by video link or something similar? The HT explained they had reviewed this but there were issues with cameras being used in the classroom and it just wasn't feasible • Governors asked what the arrangements for CAGs would be next year and the HT explained this hadn't been communicated yet. Governors asked if the leadership had had the opportunity to assess if there was any support for the outlier students? The HT advised that they may take the mocks (PEQs) more seriously and the school may bring the mocks forward to November. • Covid testing – the HT advised that although they had access to tests, the results were still taking 4-5 working days. • Governors asked what sort of assembly or form time students were having and the HT advised that they had 10 minutes form time each day and assemblies were being recorded by staff and uploaded on to the schools Youtube channel. It was working extremely well. 	
8	Trust Update		
	8.1	The CEO thanked the HT and his team for doing such a superb job in the most challenging circumstances. He had been so impressed with their professionalism. He advised he was on a steering group for the Medway North Kent MAT Alliance (representing 27 MATs) and they were lobbying the DfE and MPs on a series of MAT issues such as the A-level grading to be reviewed, priority given to staff and students for testing, Ofsted visits postponed to Sept 21, clarity on syllabus size and summer exams. This group had stressed how unacceptable it was that this far into Term 1 and schools still didn't know what's going to be examined and how.	
	8.2	He had weekly meetings with HTs and the focus was staff and pupil welfare, recovery plans and funding. The Trust had provided additional funding for Designated Safeguarding Leads's in schools, extended Benenden healthcare benefits to teacher and support staff across the trust and provided flu-jab vouchers. The Trust had staff and student well-being as its priority.	
	8.3	Governance – the annual skills audit was under way and there had been a successful recruitment drive during the summer. R Lawrence had been appointed as the new Trust Chair from Sept 20. T Whittaker was remaining as a trustee but was now Chair of the Interim Advisory Board (IAB) at Twydall. There had been a shortage of governors and skills and the trust had to initiate an IAB. It was hoped that the LGB would be reinstated by end of the academic	
	8.3	Finance across the trust looked reasonably healthy but there were issues at Twydall due to the impact of declining rolls and reduced high needs funding but a recovery plan was in progress. There were no further questions and the HT expressed his thanks to the CEO for support he and the HT group provided each other during these very stressful times. SD left the meeting at 19.00	
9	Governor Membership Updates		

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9.1	<p>The Chair advised that there remained</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 4 co-opted vacancies but she and the Clerk had interviewed 2 prospective governors who were pending approval by the trust board. T– R Osman, G Hunter pending approval from Trust 2. There had been no response to the parent governor nominations so it would be re-advertised after half term. 3. C Wallis had agreed to stand again as the support staff governor <p>One governor expressed their concern about the current process and lack of involvement of the rest of the board. They requested that the board see the nominations for co-opted governor prior to submission to the trust board.</p> <p>The Chair explained that timing was an issue, if they came to the LGB before being submitted to the trust it could add further delay. The Clerk explained the recruitment had focused on the gaps identified by the skills audit. The Chair agreed to add recruitment to future agendas so governors could be kept up to date and to send round an introductory note on any applicant being recommended for approval to the trust board.</p>	Chair/ Clerk
9.2	<p>The Chair asked for a volunteer to represent RMGS on the audit committee which met 3 times per year. As a member of the audit committee, the governor would review the internal audit reports (checks on process and adherence to the Academy Finance Manual) and may be asked occasionally to check in school if a process was being completed e.g. were all purchases authorised by two signatures. Anyone interested should contact the Chair or Clerk for more information.</p>	All
10 Clerk Updates		
10.1	<p>The Clerk requested copies of any training certificates should either be sent to her or uploaded onto Governorhub here . She asked governors to update their training record on Governorhub or contact her if they were unsure how to do this</p>	All
Business Management		
11	Income & expenditure report, (copy filed with minutes) Year End and delegation to Pay Committee to report into trust board	
11.1	<p>There hadn't been time for the staff reviews to be completed before the LGB and so the Chair requested governors delegate responsibility to the Pay Committee to report direct to the Trust Board. The Pay Committee comprised LL, SR and SG. The HT explained that due to Covid, original performance targets were now meaningless. Government had advised that reviews should be completed and no teacher or support staff member should be disadvantaged due to the inability to complete targets because of the pandemic. His recommendation was that reviews would be a short summary on the totality of the teacher's performance over the past year and not target related. Where pay progression recommendations were to be made, the line managers would make these. Regarding targets for next year, the HT explained it wasn't realistic to set pupil progress targets, the focus would be on managing virtual learning</p>	

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		and other targets. These would be negotiated between staff member and line manager. Governors unanimously approved this approach.	
	11.2	<p>The School Business Manager (SBM) presented the highlights of the cumulative report with the proviso that there would be auditors' adjustments.</p> <p>Total Income: 7,359,462 Total Expenditure: 6,985,298</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staffing: mainly supply costs had been affected as there had been no Easter revisions or after school clubs nor there had been any school trips either. 2. AQA exams board had refunded £21k 3. The school had been completely closed during lockdown and key worker children went to study at Twydall resulting in significant savings on utilities and resources. 4. £370k in surplus will be carried forward against additional costs coming through. 5. Support staff 2.75% pay award had only been agreed in August and yet unpaid. The teacher pay award was pending agreement on 16th Oct. Lower pay grades have significant pay increments which will have a big impact on forecasting for next year. She would discuss the detail with the monitoring pair at the next visit. 6. The Trust had picked up some of the Covid costs approx. £8-9k 7. There had been notification of additional catch up premium funding (£88k) to offset some of the recovery costs to help students catch up e.g. teaching costs for additional lessons 8. Additional cleaning costs at circa £320 per week will be a significant cost this year <p>There were no further questions from governors</p>	SBM/LL/AG
12	Accounting Officer Checks		
	12.1	The SBM and HT confirmed that all the checks had been completed with no concerns raised.	
School Improvement			
13	Monitoring visits (copy filed with minutes)		
	13.1	<p>QE&PO – Governors explained that following their virtual visit they were very confident with the procedures to award the Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs). The grades were in line with previous years. There had been significant positive shifts in PE and Business at GCSE. They were aware German was still an issue but were confident that strategies put in place were appropriate. There had been very few applications for Autumn resits – only 3 in any one subject. They congratulated the HT and the SLT for this achievement.</p>	
	13.2	<p>Pupil premium – Governors advised the visit had taken place and the report would follow. They commended DH, (pupil premium lead) for his innovative</p>	TSF/CW

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		approach to PP. The school were keen to keep the cultural enrichment programme going and were preparing packs for students.	
	13.3	PDB&W – Governors confirmed they had met with SLT and were confident that all was running smoothly. The only concern was government guidance which was often received too late and had a negative impact on what the school was trying to achieve.	
14	HT report (copy filed with minutes)		
	14.1	<p>The HT explained that the Covid update covered a large section of his report. He was pleased to report that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attendance: only 1% less than a normal year and was caused by those that were self-isolating. 2. Yr 12: admission figures were higher than last year by 21 students 3. Roll: total number of students were just under 1500 4. Gender: Yr7 had more girls than boys for the first time ever <p>Governors enquired whether the school would claw back the teaching time lost when Yr11 had to self-isolate and the HT explained they had managed this inhouse. The staff training day will be used as a wellbeing day.</p> <p>The HT updated governors on other areas of progress:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Science Learning Partnership (SLP) had just won a bid for £16k for RMGS to support other schools help students bridge their learning gap. 2. There was a wealth of wellbeing and pastoral support ongoing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Farah Khan from Young Lives Matter is working with anxious students on a Thursday from Sept 2020. FTs refer. b. Wellbeing expert doing videos for parents on supporting children on topics like anxiety, transition to secondary, communicating with teens etc. The 5-week programme (video weekly) will culminate in a Q&A zoom session for parents. c. CE attended webinar on mental health teams and their use in Medway (17 Sept) d. Wellbeing day for staff on 23 Nov run by Jo Mitchell-Hill e. EH has contacted CORC (Child Outcomes Research Consortium) as part of Anna Freud who will issue and interpret a wellbeing questionnaire for Years 7-11. It provides a measure of student resilience and potential issues that can then help inform our provision. Survey can be taken yearly to see progress. It is an unusual circumstance but that makes the survey more important. Feeding into this is the RRSA survey which looks at empowering students. f. In-house managing bereavement sessions run by DW for students as she works for Holding On, Letting Go 	
15	Review school development plan (copy filed with minutes)		
	15.1	The HT invited questions explaining the document reported ongoing projects and incorporated the strategies for catch ups. There were no further questions	
16	Receive annual safeguarding audit		

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	16.1	The HT advised that Medway had changed their process. Governors were expected to view the audit but no longer required the Chair of Governors to sign it off.	
17	Review term dates 2022-23 and inset dates 2021-22		
	17	The HT advised that this would be discussed with the other HTs in the trust but RMGS preferred to go midweek to midweek at Christmas. He would share the feedback once the HTs meeting had taken place.	
Policies & risk register			
18	Policies		
	18.1	SEND local offer (s ¹) the HT advised there were no changes	
	18.2	Admissions policy 2022 (s) – the HT advised no changes	
	18.3	Remote learning & and teaching appendix to curriculum policy (ns) covered in HT report	
19	Review risk registers – any q’s – nothing has particularly changed since last time		
	19.1	The HT advised nothing had particularly changed since the last time these were presented. There were no questions.	
Governance/procedural			
20	Circle model		
	20.1	Governors confirmed they were happy to continue with their existing monitoring role. She recommended AG to join the finance pair, KS to be the H&S governor. Post meeting correction: SR to join PDWB. Governors approved the recommendation. The Chair advised she had received feedback from some governors that they felt the monitoring pairs worked very well and the visit reports were high quality. The meeting agreed to look at the review when the LGB met back in school together and the clerk to add to relevant agenda	Clerk
21	Succession planning & vice chair		
	21.1	The Chair re-iterated that her term of office as Chair came to an end in December 20 and, as a parent governor, in May 21. She reminded governors that succession planning was the responsibility of the whole board. There had been no expressions of interest in the Vice Chair role. Governors were unsure about the role description and suggested there should be greater flexibility as it appeared too prescriptive. The Clerk explained that the role description had been drafted after previous Vice Chairs had felt there was insufficient structure to the role. It could be viewed as a support to the Chair or preparation for a Chair in waiting. The Clerk suggested the role could be split between two governors. The Chair asked that governors think about succession and if they had any comments to speak to her.	All
22	HT review panel		
	22.1	Dates would be circulated soon.	
23	Governor training update & CPD -		
		The Chair requested this be moved to next meeting	Clerk
24	AOB - none		
25	Confidentiality - none		
	Meeting ended 20.10 Date of next meeting: 30 Nov 20		

¹ (s) = statutory (ns) non-statutory

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ACTIONS LOG

Item	Action	Who/when	Update
9.1	Circulate details of applicants for co-opted governor prior to Trust Board approval. Add recruitment update to agendas	Chair/Clerk Next meeting	
9.2	Anyone interested in being Audit Committee rep to contact the Chair	ALL Next meeting	
10.1	Update training records on Governorhub and upload any certificates	ALL	
11.2.5	Discuss impact of pay awards at next monitoring visit	SBM/LL/AG Next meeting	
13.2	Pupil premium monitoring visit report to be sent	TSF/CW 20 th October	
20.1	Add Circle model review to appropriate agenda	Clerk	
21.1	Expressions of interest for Vice Chair to Chair	Governors/ next meeting	
23	Add governor training and CPD to next agenda	Clerk/ Next meeting	

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