



RAINHAM MARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY  
HELD ON 1 FEBRUARY 2021 6.00PM – Virtual Meeting**

**PRESENT:**

L Bourne	Co-opted Governor
L Cox	Parent Governor
S Griffiths (Chair)	Parent Governor
A Gehrke	Co-opted Governor
M Harewood	Co-opted Governor
L Lanipekun	Parent Governor
J Mayes	Staff Governor
A Moore	Headteacher
S Reynolds	Co-opted Governor
S Roe	Co-opted Governor
T Scott-Fox	Parent Governor

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

S Decker	CEO
M Brighton	School Business Manager
C Bailey	Clerk

Item	Main Discussions and agreed actions	Action/When
<b>Procedural</b>		
1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Due notice had been given and the meeting was quorate. There were apologies from Carol Wallis, Ruqia Osman and Kalgi Shah which were accepted.	
2	<b>Declarations of Business Interest</b>	
	2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.	
3	<b>Notifications of items to be discussed under AOB</b>	
	3.1 Careers	
4	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting of 30 November 2020 and signing thereof</b>	
	4.1 The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and will be signed electrically by the Chair.	
5	<b>Matters arising not covered by this agenda</b>	
	5.1 The Pupil Premium Report will be made available on GovernorHub.	TSF
	5.2 Action Point 5.7.2 of the previous minutes states that the Career Governor role information will be circulated. The SBM or the new Clerk will confirm that it has been made available.	MB/Clerk
<b>Governance</b>		
6	<b>Governor Training Update &amp; CPD Mid-Year Review</b>	
	6.1 SRO had completed a PREVENT course (via NSPCC) and a Safeguarding online course (via EduCare).	
	6.2 It was noted that Safeguarding and Reporting Exclusions learning modules are available on GovernorHub. Budgets and Sustainable Staffing Structure training will be available from next week, and IPAC Ofsted online training has spaces available for training on 11 <sup>th</sup> March. Training on the new Ofsted framework for the whole LGB will take place when face-to-face learning is permitted. <b>The new Clerk will continue to lead on governor training.</b>	



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7	<b>Governor Membership Updates</b>	
	7.1	RO, with skills and knowledge of inclusion and diversity, has joined as a Co-opted Governor.
	7.2	LB volunteered to be Vice Chair. <b>All governors agreed and the decision to appoint LB as Vice Chair was ratified.</b>
8	<b>Clerk Updates</b>	
	8.1	There were no updates from the Clerk.
9	<b>Trust Update</b>	
	9.1	The CEO paid tribute to Hari Jagaram, the DT Technician, who recently died. Harry's passing is a great loss and the Trust has written to his family to express condolences.
	9.2	The CEO confirmed that checks had been undertaken on the Single Central Record on behalf of the Trust. There were no significant gaps and the Record is being professionally maintained. In addition, DBS checks were conducted virtually at present.
	9.3	A new Trust and LGB Clerk has been appointed, and will begin after half term.
	9.4	An Ofsted two day monitoring visit will take place at Twydall Primary School on 3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> February, with a particular focus on remote learning.
	9.5	RMGS has received positive feedback from parents in relation to the remote learning offering. Schools may begin a phased return from early March, though this has not yet been confirmed.
	9.6	The CEO confirmed that the HT recruitment process has resulted in some strong candidates being shortlisted, with four candidates being interviewed on 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> February. The 8 <sup>th</sup> February assessment will be undertaken remotely, and the 9 <sup>th</sup> February assessment will be undertake in person, subject to COVID-19 testing and risk assessments being in place. LB and SG are on the recruitment panel, with SG as the chair of the panel. <b>Governors asked if there were any internal candidates</b> and the CEO said that there was an internal application but that applicant was not shortlisted.  <b>The CEO left the meeting at 6.24pm.</b>
10	<b>Policies</b>	
	10.1	There were no policies for review.
	10.2	<b>Governors noted that there is no option within the Admissions Policy to allow for a review of books.</b> It was noted that any amendments may be updated when the Admissions Policy for 2023 is due for review.
	10.3	<b>Governors asked how the school is advised of admissions appeals feedback.</b> The HT said that, as the appeal is an independent panel, the Clerk would feed any comments back to the school when they provide notice of the decision made. <b>MH joined the meeting at 6.27pm.</b>
<b>Business Management</b>		
11	<b>Income &amp; Expenditure Report/Review Budget</b>	
	11.1	The SBM provided the report prior to the meeting and noted that the finance monitoring pair had not had an opportunity to review the data prior to the meeting. It is expected that there will be an in-year surplus but this is dependent upon the return to school and various



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		changes such as a significant reduction in income from catering and lettings. However, there are savings on resources for practical experiences such as food technology, as well as a reduction in staff training and the additional costs incurred from such training. These changes make forecasting difficult. <b>Governors questioned the increased actuals for technology costs (furniture and equipment) within the IMS report.</b> The SBM confirmed that the new portacabin had to be furnished from September as space was required with bubble classes.	
	11.2	The CIF bid for the 6 <sup>th</sup> Form block has been resubmitted with a strengthened project section. The SBM explained that the Condition Improvement Fund is the way academies bid for capital expenditure funds. The 6 <sup>th</sup> Form block is required for the growth of the school due to overcrowding in the dining/social and study areas, which was at the request of the Local Authority. The value of the build is £900,000 and school reserves are expected to contribute £350,000 to the project which would ensure the furnishing and maintenance of the project. In addition, an extension to the temporary planning application for the catering portacabin has been submitted. Governors asked what the consequences of the submission being put on hold were for the school. The SBM confirmed that the bid had been resubmitted on the basis of feedback from last year. Whilst no formal tender process had been embarked on as this would incur additional cost, the architect had used costings from professional companies.	
	11.3	The SBM said that the school is taking advantage of pupils not being present to undertake premises work. This takes the form of new fencing around the car park, a canopy being installed, and boiler works which are expected to be completed by the end of February.	
	11.4	The SBM confirmed that the Income Expenditure Report had been made available prior to the meeting and the finance monitoring pair will review this in depth next term. <b>Governors questioned how premises works are monitored and whether a dedicated premises governor was required to link with the Site Manager.</b> The SBM confirmed that premises falls under the remit of the finance monitoring. <b>Governors queried whether any additional works can be undertake on site whilst no pupils are present.</b> The SBM confirmed that the site team are undertaking as much work as possible where it can be guaranteed to be completed should more pupils return to the school, for example, changing lighting and painting corridors. The HT and SBM will discuss the opportunities for a walk of the premises at the finance monitoring meeting.	HT/SBM
	11.5	The Health and Safety Governor (KS) will be mentored.	
12	<b>Accounting Officer Checks</b>		
	12.1	The Accounting Officer checks have been completed.	
13	<b>Review Academy Finance Manual</b>		
	13.1	The SBM said that the Academy Finance Manual had been reviewed and amended as it did not refer to the Circle Model of Governance. <b>Governors asked whether a reference to EU limits was still required.</b> It was confirmed that advice would be sought from the accountant as	



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		<p>this point related to procurement and it was unknown whether it still applied.  <b>MBr left the meeting at 6.49pm.</b></p>	
<b>School Improvement</b>			
15	<b>HT Report</b>		
	15.1	<p>The HT introduced his report which had been made available prior the meeting, and confirmed that it reflected the current situation. The HT responded to Governor questions provided prior to the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There had been an increase on RMGS as a first and general preference on Yr7 admission applications.</li> <li>2. Admissions to 6<sup>th</sup> Form had been provided in the report as the school was trying to recruit new entrants from other schools who would benefit from being at RMGS. The 14 German students who would usually attend in Yr12 were unlikely to continue to attend as there was no funding under Brexit regulations.</li> <li>3. There are some casual admissions as appeals continue.</li> <li>4. All staff leavers are offered an exit questionnaire and a meeting, though very few choose to complete the questionnaire. The Clerk did submit an exit questionnaire.</li> <li>5. It is difficult to compare exclusions year on year. One pupil has been excluded recently, and earlier in the academic year there were some exclusions but nothing particular of note at the moment. They were all short exclusions and there is no particular pattern.</li> <li>6. Safeguarding is more of a concern during lockdown. Lesson attendance is monitored, the office telephones non-attendees by the end of the second period. The Safeguarding or Pastoral team also follow up. There have been a number of pupils referred to social services. Daily contact is made with pupils via emails and phone calls which takes time.</li> <li>7. Attendance in lessons is good, the engagement rating is high, the average number of lessons missed (2 per week) is small (out of 30 per week). Most students do not miss any lessons but a small number of students may miss a whole week. Yr11 pupil averages relate to a small number of pupils, and the figure is not typical of most Yr11 pupils.</li> <li>8. 30 hours of lessons per week is a normal school timetable, although students are not taught for the entire lesson time. They are set tasks, they may do their work and stay online or go offline. A parent survey has provided some feedback, such that younger pupils find being on line for 5 hours per day intense. RMGS is providing CPD for teachers to assist with finding alternative strategies for teaching. The vast majority of parent responses believe the balance is correct.</li> <li>9. Pupils do interact but less than normal, and generally only via chat functions or their personal phones. They do not like to have their cameras on. 6<sup>th</sup> Form students have smaller groups and therefore interact more than Yrs8 and 9 who have bigger classes. A student feedback survey will provide more information.</li> </ol>	



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		<p>10. Andy Smith has taken a lead on working with Heads of Year to ensure all students can access online learning.</p> <p>11. COVID-19 testing has been set up, all staff are trained and the school is ready to test staff twice a week. It is unclear whether pupils will be tested repeatedly, after their initial test on returning to school.</p> <p>12. It is unknown what will happen with the cancellation of exams. A consultation on “mini-exams” for Yr11 and 13 closed this week. Mock exams took place before Christmas for Yr11 and other assessments took place which could be used instead. Some data is available, following in-lesson assessments in October for Yr13. Further internal exams will need to take place but further guidance is awaited. Governors will be involved at that time.</p> <p>13. Pupil Premium funds would normally have been spent on school trips and cultural enhancements so a cultural catalogue has been developed and parent feedback has been good.</p> <p>14. The additional expenditure required for the phased programme of refurbishment works may require the Governors’ approval. This item will be brought back to LGB.</p>	
	15.2	<p>RMGS has been awarded the Inclusive School Award with Centre of Excellence status. This was based on interviews with students and key staff members, and the assessor recommended that the school apply for the Centre of Excellence status. <b>Governors agreed that there was a great team at RMGS who supported every child.</b></p>	
16	<b>Review of School Development Plan</b>		
	16.1	<p>This point was discussed at point 14 in the HT’s report. In addition, RMGS does not wish for staff development plans to be negatively impacted by the current situation and all staff are encouraged and given time to do online training, although national qualifications have been paused. Performance management has continued. <b>Governors agreed that staff have done very well in coping and changing their teaching during lockdown.</b></p>	
17	<b>Monitoring Visit Reports ( School Improvement)</b>		
	17.1	<p>A monitoring visit to consider the quality of leadership and management took place and, whilst the report has yet to be written up, there were no concerns. It was hoped that a meeting with the new HT would take place more than once a year.</p>	
	17.2	<p>Safeguarding is being well monitored via a CPOMS computer programme which is tool for collating a centralised confidential record which authorised staff can monitor for safeguarding and protection issues. Working with Medway Local Authority is good. The online teaching does lack casual daily observations of pupils. There are a low number of pupils who are of concern but there are a small number who are shared between Medway Local Authority and Social Services. Day to day monitoring works extremely well.</p> <p>A pupil outcome monitoring pair review is booked for 23<sup>rd</sup> February.</p>	
18	<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>		
	18.1	<p>There was nothing to report.</p>	



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Risk Register		
19	<b>Review Risk Register</b>	
	19.1	The document was circulated prior to the meeting. There was nothing further to add as the detail had been covered by section 17.
Procedural		
20	<b>Any Other Urgent Business</b>	
	20.1	<u>Careers</u> LB has liaised with the Careers Advisor who confirmed a proactive approach to liaising with students over the phone. University uptake is still strong. More students are applying for degree apprenticeships and health and social service careers are more in demand. There has been lots of work undertaken on a virtual careers fair, whilst careers lessons have been maintained for the lower school years. A report has been made available on GovernorHub.
21	<b>Confidentiality</b>	
	21.1	There were no confidential items.
22	<b>Impact of Governance/Governors KPIs</b>	
	22.1	The challenge provided by questioning, particularly those given in advance of the meeting, ensured fuller answers to any questions.
<b>Meeting ended 19.45 Date of next meeting: 08.03.21</b>		

Signed:	
Date:	8.3.21



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**ACTION LOG**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who/when</b>
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5.2	Action Point 5.7.2 of the previous minutes states that the Career Governor role information will be circulated. The SBM or the new Clerk will confirm that it has been made available.	SBM/Clerk
11.4	The HT and Business Manager will discuss the opportunities for a walk of the premises at the finance monitoring meeting.	HT/SBM