



ST. BEDE'S CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL
celebrates life and learning



PUPIL AND STAFF SUPPORT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH NOVEMBER, 2020 BY ZOOM

PRESENT: Mrs. G. Geoghegan Mr. P. Owen (Chair) Mrs. J. Rourke
 Mrs. P. Talbot Mrs. F. Tiernan

ABSENT: Mrs. M. Knowles

MINUTES: Mrs. J. Ryan

PART ONE

1. **Apologies**

None. Mrs. Knowles was absent from the meeting

2. **Register of Interest – Agenda Items**

None

3. **Minutes and matters arising from the meeting held on 23/01/2020**

None

FT apologised for omitting 'and Staff' from the committee name on the agenda circulated.

4. **Policies to be discussed and ratified**

Health and Safety Policy

HBC H&S advised that the policy, approved at the previous meeting, was sufficient and overarching. However, FT has added a covid-related addendum, detailing the steps being taken in school. Governors confirmed that they were happy with the measures put in place to keep the school community safe and praised the comprehensive risk assessments and updates they have received.

5. **Training/CPD**

Pivotal Education: Behaviour Specialists

FT is now a Pivotal Instructor and reminded governors that Pivotal is in line with the school's mission and values; it has a nurture approach, is solution focussed and breaks down the idea that deprivation links to poor behaviour.

Diploma in Trauma and Mental Health Informed Schools

Mrs. Harrington commenced the diploma this week. She is also a qualified counsellor and a mental health first aider and the diploma will enhance the services offered in school to support pupils and parents.

FT described how all the different support initiatives connect. Visible Learning supports Pivotal, Pivotal supports mental health, mental health supports forest skills. Governors agreed they were proud of the holistic approach to how school can be improved rather than improvements being driven just by data.

6. Covid-19 Restrictions and impact on school, staff and students

To date there have been two positive pupils. Work is not sent if the child is unwell. Satchel One (online home learning) is working well with the older children. Class teachers have done all they can and the office will now contact parents of children who have not logged on to offer assistance and identify who hasn't got the technology to access home learning. School has received laptops and routers from the DfE and these will be carefully targeted.

Two members of staff have had to isolate due to family members testing positive.

FT outlined the guidelines and restrictions advised by the LA, eg they did not agree a Priest is an essential visitor to a school. However, in her opinion, schools are able to manage risk, contractors are coming on site when required.

The committee discussed the implications of year group bubbles and asked that risk assessments are reviewed and updated before any changes are introduced. FT advised it would be January, at the earliest, before children are able to mix inside in lessons. There is a proposal to trial children mixing outside as a year group in December but if there is an increase in cases then this will not be considered.

FT praised staff and pupils for ensuring that school continues to operate smoothly; everyone is pulling together. She had received an email from a parent simply saying thank you for everything you are doing to keep life normal for the children.

Governors expressed their thanks to everyone .

7. Mental Health and Wellbeing

Pupils

Q: How is everyone?

GG advised that pupils have accepted that this is the way we are now working. A few have found it difficult because their friends are in different classes. Staff are mindful that bubbles might have to be sent home but home learning makes it seamless when they return to school.

Q: How are teachers managing to teach full time in class then prepare online work?

A: The only preparing work for two weeks of isolation

Q: Could lessons be delivered by zoom if a class was isolating?

A: One school in the Primary Network has sent six bubbles home. The teacher has split the class and is delivering the lesson via zoom then inviting the others in but this wouldn't meet the needs of our community. Only RE, English and Maths are provided if a child is isolating to avoid putting staff under additional pressure.

FT recognises the pressure staff who are also parents are under; last week four members of staff had children isolating at home because their bubbles had been sent home from Wade Deacon. Another has a 6 year old child who is being looked after by grandparents. She is conscious of the need to act compassionately and value staff.

Q: When doing the planning do you do ordinary planning and also upload to Satchel?

A: Not automatically. We work closely as a year team and share the workload. We are mindful when preparing lessons of what can be uploaded, eg powerpoint presentations that the child can access. It's quick and easy to upload work.

Q: How is your mental health and how are teaching staff coping?

A: We've talked in the past about how we're a close team and we all have people we can speak to. Like the children we're not seeing friends due to the staggered lunches etc but we accept that is how it is.

FT confirmed that morale is high and she often hears laughter from the staffroom. Staff are empowered to approach SLT. Staff are very committed to the success of children and she proposed offering staff a Wellbeing Afternoon, staggered over three weeks, in December in recognition of continuing to work in a difficult situation. .

Q: Is there a way of rewarding staff, eg flowers from the Governing Body

A: No, this wouldn't be permitted under the terms of reference of the Private School Account

FT advised that she buys gifts for staff and one had suggested that the money normally spent is used to support vulnerable families. When asked what rewards they would like staff responded saying being thanked and praised by SLT, Governors and/or parents was more important.

Governors agreed the request for a wellbeing afternoon and confirmed staff can take their PPA time in the morning so they have a full day off. They also agreed that all pupils should receive a small token, eg selection box, at the end of term.

8. **Attendance and Punctuality**

FT advised that covid-related absences do not impact on the school's overall attendance. Attendance to October half term was 97.57%, the same period last year was 96.84%. When absences were analysed the biggest impact was holidays in term time. Last year this accounted for 30% of absences this year it is 18%. There has also been a reduction in sickness absences; 35 compared to 51 last year. This may be due to increased hand hygiene.

9. **Any Other Business**

The Wellbeing Policy will be discussed at the FGB meeting.

10. **Date of next meeting**

Wednesday, 10th February, 2021 at 5pm.

