

**GOVERNING BODY FOR MAPLEDOWN SCHOOL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM DUE TO COVID 19 LOCKDOWN  
ON TUESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> MAY at 7pm 2020**

**LA GOVERNORS**

Sue O'Halloran (Chair)\*

**CO-OPTED GOVERNORS**

Judy Benjamin \*

Lorna Jaffa\*

Helen Wells\*

Alper Kilic \*

**STAFF GOVERNOR**

Christa Lewis (Staff)\*

**PARENT GOVERNORS**

Vacancy

Pete Kornickzy \*

Judy Meshulam \*

Teresa Bull (Vice-Chair)\*

**HEADTEACHER**

SteveCarroll\*

\* denotes member present

**NON-VOTING OBSERVERS**

Caroline Garvey (Deputy HT)\*

Sue Hart (Deputy HT)\*

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Kristina McGoldrick - Clerk

**Part I**

**20/24 WELCOME**

The chair welcomed the Governors to the ZOOM meeting

**20/25 ACCEPTANCE/NON-ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**20/26 LOCKDOWN EASING AND SCHOOL RE-OPENING**

The Chair invited the Headteacher to give a situation update following the Government announcement of Covid 19 Lockdown easing. The Headteacher reported that the school had received a huge amount of information from both the LA and the DfE, often conflicting and not a huge amount of practical advice. He pointed out that the information was particularly geared towards mainstream primary schools and we still await official advice about Special Needs Schools.

He acknowledged that there is a presumption from the DfE and LA that the school should make efforts to re-open as soon as possible and to stick to the Government's roadmap.

He reported that of the four special schools in Barnet, only one has remained open for a small cohort.

He reminded Governors of the school's legal duty of care to provide a safe environment for staff and pupils.

It is a requirement that Risk assessments are carried out before the school re-opens. The official 19 page Risk assessment from the LA (which needs to be tailored to Mapledown) had only been received that morning.

A survey had been sent (15 May) to gauge parental and staff opinion on possible re-opening. He reported that 25% of parents would like their children to return to school as soon as it is open. Of the 75% who are not happy to send their children immediately, some had voiced that they would like to re-consider the situation a few weeks after re-opening. Many simply felt that it was not safe at this moment in time.

Fourteen members of Staff had contacted the Head Teacher, giving various reasons, including medical conditions, reporting that they would not be available for work.

Unions are strongly advising their members that it is not safe under the Government's current road map.

He stated that there are real challenges facing the school, not limited, but including:

- ! Lengthy Risk Assessments to conduct
- ! Pupils are not able to socially distance
- ! Staff required to provide Intimate care for pupils
- ! Preparing the building to minimise risk (including deep cleaning, special taps etc.)
- ! Sourcing and providing PPE for staff, (conflicting advice on what PPE is required)
- ! Staffing

He suggested to minimise risk, pupils and staff should be divided into groups and work only within those to avoid cross over. Should anyone display symptoms that Group would be isolated.

He acknowledged that families are facing real challenges in the current circumstances.

He **PROPOSED** that we aim to re-open school no earlier than June 15th but that the Governors re-convene on the 9<sup>th</sup> June for a situation update.

The Chair **INVITED** comments from Governors.

Judy M **SHARED** that she had been issued with PPE and commented that is extremely uncomfortable to wear and can only be worn for a short period of time. She **AGREED** with The Headteacher's suggestion that pupils and staff should be divided into Groups. She mentioned this had been successful in a care home environment.

The Vice Chair agreed with Judy M. She **QUESTIONED** if pupils could be taught outdoors and would the situation be monitored.

The Head Teacher responded that we have a small amount of PPE (3 ply masks/aprons/gloves). We are trying to source Visors and have thermometers to check staff and pupils on arrival. Pupils could be taught outdoors where possible. He **ASSURED** that the situation is always subject to monitoring and reviews.

Judy M **QUESTIONED** what would happen if 90% of families wanted pupils to return?

The Head Teacher responded that this is very much an experimental stage between now and the end of term. The real challenge will be from September to December. Should there be an increased take-up that would have to be managed, with the aim not to exclude any families.

Lorna **ENQUIRED** about Deep cleaning. It was stated that a staff member would be assigned all day long to clean common surfaces and areas.

Pete **QUESTIONED** why it would take three and a half weeks before potential re-opening and what was the rationale with the date of the 15<sup>th</sup> June?

The Headteacher **RESPONDED** that the sheer amount of the work involved, including completing Risk Assessments, sourcing equipment which is frequently out of stock, communicating with all stakeholders, takes time. There is a lot to do. In particular staff need to be 'onboard' and reassured.

Helen **COMMENTED** that she is trying to source PPE which is constantly out of stock and **QUESTIONED** about transport. The Head Teacher explained this is one of the next stages and part of preparations.

Christa **STATED** that she had received feedback from many staff which was circulated to Governors just prior to the meeting via email. She voiced that staff are very worried especially in Learning Zones Two and Three. There is huge anxiety about pupils not being able to socially distance and challenging behaviours such as spitting.

Alper **QUESTIONED** after all of the preparations, what happens on June 9<sup>th</sup>?

The Head Teacher **RESPONDED** that we then take stock of where we are at that time, with regard to Risk Assessments, PPE, deep clean etc. If we are satisfied that we have done all we can to minimise risk and make the environment as safe as possible for staff and pupils alike.

Judy B **ASKED** about tests for staff and was informed that these are not available at the moment.

Pete **ASKED** what support the Governing Body could give? The Headteacher responded that staff need to be reassured. At the moment we are working on the finer details of preparations and would call on Governors for help if needed.

Sue H **STATED** that it was worth noting that following the meeting that day with the Nurse Manager, she advised that the nurse would need to be in PPE including a FFP3 mask (supplied only to the NHS). They would themselves need to do a full risk assessment and it may not be deemed safe for the nurse to be on site. A discussion ensued and it was raised that parents would have assumed a nurse would be on site and may take a different view on returning pupils if that is not the case.

Judy M **ENQUIRED** about working with other Special schools to learn from their experiences. The Head Teacher responded that he had consulted with a Head Teacher from Cambridge on the recommendation of the LA and his plan was to work together with Oakleigh.

The Vice Chair and Judy M **RAISED the question** about transmission and symptoms of Covid 19. The Vice Chair **COMMENTED** that current scientific advice is that the 11-19 age group can be transmitters of the virus and that having a disability itself puts them in a higher risk group.

The Chair **INVITED** the Governors to vote on the Proposal of working towards re-opening the school on June 15<sup>th</sup> subject to a status update on June 9<sup>th</sup>.

The Governors voted **UNANIMOUSLY** in favour of the proposal.

The Chair then **THANKED** the Head Teacher and staff for all their hard work and commitment.

**AOB.** The Chair **INVITED** Alper to speak. Alper **INFORMED** the Governors that due to work relocation he will be resigning from the Governing Body in the Autumn Term. He thanked everyone and said that he has been proud to be a Governor at Mapledown.

The Governors collectively thanked Alper for his contributions and wish him well.

20/27 **DATES OF NEXT GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

Lockdown Easing Situation Update - Tuesday June 9<sup>th</sup> 2020 at 7pm via Zoom

Proposed to meet at: 7:00pm Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July and Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020 via Zoom

Meeting with Sandra Chaaya Proposed to meet at: 7pm on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 via Zoom

Kristina McGoldrick 20 May 2020