

STANFORD INFANT SCHOOL
Full Governing Body meeting – held online
7th July 2020 6.00pm

Present: Catherine Bradley & Holly Lomasney - Co-Chairs, Madeleine Denyer – Head Teacher, Emma Remnant, Elizabeth Lyle, Lucy Kane, Stuart Clark, Tess Gill, Catrin Pinheiro Torres, Naomi Schubert, Mark Topham

Quorate: 12/12

In attendance: Richard Barker, Head of School Organisation, Brighton & Hove City Council
Anna Johnson (Clerk)

1.

a. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

b. Declaration of any Pecuniary Interest in the Meeting - None

c. Notice of any Urgent Other Business

2.

**a. Proposed reductions in Published Admission Number (PAN) –
Richard Barker, Head of School Organisation, Brighton & Hove City Council**

There is a decline in school age children in the city, which is part of a 25 year pattern of variations in this figure. East and West Sussex have also seen a decline in school age numbers in recent years, despite rises in local development areas and this is the demographic trend in the whole south east region.

From 2022 there will be a predicted 600 surplus primary school places in the city. The Department of Education recommends education authorities having surplus places of no more than 5-10%. The council needs to maintain capacity and avoid closing schools but wants to address the financial challenges faced by schools with low class sizes.

A cross party group has been working on how to make changes, which began with voluntary reductions in PANs at Westdene and Brackenbury schools. The timetable for reducing PANs is now more urgent as the Children & Young Persons Committee deciding on the proposals will be less free in their decisions as elections near.

Parent preference is not a consideration as the priority of PAN planning is to sustain all schools in the city. There are schools that are oversubscribed but many of the children attending come from outside the area.

Q. Is the planning using the immediate postcode area as the catchment for each school, so reducing parent choice promoted under national guidance?

A. Planning is based on a citywide solution with changes benefiting the whole city.

Q. Is creating one form entry schools sensible planning?

A. The Department of Education is not in support of one form entry schools and these schools find it particularly challenging to move along on the school improvement journey. The cross party group does not want to generate another problem by creating more of these schools. There are a number of one form entry church schools over which the council has no jurisdiction although it has asked some of the larger church schools to reduce their PAN.

Q. Stanford Infants is an outstanding school, isn't it a benefit to children in Brighton to offer more places at this type of school?

A. It is unfair that the schools that are working hard towards improvement often end up with a high proportion of late entry children who tend to be from transient homes and need more support. These schools lose local children to larger schools further away and the funding that goes with full classes.

Q. Is this a failure of long term planning – schools were being expanded a few years ago?

A. The bulge had to be accommodated and planning has aimed to equalize the proportions of children receiving free school meals in catchment areas.

Q. Has the cross party group anticipated another sudden change in school age children which may arise from the housing crash in London for example?

A. The council is changing the PANs and not the number of schools which will allow for future flexibility. PANs can be increased without consultation.

RB explained that adjudication on the PAN proposal by the Children and Young People and Skills Committee (CYPC) would take into account parental preference and governing bodies had power of refusal to reduction in admission numbers. The final decision would be made in January 2021 at the CYPC following a series of consultation meetings in the autumn. Not all schools on the list would go through to the committee following online consultation.

Governing boards of schools on the list were writing to the Head of Children's Services with their views on the proposals.

Richard Barker explained that the council must consider equalities issues; the current situation affects the education of disadvantaged children who have protected characteristics disproportionately.

Governors agreed that despite their role in supporting Stanford Infants, taking action to ensure a good education for all children was ethical.

Q. Is the council doing enough to improve failing schools so that parental preference for schools would be distributed more evenly across the city?

A. The council does have a school improvement strategy but due to the funding formula being based on pupil numbers this is hampered by poor finances. It is important to understand that education is not run by market forces.

Q. What impact will PAN changes have on the recruitment of high quality teaching staff in the city - they are attracted to the city by the outstanding schools which will be reduced in size?

A. The struggling schools will be bolstered by stable and full class sizes and should become more attractive to teachers. However, the main challenge to recruitment is the expensive housing market in the city.

Action: Chairs to write a letter to Head of Children's Services and distribute to board for comment before sending.

Governors noted that the support of the parent body when the school was being asked to expand had been vital and the board should consider how to engage the power of the parent voice once it was confirmed that Stanford Infants was included in the final proposal.

6.40pm Richard Barker left the meeting.

b. Head Teacher Briefing Paper

Q. 10 children are not moving to the Juniors from Year 2 - are the reasons known?

A. Some are moving to private schools where their siblings are already and some are moving to other local schools. The figure has risen this year after a decrease in the last few years. It was agreed that the Chairs would contact the Chairs at the Juniors to discuss this issue. **Action**

Q. Is it a concern that admission numbers are below the roll number by 12 currently?

A. The Head had tried to speak to the Admissions teams but had not made contact. It was usual for late placements to be made but the school office would regularly contact Admissions regarding vacancies as they had every year recently.

Headline Priorities 2021

A review of the SDIP confirmed that most of the plan had been completed. Due to school closure during the pandemic, an absence of data meant some areas could not be signed off.

Many of the next year's priorities were about embedding progress made this year. The school would need to address gaps in knowledge and decide which areas of the curriculum to adapt in the autumn.

Those children who had missed phonics assessments would be complete them in June 2021. Work in developing the maths specialist team would continue. In the area of personal development, inclusion of BME families would be a focus continuing the Respect theme in the curriculum in previous years.

Q. Is there an expectation that disadvantaged children will have made accelerated progress during lockdown?

A. For the summer term they have been attending school in small class sizes and this may well be the outcome.

Q. Does the school know how much catch up funding it will receive and what it will be used for?

A. It is not expected to be a significant amount and teachers will wait until the autumn term before deciding where support is needed.

Emma Remnant reported that the new reception cohort had some children with high needs, which may have been accentuated by the lack of nursery provision during lockdown. There were also a relatively high number of children with English as an additional language (it wasn't yet clear how much English they had) and some children with physical, developmental and SEND needs.

Q. Is the number of children with additional needs increasing because the school has a reputation for supporting them well?

A. This is the case for children of adoptive families with attachment issues.

ER reported that it was expected that there might be more children with delayed language development and toilet training due to lack of nursery provision. For these reasons welcome chats have been extended to half an hour in September and will be take place in person not over Zoom.

The Head would be consulting with staff for their input regarding plans for the autumn.

	<p><i>Q. Are there still staff members shielding?</i> A. There is only one staff member shielding who is very anxious about returning to work but is starting work in the playground. The Teaching Assistant believed to have had Covid-19 is still very ill and has therefore not returned to work.</p> <p><i>Q. Has there been further development of on online learning provision?</i> A. The Head and the Year 2 Lead had attended the Teaching School Alliance training sessions. Some caution was needed as very young children might not find accessing technology easy and schools were required to use their own curriculum rather than independent provision such as the government platform Oak Academy.</p> <p>The Head would be sending parents a feedback questionnaire about the school's online learning provision.</p> <p>The Head confirmed that a contingency plan for possible further lockdowns would be sent to the board before September. Action</p> <p><i>Q. Is there further action needed to encourage full attendance?</i> A. The Head did not anticipate this would be an issue, those children who continued to stay at home had parents or siblings who were shielding or older siblings who had not returned to school.</p> <p><i>Q. Will the Senior Leadership Team ensure they have a proper break over the summer?</i> A. The Head and Deputy confirmed that they would be taking time off.</p> <p>The Head described the importance of gaining staff input for the new risk assessment especially in current context where government guidance was so unclear.</p> <p>Continuing with the Breakfast Club was operationally challenging but the school understood that it was vital for some parents as well as providing income for the school.</p> <p><i>Q. What will happen next term if a teacher becomes ill with Covid-19?</i> A. The teacher will self-isolate and the school hopes to have tests so that they can test children from that bubble. How cover is provided will depend on the timetable of the staff member; the Head and Deputy have been providing cover in general.</p> <p>The Head reported that Sports Funding had been confirmed for 2020 to 2021. While no government guidance had yet been received in relation to the Pupil Premium report in the absence of data.</p>
3.	<p>a. Accuracy of Minutes – the minutes were agreed b. Matters Arising & Action Log – All actions were completed</p>
4.	<p>a. Governor Meeting Dates & Roles 2020-21</p> <p>The Head announced that James Bates was stepping down from the board at the end of term. The board thanked James for his very significant contribution to governance and meaningful support for school finances in his role as Chair.</p> <p>It was proposed and agreed that Mark Topham would become chair of the finance committee. Naomi Schubert was appointed Co-opted governor from July the 27th.</p> <p>It was agreed that the parent governor vacancy would be advertised in September</p>

	<p>when nominations were more likely to be put forward. Action Action: Clerk to confirm if a parent governor election information can request particular skills.</p> <p>Governors agreed the proposed meeting dates. It was not yet clear whether governance meetings would continue online or as a mixture. Some governors noted that it was easier to attend on Zoom.</p> <p>The board had skills gaps in the area of finance (the committee needed another member) and health and safety which was a statutory requirement and also particularly vital in the current situation of the pandemic. There was a vacancy on the Personal Development and Behaviour group following James Bates departure.</p> <p>Lucy Kane agreed to become the governor link for computing and maths.</p>
5.	<p>a. Safeguarding - Standing Item</p> <p>Tess Gill reported that Safeguarding network meetings had resumed online. The safeguarding audit had been reviewed but the requirement to submit an updated audit had been postponed by the local authority. Guidance was being issued by Gill Hibbert on how the Single Central Record could be monitored by the Safeguarding governor.</p> <p><i>Q. Will safeguarding training take place in the inset in the autumn?</i> A. Yes, depending on space some staff and Tess Gill may need to attend via Zoom. Action: MD to circulate agendas</p> <p>The dedication of Emma Remnant in collecting and dropping off children to school was remarked on by the board with gratitude.</p> <p>Keeping Children Safe in Education (KSCSIE) Sept 2020</p> <p>Amendments and additions related to mental health, exploitation and allegations against agency and supply staff; an amended Child Protection policy would follow from the local authority in the autumn.</p>
6.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Governors were invited to attend the Hove Partnership meeting taking place on July 14th.</p> <p>The Chairs thanked the incredible dedication of the staff during the challenges of the year and the board for their commitment to the school.</p>
7.	<p>Next meeting: 22nd September 6pm</p>

Chair's Signature:

ACTION LOG OVERLEAF

ACTION LOG				
	Date of Meeting	Action	Owner	Due Date
1.	16.06.20	Catherine to contact BHASVIC Black Lives Matter ambassadors re visit	CB	Autumn term
2.	07.07.20	Chairs to write a letter re PAN to Head of Children's Services and distribute to board for comment before sending	CB/HL	Asap
3.	07.07.20	Chairs to contact SJS chairs to discuss numbers transferring to the Juniors	CB/HL	Autumn term
4.	07.07.20	Head to send contingency plan for further lockdowns to board before September	MD	September
5.	07.07.20	Parent governor vacancy to be advertised in September. Clerk to confirm if a parent governor election information can request particular skills.	MD/AJ	Asap
6.	07.07.20	Head to circulate safeguarding inset agendas	MD	tbc