

**Minutes from the Extra-ordinary Meeting of the Governors  
held (via Zoom) on Wednesday 20 May 2020 at 2.00 p.m.**

**Present:** Collette Buck, Ian Burton, Sue Donnelly, Clare Gaskell, Mike McGarry (Headteacher), Cathy Morris, Jonathan Mumford, Karen Owens, Paul Povey, Jim Rimmer, Richard Snowdon, Paul Steiger, Jackie Talbot, Mervyn Thomas (Chair),

**Also Present:** Tom Dolly, Carolyn Ainsworth, Gayle Phillips, Andy Pritchard, Vicky Ashworth, David Cregeen - SLT members  
Judith Gordon – Acting as Clerk to the Governors

**Apologies were received from** Sara McCarthy, Rod McGreevy, Jane McNeice  
**No apologies were received from** Kevin Grimes

19/77 This short meeting is to discuss the phased return of Y10 and Y12 students and follows information received from SASH (Headteacher's association) and the local authority.

**Mike McGarry - Headteacher**

- Information has been changing, almost on a daily basis, for the last few weeks
- Made planning very difficult
- SLT and other colleagues have been working on risk assessments and detailed planning documents on how we can respond, when it is safe to do so, for the appropriate year groups to return to school
- According the guidance from the DfE, some face to face provision should be given for Y10 and Y12 pupils before the start of the summer holiday
- The guidance for primary schools is much more detailed with children from Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 going to school from 1 June
- Range was planning for some basic pastoral input for Year 12 in the first instance for the week beginning 1 June – small groups in school on a daily basis to have 1:1 meetings with tutors.
- Y10 pupils would come into school in small groups during the week beginning 8 June for wellbeing and re-integration talks
- Week beginning 15 June, trying to have some kind of learning on a subject basis with very small groups
- The teaching unions (NEU and NASUWT) have expressed major concerns at any return to school at this stage, although the Headteacher's union (ASCL) are, more-or-less going along with the guidance from the government. This also makes planning difficult.
- Sefton LA, issued two letters on 19 May, (both of which were sent to governors prior to this meeting). One to Parents/Carers setting out the Council's position on the wider opening of schools. The other letter was sent to Headteachers of Sefton schools, again setting out the Council's position on the wider opening of schools.
  - Sefton have suggested that the date for the wider opening of school across the borough, if it is safe to do so, is 15 June as this would give all schools the same amount of time to plan and prepare
  - Liverpool, Wirral and Knowsley Councils have adopted a similar approach
- Although Range is an academy and, as such, does not come under the control of Sefton LA, it does cause issues if academies go against the advice of the LA and would feel very uncomfortable in doing that

- In consultation with other local Headteachers and the wider Headteachers group, it has become clear that they are not planning to increase the current provision at this stage
- Met on Friday 15 May with primary Headteachers from the FLIP group and the Head from Formby High – those primary schools are following the advice of the LA and, at this stage, are planning to re-open their schools during the week beginning 15 June
- A conversation with the Head from Formby High, to try to agree a common approach, was held and both felt very strongly that there should be no expanding of any provision until at least the 15 June at the earliest.
- The above information was included in a briefing paper sent to governors prior to this meeting (**APPENDIX 1**)
- This timeframe would give the school extra time to ensure that the site is prepared and risk assessments in place.
- Work is in progress, i.e. setting up rooms; distance marking; conversations with our catering staff etc. We now have adequate stocks of hand sanitiser.
- Proposed that meetings take place with school union representatives and staff governors so we can ensure that we get the school as prepared as possible
- The proposal, including the timeframe, for expanding provision was outlined in the briefing paper and governors were asked for their views

#### **Dr Richard Snowdon (RS)**

- Individual risk to young people and most people of working age is quite small, therefore the actual health risk is relatively low
- The challenge is the politics, which you have raised, and the practicalities of social distancing

#### **Dr Mervyn Thomas**

- Spokesperson from the National Governors Association (NGA) had stated that if the LA had said that schools should not partially re-open on 1 June (which effectively is what Sefton LA had said) then it would be perverse of individual schools to go against that unless they had a really good reason for doing so.

#### **Mr Jim Rimmer**

- I feel school would be ill-advised not to follow the advice from Sefton LA  
Do you have any sense for how parents/carers/staff feel about a wider opening of school at this stage?

**TD** - We have conducted some surveys, one for parents/carers of Y10 and Y12 pupils to ask them what the likelihood is of them sending their children back to school on 1 June. The numbers were quite high – 70-80% of the 60% of parents/carers who responded said that they were likely or extremely likely to send their children back.  
We are currently surveying pupils and parents/carers about remote learning.

#### **Mrs Sue Donnelly**

- Have our insurers issued any guidance as to where we stand regarding employer liability, particularly if we are going to go against the recommendation of the LA?

**AP** – only with regards to taking reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the site. Because we are an academy, we do not have to follow the Local Government guidance. There was a feeling during a meeting of the SLT that, if we did not follow the LA guidance and something went wrong then we could be criticised in the public domain.

**Mr Jonathan Mumford – staff rep**

- Staff want to be safe when the school re-opens

**Mr Paul Steiger (PS)**

- What is the benefit to opening the school for the time-period as stated? A Sixth Form college has stated that they are not opening until September and have made that decision now.
- **MM** – Sixth Form Colleges come under the same guidance as that for pupils in Y12 and it is interesting that this particular college has made that decision.

In terms of benefits to pupils, it is difficult to measure that. The longer all pupils are away from school is detrimental to their education. If we can get Y10 pupils into school in small groups and have face-to-face time with subject teachers, which will be of great benefit. From a well-being point of view and letting them know that we are here for them will also be of benefit. It will not be the same as school being up and running as normal.

- **PS** - That could all be done on-line, teachers could have face-to-face calls remotely, so we need to ask what are the benefits of getting, even small groups of children, together in school at the same time.
- **RS** - PPG and SEND pupils may well struggle more with the remote environment than other pupils
- **MM** – it may well be disadvantaged pupils, not necessarily SEND pupils, who may be engaging less. We could step up our efforts to reach out and encourage more of those pupils to come into school. Those pupils are entitled to come into school now, but we have very few who actually do. Currently we have one room running for pupils who are entitled to come but we could increase capacity.
- **DC (SLT)** - Learning mentors will have conversations with all pupils to see if they need any additional support and provide group work activities or 1:1 provision. There will be pupils who currently are not part of the mentor cohort who may have experienced mental health/resilience issues during the lock-down period that need to be followed up and offered support. It is important that we have those conversations face-to-face rather than remotely.
- **GP (SLT)** - parts of the curriculum, especially for Y10, can only be taught at this time of the year, e.g. athletics assessment for GCSE PE  
Face-to-face contact could kickstart pupils to go away and work over the holiday period in readiness for September  
Growing evidence that some boys are struggling to motivate themselves outside of the school environment

**Ms Collette Buck – Parent Governor**

- I would definitely agree that the connection with school is really valuable and having input from teachers in school would be beneficial. Lots of children do not work well at home.

**RANGE HIGH SCHOOL**

Following the above discussion governors unanimously **AGREED** to the proposal and supported the proposal and timeline as outlined in the Headteacher's briefing paper, providing that it is safe to do so. They were also aware that it could change should further guidance be issued from the DfE.

The Headteacher will write to parents/carers/pupils to give them an indication of how we plan to start re-opening the school with the caveat that it could change should the guidance change.

**RS** - Pupils will return at some point so all the planning that is taking place is worthwhile. Has transport for pupils from the Ainsdale area been considered?

**MM** – For the remainder of this academic year it will only affect pupils in Y10 and Y12, as far as I am aware very few pupils in Y12 use the school bus, so the numbers will be significantly lower than usual. Also, we are planning for Y10 pupils to come into school using the House system so not all Y10 pupils will come into school on the same day. We could potentially be talking about 3-4 pupils on a daily basis who would use the bus. This issue is in the central planning document that is still being worked on.

**AP** – Merseytravel operate the school bus service and we have very little input into the running of it so it would be Merseytravel's decision as to whether the bus service would run.

The Chair suggested holding a further meeting during the week after half-term. This was **AGREED**. Governors will be informed when a date/time has been arranged.



Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date 25 June 2020