



BISHOP PERRIN

Church of England Primary School

**Full Governing Body – Decisions made via email during
COVID-19 Lockdown from 16th March 2020 onwards
NOTES**

Governors:

Father David Cloake	(FrDC)	Chair
Aid Corke	(ACo)	Head Teacher
Amanda Crinall	(ACr)	
Rachael Macklearn	(RM)	Deputy Head, Associate Member
Russell Nimmo	(RN)	Vice Chair
Charlotte Holder	(CH)	
Andrew Leach	(AL)	
Satty Panesar	(SP)	Associate Member
Liz Poulter	(LP)	
Phil Storey	(PS)	
Alwyn Williams	(AW)	

Non-governor attendees

Helen Bott	(HB)	Clerk
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Date		ACTION
16/03	Finance meeting 17th March The Chair of governors cancelled this meeting on the 16 th March due to social distancing restrictions made by the Government. Actions made during the days after this meeting was cancelled:	
18/03	SFVS Feedback and observations made by AW: <i>I have had a look at the attached SFVS document - and although I'm not exactly sure of all the meanings I would make the following points:</i> <i>1. parts 1 and 2 of the of the checklist - these appear to need updating to reflect the changes in membership and make up of the finance committee. Do we have clarity of membership for this most important area of work?</i> <i>2. On the dashboard we have a red rating for item 5 in section D. I thought that staff received an allocation of time for preparation - but may have just misunderstood what this means.</i> <i>The rest of the data appears consistent with information provided in various meetings.</i> Feedback and reply from The Head: <i>My apologies, as I thought I had updated the boxes of text that AW has referenced in her email, but clearly hadn't saved it properly! As such I have updated the SFVS and we can now consider this the final version. Thank you AW for your observations. With regards to the PPA allowance on the Dashboard, it looks like that has been amended by Steve. The</i>	

<p>30/03</p> <p>26/03</p>	<p><i>teachers get their allocated amount of release time plus some extra time for subject development, so all within the remit of expectations.</i></p> <p><i>Seeing as we are all in agreement with the SFVS, we can submit it now, as the deadline is the 24th March.</i></p> <p><i>Action: FrDC-please can you "sign" at the bottom of the Introduction and Outcomes tab and return it to Denise so she can submit it please (it's asking for the Chair of Govs to sign it off).</i></p> <p>To: Adrian Corke; Alwyn Williams; Clerk to Governors at Bishop Perrin Church of England Primary School; Cc: Andrew Leach; Denise Forster; Subject: Re: SFVS document from last Finance meeting for action/update</p> <p><i>Good afternoon Aid,</i></p> <p><i>Thank you for sending over the SFVS and apologies for the delay in returning it.</i></p> <p><i>As Excel isn't playing ball at my end despite best efforts, could I ask that you accept this email in lieu of my signature, demoting my acceptance and agreement of the document.</i></p> <p><i>I hope that the Royal London Borough of Richmond upon Thames will forgive my tardiness what with this pandemic and all.</i></p> <p><i>Blessings, Fr David</i></p> <p>Budget 2020 The Draft 1 of the Budget for 2020 with accompanying notes was emailed and put on the Governor Hub for all governors to be able to make comment to Business Manager before 31st March. The following agreed the budget: AM, FrDC, LP & AL</p>	
<p>23/03</p>	<p>Governors' Maintenance Fund To the Finance Group from The Head: <i>....I would be grateful for your thoughts on the comments I have made on Pg 4 of the attached: Governor's Maintenance Fund</i></p> <p><i>I've put some commentary next to some of the areas of possible expenditure for the Governor Fund so we have clarity on how it can be spent. It would be great if we could get this policy ratified as it will then enable us to legitimately transfer funds back to the school.</i></p> <p><i>It is a first stab, so please feel free to share your thoughts & comments.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you Fr David for putting the policy together as I think it will come into its own once finalized.</i></p> <p><i>If we could have any final comments by Fri 3rd April, we can then get it out to the rest of the FGB to get it sign-off electronically.</i></p>	

25/03 *Feedback form AW:*

Many thanks for forwarding the draft policy on the Fund – which I am happy to review if a policy is required. However, when I raised this issue the point I was trying to make was the lack of a constitution or governing document for the Governors Fund – which in turn means we are unsure when considering what can/cannot be paid from the fund.

I have undertaken a thorough search of all the documents passed to me and have not found anything appropriate; and nobody else appears to recall such a document.

I have been researching the YouGov website for Charity Commission – initially I thought we would have to register with the Commission as the income is now over £5k per annum. However, further research uncovered guidance for Charities that are Exempt – and cannot therefore be registered. Included in the list was Foundation schools – so I don't think we need to register.

The guidance still suggests that we need to comply and have a Governing Document – against which we can be audited by the Regulatory Body (I assume this might be the Diocese, but that question goes unanswered).

Attached below is an extract from the guidance – setting out what the Governing Document should cover. At the bottom of the page I have attached a sample document from the You Gov web site – normally used for a small unregistered charity (income less than £5k) I think we could adapt the format suit the Governors Fund.

If we have a Governing Document I think we would negate the need for a Policy Document. This seems a simple solution – but your experience might suggest that this is not an appropriate route.

Happy to be guided on this.

5.1 Your charity's governing document

You and your co-trustees must make sure that the charity complies with the governing document, which usually contains key information about:

- what the charity exists to do (its purposes, as explained in its objects clause)
- what powers it has to further its objects
- who the trustees are, how many trustees there should be and how they are appointed and removed
- whether the charity has members and, if so, who can be a member
- rules about trustees' (and members') meetings; how they are arranged and conducted; how decisions must be made and recorded, and so on
- how to change the governing document
 - how to close the charity down

There may also be rules limiting how powers can be used, who can vote at meetings, or which rules can be changed.

Every trustee should have an up to date copy of their charity's governing document and regularly refer to it. If

you don't have a copy, or don't know what it is, ask your fellow trustees. If they don't have a copy, the Commission can usually provide one (if your charity is a registered charity).

The governing document is essential to your charity. You and your co-trustees may need to review it from time to time to ensure that it continues to meet the charity's needs. Governing documents are legal documents. You must follow the correct procedures to amend them, and it's important to word any changes correctly. You should consider taking appropriate advice about any changes. Use one of the Commission's model governing documents or an approved governing document, to ensure that your governing document has all the provisions and powers you need.

Read more about governing documents.

FrDC comments:

30/03

Other expenses

1. *Hardship - this is a grant making facility with each case on its merits and on the basis (I would think) of a written application to the HT. As such, we need to compile a simple criteria for this as any grant-making bodies would to ensure transparency and consistency. In previous times we have been uttering student names in meetings with no back-story and granting payment based on little or no context save for what the 'finance chair' seemed to know personally - a wholly inappropriate process. I will research grant-making processes as this is what this is.*

2. *Upkeep - I would advise keeping this general to allow a common-sense approach. Again, I can foresee many hours of conjecture against this if we set stipulations.*

3. *Equipment - as above*

I have nothing else to add only to counsel a pragmatic approach in the creation of this document, remembering that its predecessor doesn't exist and we have operated this fund without guidance since the beginning.

FrDC further comments regarding AW comments:

30/03

There seems to be two conflating issues here: the Governor Maintenance Fund on one side and its charitable status on the other.

The document that is being mooted is one that gives governors a basis upon which to Minute its decisions as we currently enjoy no such document. This needs to exist for us to do our job properly.

Aside from this is the charitable status of the Fund. As a school fund (albeit on that Governors hold jurisdiction over in its spending), it is not able to be listed for charitable status other than insofar as its donations can attract Gift Aid.

A Governing Document in this scenario determines our community benefit and why we would be considered as a charity. The Policy attends to how we spend the monies given. If you think of parishes, we have a GovDoc to say on what basis we are a charity (and does place conditions on what can or can't be done with funds) but the PCC has to make spending decisions beyond the Gov Doc.

	<i>You'll be receiving a Headteacher Report from me shortly which will hopefully get you up to speed on how things have been at BP.</i>	
07/05	<p>Headteacher's Report May 2020 and Last FGB Minutes for approval</p> <p><i>To all governors from Clerk: Please see the link below to the most recent Headteacher's report and also the FGB Minutes from our last meeting that was held in February that need approval. Please can you comment to this post saying if there any changes that may be needed and if you approve the last minutes. Online Approval of FGB & HT Update May 2020</i></p>	
07/05	<p><i>Reply from RN: ...The minutes look good to me, except that Item 3 Governor Communication should perhaps refer to 'Declaration of Interest' rather than 'Deceleration of Interest'. Though on second thoughts..... Thanks for the very thorough HT's report, Aid. I think that (alongside your weekly letter to parents) is incredibly helpful in keeping everyone as abreast of things as possible at this strange time - and also meets the suggested format of AfC spot on.</i></p>	
10/05	<p><i>Reply from AC: I approve the minutes</i></p>	
11/05	<p><i>Reply from CH: I agree the minutes.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you for the HT's report and updates on school activity during this time. On a personal note I wanted to comment that the year 6 and year 4 packs have been really useful. We are balancing working from home and homeschooling and whilst we aren't managing to get lots of school work done we are focusing on the key tasks in the packs. However I appreciate other families have more time and there are lots of additional resources and ideas. The weekly letters from the class teachers and phone calls have been a great idea to keep in touch. Thank you for the work put into the homeschooling pack and updates!</i></p>	
17/05	<p><i>Reply from AL: Only comment on the minutes is that I don't remember ZS being at the meeting.</i></p>	
22/05	<p>COVID-19 Re-opening Risk Assessment</p> <p><i>Email to all Governors from the Head: Dear All,</i></p> <p><i>I hope you are as well as can be expected under current circumstances.</i></p> <p><i>I want to update you all on where we are with re-opening the school.</i></p> <p><i>You'll be aware that the final decision as to whether schools are to re-open will be made by the Government on Thurs 28th May. You'll have seen that we are aiming to re-open on Mon 1st for</i></p>	

Reception only, just with half-days for the first week.

Us opening though is dependent on our Risk Assessment not flagging up any key issues that we cannot resolve or fix before the 1st June. The RA isn't finished yet, as I'm still working on it and my aim is to get it you by Monday.

My understanding is that Governing Boards need to have seen the school's RA and effectively sign it off before a school re-opens.

Our RA is going to be very comprehensive and is based on the model RA designed by the Kingston Council Health and Safety Unit. It will be enhanced with our RAs from Unions and other schools that I have managed to get copies of.

You will of course be welcome to email me (or phone if it is quicker-07946 095203) if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Aid

29/05 *Email to all Governors from the Head:
Dear All,*

My apologies for the delay in getting this to you, but finally (although this is a living, dynamic document!), here is what we have in place in readiness to open to Reception Class on Monday.

We have taken into account guidance from the Kingston H & S Unit, who provided an initial model outline, and guidance from the Government. We have also consulted staff extensively and acted upon anything that was practicable and proportionate. The Unions have also shared their thoughts, and these too have been factored into the RA.

As a Governing Body you are asked to give your approval to the RA. I appreciate that this doesn't give you a huge amount of time between now and Monday, but with Yr R being self-contained, only being in for half-days and most staff not on site next week, we have time to respond to anything that you have questions about.

As a suggestion, and only a suggestion, we could utilise our Google Meets facility we have via our LGfL accounts and have a virtual meeting to discuss the RA if that was felt the best way forward. I will leave that with Fr David to decide if it is needed.

I would like to thank Rachael, Mary, Denise, Alison Stock and Jackie Sandal for all their help in getting this document together, which you can see if pretty hefty!

Text highlighted in yellow is there to remind us to action it.

The RA will be shared with staff now, so everyone will be able to see it. Please can I remind you that the content of the RA is confidential.

	<p>Thanks,</p> <p>Aid</p>	
30/05	<p>Reply from RN: Hi Aid, I hope you and all at BP are well. First of all, thanks to you and all concerned for completing what is a very formidable task ready for Monday. I was reading earlier in the week about the concept, first put forward by Prof John Adams of ICL over 20 years ago (i.e. long before coronavirus), of the 'risk thermostat'. What this basically means is that everyone has their own individual tolerance of risk, and this, unsurprisingly, varies from person to person. Which is, of course, of no help whatsoever to an institution which has a moral and legal duty of care to its pupils, staff and families! I feel singularly ill-equipped to comment on the RA, partly because my own risk thermostat is probably set to the more 'relaxed' end of the scale, and partly because it is an area in which I have no expertise whatsoever. However, I am happy to endorse the RA on the basis of two criteria. First, I think there is ample evidence that the school has called upon and implemented the best possible advice available to it from a variety of sources. Anyone who has followed your letters to parents on re-opening will have seen there have already been significant changes to the protocols proposed, reflecting the acceptance of this guidance. I am further reassured by the commitment to an ongoing empirical review of the RA. My second criterion is one of proportionality. I have heard several people on the radio during the past week argue that schools should not re-open until it is 100% safe for them to do so. That is simply unattainable. Life is not risk free, and no human activity can be guaranteed 100% safe. (Anyone crossed a road recently?) However, as a strict non-expert, I feel that the RA does satisfy the layperson's concept of what is reasonable and practical (i.e. proportionate). To sum up, if I have confidence in the school's professional judgement in drawing up an RA for a nature walk in Crane Park - and I do - then I have equal confidence in its professional judgement in drawing up an RA for coronavirus re-opening. My confidence is not dependent on the nature and perceived magnitude of the risk. With best wishes, Russell</p>	
01/06	<p>Reply from LP: Hi Aid,</p> <p>Thank you for sharing the risk assessment. It is a very thorough and well thought through document. I can only echo what Russell has said that the thoroughness of the document demonstrates your hard work and that of the staff.</p> <p>I have only two questions/concerns about the procedure, both from a safeguarding perspective.</p> <p>1. Although I agree with the WhatsApp group as a method for exchanging messages, I just want to point out that the platform is</p>	

not GDPR compliant and it has been suggested that it should not be used in schools. See below explanation from Andrew Hall who does safeguarding training for schools. Can it be added to the risk assessment that any confidential or sensitive information about pupils should not be shared in this group? Perhaps this could be shared via email instead?

Why schools shouldn't use Whatsapp

In trying to maintain internal communications, I have heard a few times now, of schools using WhatsApp.

There are a number of serious concerns about using Whatsapp for school communications. First, Whatsapp says it should not be used for business; it is against their terms and conditions. Second, it is not compliant with GDPR. Third, there is no way that a school can access the content should it need to; there is no audit trail whatsoever.

Whatsapp is owned by Facebook and data can be shared between them. Although Whatsapp has a business app, this is for businesses to link with their customers (ie the public) and is not designed for private chat within an organisation.

For a fuller explanation, see here:

<https://support.safeguardingschools.co.uk/article/36-why-schools-shouldnt-use-whatsapp>

2. I noticed the CAR will be used as the first room, which makes total sense as the current one is too small to allow for proper distancing. My only concern is this room has two large windows. Will blinds be installed to allow for privacy?

With pupils returning to school, I was wondering if the FGB will be reinstated. Will we be meeting again, perhaps virtually, as planned in July? Given the current situation and the time laps between our last meeting, it would be sensible to meet in June to review how the partial reopening of school is going?

*Best wishes,
Liz*

01/06

Email reply from Head:

Thank you Russell, Liz and Alwyn for your emails about the Risk Assessment (I'll share Alwyn's reply to me below so you can see her thoughts).

Liz-you have made some very perceptive and valid points, which goes to show the value of having our Governors and some fresh eyes!

Although not explicit in the RA (which I shall now do), the expectation is that we would never share names of children or anything confidential in a WhatsApp message. The WhatsApp messaging is purely to overcome our inability to send children out of class for messages/errands. If there were a medical emergency, mobile phones would be used to phone the Duty First Aider to come to the classroom. Our LGfL emails are now secure and GDPR-compliant, which allows us to write the names of children if needed, which we couldn't do previously. The updated

point about WhatsApp is on pg 24 and copied below:

- *WhatsApp messages are not to contain the names of individual children or anything that is of a confidential nature. Staff can use the secure LGfL email accounts to communicate information relating to children and the names of children if needed.*

We have now put up some sugar paper on the CAR windows (half-way up). This means that children can't see in, but adults can (for safeguarding purposes). This is on pg 18 of the RA and copied below:

- *CAR windows (lower half) covered up with sugar paper to give privacy and confidentiality to any children being treated.*

I've updated these aspects on the RA, which is now attached for you. I can see us having many iterations of the RA before the end of all of this!

Here is Alwyn's email:

Dear Aid

Thank you for sharing this risk assessment; I have been keeping in touch with those nice letters you are sending out so I don't think any of this comes as a surprise. It looks comprehensive to me, but as you say there may well be some issues that you will have to address once school is open again.

I am happy to give my approval.

Best wishes

Alwyn

01/06 *Reply from CH:
Thank you for sharing the RA. I agree with the comments made and don't have anything further to add. It looks like a very comprehensive document and clearly taken time to produce.*

I hope all is going well this week with the return of the children.

*Kind regards
Charlotte*

02/06 *Reply from Chair:
Dear all,

First, my thanks to Aid and the SLT for this RA - it is a mammoth leviathan of a thing and in such testing times a delicate tome to compile.

Please accept my apologies for being so late to the party. I took last week 'off' so turned off computers and mobile phones, so am only now catching up.*

For my part, I am very happy with this RA. I cannot see anything that gives me cause for concern both as Chair but also in my

	<p><i>capacity as one of the safeguarding governors. As Russ alludes to, we have to work within what is reasonable and practical for our site such as it is for such a small place. We are also working our way tentative step at a time into a world that is hitherto unknown and I have no doubt that this RA will be reviewed regularly and in light of what happens hour by hour. This, as with all schools (and all national institutions, including central government) are working by 'best guess', and are very much at the mercy of circumstance.</i></p> <p><i>I close by suggesting that we convene a virtual meeting of governors. I am only familiar with Zoom and have facility to host a meeting that can last longer than the 40 minutes offered by a free account, and I think it would be helpful to 'meet' in the next few weeks. This will allow governors to discuss the present reality, ask any questions and take an account (if possible) of the current financial situation of the school. If you are in agreement, I will ask Helen to canvass opinion for a good to time to gather and would respectfully ask that any questions for the SLT are made in writing before the meeting (to allow for expediency and time to prepare for the staff who are already under some considerable pressure).</i></p> <p><i>My thanks and best wishes to you all, Fr David</i></p>	
24/06	<p>Budget 2020 Approval <i>Email to all Governors from the Business Manager: Hi All,</i></p> <p><i>I hope you are all well.</i></p> <p><i>Please forgive the direct approach, you will see from my email below that I have asked Helen to forward these documents to you. I realise time is very short and Helen doesn't work on Thursday's so thought it best to email you direct just in case.</i></p> <p><i>You will also see from my email below and attachments that the Budget for 2020 needs to be approved by you, the Governing Body. Covid-19 has robbed us of so much time here at school and caused so much extra work as I'm sure Aid will attest hence the short period of time for the turn-around of this document. My deadline for uploading to AfC is Tuesday 30 June. Between your approving it and uploading it needs to be transferred to a different format which Steve Llewellyn will do on our behalf.</i></p> <p><i>As the email states below if you approve please advise Helen directly if you have any questions please direct them to me and I will be more than happy to try to answer them!</i></p> <p><i>Best wishes to you all,</i></p> <p><i>Denise</i></p>	
25/06	<p><i>Reply from RN:</i></p> <p><i>..... Given that finance is absolutely NOT my area of expertise, I can't imagine on what grounds I would not approve the budget - therefore I do approve it! Thanks for all your hard work on it, Denise! Best wishes, Russell</i></p>	

25/06	<p><i>Reply from AW:</i> Denise has circulated the school budget. I ave reviewed the document and clarified a couple of points with Denise and I am now happy to approve the document.</p> <p><i>Alwyn</i></p>	
25/06	<p><i>Reply from ACr:</i> Just to let you know that I approve the budget,</p> <p><i>Thanks,</i></p> <p><i>Amanda</i></p>	
26/06	<p><i>Reply from LP:</i> Hi Denise,</p> <p><i>Thank you for sending this through and apologies for my delay getting back to you. The budget looks great and I'm happy to approve. I have two questions though:</i></p> <p><i>I can see you've adjusted the income from lettings and catering for next academic year, I assume that is due to COVID-19 and the school closure. How was the shortfall calculated? Is it possible to be more next year with the possibility of a second wave and further closures? Should this potential risk be accounted for in the budget?</i></p> <p><i>I noticed an adjustment to the roll over from last year. What accounts for the extra money than predicted?</i></p> <p><i>Best wishes,</i> <i>Liz</i></p>	
26/06	<p><i>Reply to LP from DF</i> Hi Liz,</p> <p><i>We reduced the Clubs and meals income based on what we would normally receive for this term and these reductions are due to Covid-19. These reductions are made for the financial year not the academic year. Unfortunately the two are not the same and we have to take this into consideration. It may be that come September we cannot run clubs as we normally would but at the time of setting the budget we are unclear what September will hold in this respect.</i></p> <p><i>Unfortunately we cannot budget for the unknown. Obviously we monitor the situation throughout the year and will make adjustments if/when necessary. Some of the extra expenditure due to Covid-19 we are hoping will be reimbursed by the Government.</i></p> <p><i>The larger than predicted carryover was mainly due to Covid-19. You will see on the accompanying notes/spreadsheet that 25.5k in E19 was expenditure that would have been paid out should Covid-19 not have happened. The bulk of this was the Year 5 and Year 6 School Journey.</i></p> <p><i>There was also 3.5k for a boiler repair that took place last financial</i></p>	

	<p><i>year but because of a few problems with the system after the repair I wouldn't pay them until the problems had been rectified which meant the payment was carried over into this financial year. There is also 3k from the School Association for an art installation. School Association income often transverses over two financial years but allocated in one academic year.</i></p> <p><i>The Government and AfC are very aware that there will probably be some unknown impact on school budgets this year due to Covid-19. The delay in sending the budget out to governors was time spent making changes trying to make sure that all that we did know would be reflected. There has been a lot of unplanned and unexpected expenditure and this had to be entered. In doing so we have to try and make savings elsewhere to make the bottom line balance and have positive balances for years two and three.</i></p> <p><i>I hope this answers your questions but please don't hesitate to come back to me should they not.</i></p> <p><i>Hope you and the family have a nice weekend.</i></p> <p><i>Best wishes, Denise</i></p> <p>26/06 <i>Reply from LP: Hi Denise,</i></p> <p><i>Thank you for your response, it sounds like lots of consideration has been put into anticipating the impact of COVID-19 in the budget. It is difficult to predict the unknown and it sounds like AfC and the Government are understanding about this.</i></p> <p><i>Thanks Denise for putting together such a thorough and well thought through budget which I am sure has been challenging during these unusual times. I'm happy to approve it.</i></p> <p><i>Best wishes, Liz</i></p> <p>30/06 <i>From the Chair Dear Denise,</i></p> <p><i>With thanks for these figures and apologies for my delayed reply, I am happy to add my agreement to those already offered.</i></p> <p><i>The school (and its governors) have a great deal to be grateful to you for with the accounts in these strange days and I would like to extend my thanks to you for your vigilance in adversity and for overseeing a financial future that is more optimistic than any of us had dared hope for.</i></p> <p><i>With thanks and best wishes, Fr D</i></p>	
25/06	<p>Updated Whole School Risk Assessment</p> <p><i>Email to all Governors from the Head:please find attached an updated version of our original Risk Assessment.</i></p>	

	<p><i>We have received some additional guidance which has now been factored into the RA. To help you find it, you will see on pg 3 a table that has some text that has been highlighted in grey. This refers to all the new additions.</i></p> <p><i>If you have any questions about the RA, then please do not hesitate to get in touch.</i></p> <p><i>Best wishes,</i></p> <p><i>Aid</i></p>	
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Signed:

Date: