

CORE GROUP REVIEW AND PLANNING MEETING (remote)
Tuesday 7th July 2020 at 1.30pm
Minutes

Present

Simon Ball	Head of School - DCE
Paul Blackburn	Chair - WDCE Governors
Andrew Bradley	Chair of Governors – St. Wilfrids
Bev Burrows	Headteacher– St. Elisabeths
Paul Good	Chair – Trust & DCE (MDBE)
Lee Jamieson	Chair - St. Elisabeth's Governors
Hannah Large	Head of School - WDCE
Helena Miller	Head of School – St. Wilfrids
Matt Whitehead	Executive Headteacher

In attendance

Kathy Crotty	Clerk
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1) Latest DfE guidance regarding September opening – Matt Whitehead

- The key elements from the guidance were shared with the group. Each school is undertaking a new risk assessment (RA) for September and it was stressed this is a tweaking of the current RA which is working well in each school. The guidance suggests 'reducing contact' and Heads have discussed ways this can be done in each school. The Trust has approved the decision for schools to close on Friday afternoons to enable deep cleaning but the guidance suggests this might not be needed. The guidance asks to "minimise where possible" and be "reasonably practicable." A bubble can be a whole year group in WDCE. This is more difficult for mixed aged classes. Phonics and maths can be taught across phases within the parameters of this guidance. The guidance asks to keep groups "consistent" and recognises this is difficult in primary schools. The guidance is designed to enable isolation of bubbles if there are positive cases of Covid-19. The guidance allows for teachers to move between groups for educational reasons, and this will be done whilst balancing with staff safety.
- Shared spaces will be considered. Lunches are likely to be in classrooms with some phase groups using the hall. Manchester Fayre are looking at some hot dinners but not initially for all children.
- The guidance is clear staggered starts should not reduce the teaching time. Closing the school on Friday afternoon to keep bubbles separate will reduce some teaching time. Breaks can be reduced to accommodate this.
- Supply staff have to minimise contact but can move around schools, the schools will aim to minimise contact by keeping staff within phases.

- After school clubs can be opened and this would be beneficial for parents, but this would be a different offering than usual, probably aiming to keep children within their class bubbles.
- Summer 2021 is when the normal curriculum is expected to be back in place according to the guidance, adaptations will have to occur such as PE will have to be outside and this could affect gymnastics. Each school must have plans for home learning in case there is another closedown.
- The numbers of children on site will increase. However, there have been no incidents of the virus in the school population known to the schools. It was noted the curriculum is now described as “ambitious” rather than “balanced”.

Action: MW to ask the DfE who will be defined as a designated KW (key worker) in September.

- MCC is suggesting schools allocate two days for INSET planning, this would be supported if INSET days were switched (brought forward) to not affect the children’s entitlement. Schools do need time to address the RA issues.
- The NEU rep has been asked to share information and this is happening.

Action: MW to share the google platform link to be included in the planning for a future closedown.

- It was previously accepted online lessons are not so straightforward and staff might be reticent. It was clarified the suggestion of recording of lessons would only be in the event of another closedown

SWCE - Helena Miller

- There are no envisaged RA issues for September. The current hygiene measures are working well and will continue. 336 children in the school is a significant increase, the TAs will have to work across the phases so the bubble will be a phase.
- Remote education has to align to in-school provision, the take up is not very good at SWCE and if a bubble has to be closed this will be an issue.
- The cleaning during the school day will have to be managed differently. The toilets will be cleaned more often, staff will keep their classrooms clean. The budget does not currently include for additional cleaning.

WDCE - Hannah Large

- The school will work in class bubbles and in year group bubbles for breaks and lunches.
- Lunches in the classroom is not preferred, the school is looking at the logistics of multiple sittings and cleaning in the school dining area.
- The leadership is mindful about keeping adults safe. There is no additional income for cleaning even though there will be additional costs such as for paper towels. PE activities will be limited to avoid the sharing of equipment. Remote learning may continue for homework.
- There are 171 children in the school at the moment, the transition to larger bubbles is an issue as the hall is full of furniture which needs to be returned.
- The trade unions are formulating their response now and this might affect planning. Health care chaplains are affiliated to UNITE and the unofficial word is the second wave is likely to not be November but February or March 2021 so the autumn term may be quieter.
- It was agreed WDCE can close for children on the last Friday afternoon at the end of term to allow for furniture removal back into classrooms.

DCE – Simon Ball

- The RA requires a consultation with an independent staff member, DCE has a volunteer from a member of staff who has been shielding for 15 weeks to review the plans. This would usually be undertaken by the staff Health and Safety representative, but not all schools have a representative.
- Parents might find the Friday afternoon closure unhelpful. The curriculum will be limited if Friday afternoon closes. PPA time is protected for teachers and this is usually when children are in school. If the school day is extended this will impact on the percentage of teacher time available for PPA.
- Lunchtimes are working well in the classrooms at DCE.
- The school is planning to use the G Suite (computer software / google meets) and is looking at some live teaching using this platform. One Education recommend this. If the school does have to enter into another lockdown, 55% of children in this school would be in school due to their KW status, so staff time to prepare online work will be limited. There are currently 60% to 70% of children in school.

Action: MW to share the DfE offer for G Suite with DCE; SECE; and SWCE and Microsoft education suite with WDCE.

SECE – Bev Burrows

- Danny Brazil the Stockport MBC Health & Safety officer has checked the SECE RA and he has suggested this just needs to be tweaked for September. Lunchtimes will require children to sit on one side of a table to avoid facing each other. Children can fit in the classrooms with some rearrangements of furniture.
- BB has contacted HR about PPA time and it was clarified this has to come out of set teaching time. This school will provide a full timetable for September. Remote learning is being discussed, currently the school is using BBC Bitesize and the Oak Academy.
- The recruitment of a TA has fallen through. BB has acquired a definitive list of qualifications needed by support staff.
- Nursery children will not be in school full-time in the first week, they will be invited to some 'stay and play' without parents. Reception will also include some 'stay and play'. EYFS will be full-time by the third week. Staggered times will be in operation for the school day.
- SECE will shut to all children at lunchtime on the last day of term for time to return the furniture to classrooms.

PG explained the Trust decision for Friday afternoon PPA time was an option and school leaders can make the decision to change this. However, it was preferable for all schools in the Trust adopt the same timetable. The RA will determine if safety issues can be accommodated with full school opening.

The RA will require TAs to remain in a phase, to move too far from this means a closedown would involve too many people. The Trust has to protect staff and be seen to protect staff.

2. EYFS

Transition activities are critical, this needs to be reasonably speedy, but education is not statutory until the term of their 5th birthday so a gradual introduction is welcomed. Some children might need a longer transition.

DCE – Simon Ball

The initial INSET day at DCE will include a stay and play for the seven children who have never been in school and this is on a rota basis. (The other reception children have been in the nursery). The parents of these seven children will be allowed into the classroom with social distancing. The DCE home visits have not occurred and there will be individual time slots for the parent and child to meet the teacher in school instead.

WDCE – Hannah Large

WDCE are offering a “walk by” for five children to come into school with their parents to meet their teacher.

SWCE – Helena Miller

There will a phased introduction for EYFS, parents are not being invited into school due to staff anxieties.

SECE – Bev Burrows

MW clarified if SECE wants to pilot the baseline assessments, this will be supported. Some schools have piloted the baseline assessments this year. This may require children sitting close together with staff

It was stated the Trust must have a plan for the blended curriculum in case there is another closedown, this is included in the guidance. Google classroom does allow for sharing worksheets etc. Lessons do not have to be live but can a pre-recorded video or voice only lessons. It was felt the staff need to focus on the learning in the classroom. It was felt only the normal preparation and planning could be shared online if needed. There might be a need for some online resources for children who might not be returning due to health reasons. It was agreed plans are needed, not the actual learning materials, they will be produced if staff are required to work from home.

3. Children’s behaviour

SWCE is going to amend the Behaviour Policy as there are more issues becoming apparent. MW reported there will be huge pastoral issues for children especially those who have not been in school. HL noted at WDCE, there has been a growth of children befriending people on social media and e-safety is an issue in school. This has affected the behaviour of the children. The school is conscious many parents have been busy working at home whilst the children have not been in school. The children are using reflection time instead of collective worship which has been helpful.

Action: HM to share the SWCE Behaviour Policy when amended, with colleagues

4. Closing Prayer

The closing prayer was led by Andrew Bradley and focused on wisdom.

5. Date of next meeting and suggested agenda items

Monday 13th July at 1pm

Agenda items: Before and after school provision / Children’s well-being / Social media / Finance

Summary of actions

- Action: MW to ask the DfE who will be defined as a designated KW (key worker) in September.
- Action: MW to share the google platform link to be included in the planning for a future closedown.
- Action: MW to share the DfE offer for G Suite with DCE; SECE; and SWCE.
- Action: HM to share the SWCE Behaviour Policy when amended.