

Glyne Gap School
Headteacher's report for Governors' Meeting
on Monday 8th March 2021

I last reported to Governors in November of this year. Since that time the Covid 19 pandemic has worsened and we have entered a third period of national lockdown. This has undoubtedly had a significant impact on usual school activity....and yet we have endeavoured to maintain school as a place of learning, safety and fun for pupils. The information shared here details the school's current position and any risks/challenges the school faces that Governors need to be aware of.

1.Current context:

- In line with Government directives, Glyne Gap School opened to all pupils in September 2020.
- Throughout terms 1 and 2, all pupils who were able to returned to school.
- Government announced a further national lockdown and the immediate closure of schools on January 4th. There was an expectation that special schools would remain open and offer full time provision.
- All pupils (excepting those on the shielding list) were offered full time provision from this date to present. Initial take up was 60 (approx.) pupils with a number of parents/carers choosing to keep children at home.
- Current take up over 100 with approximately 8 pupils (plus those on the shielding list – approximately 6) yet to return.
- Teachers have been leading learning for pupils in school as well as making telephone calls home weekly to support the Remote Learning offer.
- Pupils and staff continue to work in class 'bubbles' and whilst we cannot socially distance within bubbles, bubbles do stay socially distant from each other. Outdoor space is timetabled as are shared areas of the school such as the sensory room. A member of the site team cleans throughout the day and there are additional cleaning regimes in place.
- All staff are (voluntary) tested twice a week with Lateral Flow Devices.
- East Sussex County Council and Sussex NHS prioritised special school staff for vaccines in the week before half term and a number of school staff have had their first vaccine.
- Non-class based staff have returned to working in the school building.
- CITES therapists have returned to working in school (under their NHS/ Health protocols).
- Essential visitors are welcomed into school.
- There is an internal 'track and trace' procedure for when staff/visitors need to work within a different/particular bubble.
- All staff who can return to work have done so.

2.1 Strengths within this current context:

- School community is Covid -19 free
- School culture and morale remain positive
- School leadership (at all levels) is strong and focused
- School has financial resources to manage any turbulence
- Communication with parents is effective and parental support positive

2.2 Risks/threats within this current time/context:

- Pupils and/or staff test Covid – 19 positive. This has happened and we are able to quickly put measures in place to minimize transmission. Unfortunately, it does mean that class

bubbles may have to close and there is an impact on the attendance/learning of pupils who need to self isolate.

- Key personnel are ill and/or unable to work.
This scenario has been considered at other times and leadership is distributed to compensate for this.
- School is unable to open fully as an impact of staff absence.
We have a bank of supply staff who work regularly in school to cover staff absence. There have been and will continue to be times when, even with this in place, we do not have enough skilled staff in the building to fully open all classes. We use supply staff where we can, move staff from other classes (observing the need to maintain bubbles as far as possible) and, ultimately, ask pupils to attend part time. This is further impacted on by a number of staff being added to the recently revised shielding lists. This is a challenge for all local special schools where children are having their shielding notices revoked, but staff are being added to the list.
- Staff are tired and challenged by the cumulative stress of working/living in this way.
This remains a reality. It is supported by managing workload (for groups and individuals), regular communication and a supportive school culture.
- Further national/local lockdown
This seems unlikely at this point...but may happen. Whilst school is well placed to manage this practically, the challenge will be on staff motivation and ability to cope

3.1 School data:

On roll in each department: Nursery – 10 Infants – 34 Juniors – 27 Seniors – 29 Faculty – 20 Total on roll	<u>1/3/21</u> 120	<u>23/10/20</u> 115	<u>18/11/19</u> 112
Pupils eligible for free school meals and pupil premium	45 (includes extended entitlement due to benefit changes)	TBC	March 2019 – June 2019 35 –PP(deprivation) 1 – PP (adopted from care) 12 LAC PP
	Term 3	Term 1	Terms 5 & 6
Attendance	This is impossible to analyse this term (remote learning classed as attending)	86% (this was analysed by East Sussex following DfE returns)	86%
“Looked after” children (eligible for pupil premium)	11	11	12
Pupils needing a safeguarding plan Child protection plan: Family support plan:	2 8	0 8	1 3

Pupils with behaviour that seriously challenges or severely restricts learning: List A (no of pupils: 9) List B (no: of pupils: 12) No. of behaviour related incidents (non A/B): (Terms 1 and 2)	66 20 39	Data not available	Incidents 11 61 44
Number of injuries related to behaviour	52 (a list) 22 (b list) 30 (other)	As above	50 Self 2 Staff 27 Parent 2 17/pupil/student
Number of permanently contracted staff employed	91	98	83

4.1 Teaching and Learning data:

4.1 Governors will appreciate that there is no quantitative data related to teaching and learning for this term. We will be in a position to report on pupil progress and the impact of teaching from term 4 onwards (depending on national context).

4.2 Assistant Heads have re-started classroom observation this term. This has been discussed with teachers as a supportive measure so that Assistant Heads can remain accountable for classroom practice and support teachers at this time. The focus has not been on the development of teaching.

4.3 CITES colleagues are working in school directly with pupils and staff (with some adaptations as needed). I am meeting with CITES colleagues later this term to continue to discuss partnership working. Successes within this are the OT and PT we are currently working with who work with energy, speed and with pupils benefitting from input. Challenges continue to be organisational communication and the lack of shared planning.

5.1 School Development and monitoring:

5.1 School Development (Governors have access to full updated School Development Plan)

No. of items currently on SDP	No. of items complete	No. of items started/on schedule	No. of items behind schedule	No. of items not yet due to start
9	0	7	1	1

The item of the development plan that is behind schedule is the consideration and development of the school self evaluation and medium term development/monitoring plans. These were recently discussed as part of headteacher performance management and a considered approach to both pieces of work has been agreed.

It is a testament to the diligence of senior leaders that these developmental activities are taking place in a time when our reactive work is increased and of higher priority.

5.2 Monitoring plan

Governors are aware that (external) monitoring activities have had to have a different focus this year. Whilst we completed our Autumn Term standards visits with East Sussex SLES, SLES have cancelled Spring term monitoring visits for schools rated good and above. A decision will be taken after Easter as to whether Summer term visits will take place.

We had scheduled an additional SLES visit focussing on the meeting of pupil's complex health needs for the Summer Term. I will make a final decision as to whether this goes ahead or not after Easter.

6.0 Pupils

6.1 School roll is currently 120 and we are receiving full place funding for all pupils. We receive additional top up for 3 pupils who require 1:1 support to meet their medical needs as detailed in their EHCP and there has been delay to this finding as there has been a challenge to where this money comes from. This is a situation that Bev and I monitor. We have one further pupil who has an allocated space for which we receive full funding. His needs are such that he is also allocated additional funding. Whilst this pupil is currently not attending, we are receiving the additional funding as we have had to employ an INA to support him as/when he does attend.

6.3 Nursery roll is currently increasing and Nursery is likely to be full at the end of this term .

7.0 Staff – wellbeing, appointments, training and welfare

7.1 Staff wellbeing remains paramount now more than ever. It needs to be acknowledged that staff are generally beginning to tire from working and living in this way, with particular challenge being felt when having to support a considerable number of pupils in school and an equal number out. I hope this particular pressure remedies itself in coming weeks. Additional initiatives that have been put into place include peer supervision for staff supporting pupils with considerable safeguarding needs and additional PPA being given to all teachers to support remote learning.

7.2 We recently appointed Faye Fernandes as a class teacher and Faye will be joining us in term 5. Faye is currently Deputy Headteacher at Catsfield Primary School and has wanted to expand her skills within special education for some time. I know Faye will bring a number of gifts and skills to Glyne Gap and that we will be able to continue to support her personal and professional development.

7.3 Governors are keen to continue to know the impact of change to role and support given to the Head of Faculty and Head of Lower School who effectively swapped roles in September. Both Heads of School meet with me weekly to discuss self-leadership, workload and priorities. Both Heads regularly meet with Barbara informally. Both have established themselves as credible leaders within their new departments and are involved supporting teachers and monitoring pupil learning. It has to be acknowledged that the current context has impacted on opportunity to move departments on as Sarah is needed to lead a class and Jayne's safeguarding portfolio is considerable at this time. Whilst I know this is frustrating to the both of them, we acknowledge that these *are* the priorities and school colleagues are not in a position to move practice on at this point.

7.4 A comprehensive professional development and training plan is in place for the school year. This has had to be amended as one planned training day was overtaken by the need to test all staff for Covid 19 (this additional day was agreed by Government). We regularly run initial Team Teach training for new staff which takes 2 days and is led by Jayne Gosling. In other times, we have been able to facilitate this and keep school open as we are able to move staff/use supply staff. Due to current restrictions, we are unable to do this and yet this training needs to happen to support and protect pupils and staff. I will write to parents/carers and this will result in a partial closure.

7.5 We currently have 2 members of staff within an absence management programme.

8.0 Resources – including finance, premises/health & safety

8.1 19/20 budget accounts have been closed, signed off by accounts and submitted to Companies House.

8.2 Whilst the budget set for this year is deficit, income and expenditure are as expected for this point in the year.

8.3 Analysis has begun to support strategic financial planning with the aim of being able to balance income/expenditure without the need to rely on reserves.

8.4 The resources committee can confirm that all statutory and best practice checks are up to date. The termly site inspection has taken place.

8.5 Governors are aware of an incident that occurred in the school pool and the school's response to this. Immediate safeguarding, health and safety actions required as a response to this incident have been completed and actions to strengthen teaching and learning are in hand and will be completed this term.

8.6 Our Covid - 19 risk assessment remains up to date and is routinely reviewed every Monday by senior staff.

Kirsty Prawanna