

**Glyne Gap School**  
**Headteacher's report for Governors' Meeting**  
**on Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

I last reported to Governors in March of this year. I was not able to present my report to Governors in person as restrictions as an implication of Covid – 19 began in the week of our planned meeting.

This report reads very differently to my usual report to Governors and information shared here details the school's current position and any risks/challenges the school faces that Governors need to be aware of. Our habitual drive for quality teaching and learning has had to change and it is therefore not possible to update Governors on pupil learning outcomes. Governors will, I hope, accept that some activity regarding school monitoring and development have also had to cease for a period.

This report is accompanied by a comprehensive financial report from the School Business Manager (including impact of Covid-19 measures) and a report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

I will write to Governors before September to update and confirm arrangements for September.

**1.Current context:**

- In line with Government directives, Glyne Gap School closed to the majority of pupils on 19/3/20.
- Following risk assessment on the needs of pupils and through identifying pupils with key worker parents, we re-opened on 23/3/20 for a group 12 pupils who attended school Mondays and Wednesdays until and including week commencing 25/5/20. A small number of pupils joined this group at different times in the 10 weeks following ongoing risk assessment including 2 pupils not on roll who ISEND services asked us to support.
- Pupils worked in small groups and continued to travel with Home School transport.
- Throughout this period, staff worked in 3 groups and were either in work, acting as first reserve to replace any absent staff or on holiday. Staggering staff in this way meant we were able to support this group throughout the Easter holidays and the May mid-term break. A member of the senior leadership team and was on site when pupils were present and the school office was staffed. All other staff worked at home. All staff remained on full pay (including supply staff who were paid for their usual hours).
- Teachers made weekly calls to all families to offer support and guidance regarding home learning. In addition, teachers created and shared a weekly class newsletter.
- Following Government advice, school opened more widely from 1/6/20. Having consulted with staff, I was confident we could offer 2 days in school to any child who wanted/needed to attend and we welcomed 56 pupils back to school. This number has risen to 78 over the last 4 weeks. We are working hard to increase this number to all pupils able to attend. Where we have the space and staff capacity to add a third day of attendance to pupils, we have.
- We have 25 pupils who are unable to attend at this time due to their own/family health needs. This will not change until Government guidance changes.
- Pupils and staff are working in 'bubbles' of half class size 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. School corridors are one way and staff rooms are socially distanced. A member of the site team cleans throughout the day and there are additional cleaning regimes in place.
- Non class based staff have returned to working in the school building.

- We have worked closely with Home James (School Transport) and in the majority of cases, pupils travel to/from school in their bubble groups.
- All staff who can return to work have and remain on full pay. There are 3 members of staff who cannot work due to their own/family health needs and these staff remain on full pay. We have offered 6 weeks unpaid leave to any staff member who, for whatever reason, feels unable to work at this point.
- This arrangement will continue until Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

Pupils and parents on the whole have shown such resilience and fortitude during this period when they have not had the support of school or respite services. I appreciate that whilst some have absolutely enjoyed the increased family time (particularly when the sun was shining!), this hasn't been everyone's experience.

Staff have responded to these unusual circumstances with flexibility, positivity and a determination to continue to support pupils and their families. It is because of this that we have been able to offer the provision that we have and in a timely, pragmatic and calm way.

## **2. Holiday Club**

For a number of weeks families have been asking about Holiday Club provision. I can appreciate that for some the thought of a further 6 weeks of school being closed is challenging. However, I am also aware of the need for all staff to have a complete break from school. In addition, we simply could not run Holiday Club as we previously have within current working safely guidelines.

To this end, I have consulted with staff on a proposal to run a Holiday Club that essentially looks like a 9 day extension to the term and current working practices. Staff response shows we can make this offer to parents and that is currently taking place.

Working in this way ensures:

- that as many children and families as possible have some support during the summer break (this Holiday Club will be free to all to ensure equality of support).
- that the support offered maintains the risk reduction measures that school has used in the last 14 weeks.
- that school staff have a summer holiday and the school building can close to enable necessary works prior to September.

Having consulted with ISEND, the Local Authority has agreed to fund home/school transport for this Holiday Club.

This Holiday Club will be the school's most significant additional spend as a result of Covid- 19 implications and yet I see it as a necessary spend to both support pupils and families and to maintain and strengthen school culture in preparation for the coming school year. We are in an extremely fortunate position that we do have resources to fund such a venture.

## **3. Planning for September**

At the time of writing, Government guidance on how schools will look in September has not been published although the direction of travel suggests that schools will be open to all children to attend

full time. I am working on an assumption that we will be able to increase our bubble size and therefore return to full size classes that enables pupils to attend 5 days a week.

If we continue with a number of safer working practices (cleaning regimes, no larger groups such as assemblies, limiting visitors) then I would be optimistic that we can offer pupils and staff a safe and welcoming time in school where wellbeing and learning for all re-emerges as our focus.

#### **4.1 Strengths within this current context:**

- School community is Covid -19 free
- School culture and morale are strong
- 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

#### **4.2 Risks/threats within this current time/context:**

- Pupils and/or staff test Covid – 19 positive.  
Schools are supported with a dedicated Public Health England helpline to advise in such situations. The bubble approach supports managing infection spread and we have the capacity to manage this threat.
- Key personnel are ill and unable to work.  
This scenario has been considered at other times and leadership is distributed to compensate for this. We are aware of where we could seek school business support if needed.
- Inability to recruit to teacher vacancy.  
I have not run recruitment for a class teacher position and have created a temporary internal solution with a Teaching Assistant leading a class; an Assistant Head and a strong class team will support her.
- Recruiting to Teaching Assistant vacancies without applicants visiting school and therefore having a less-rounded view of applicants.  
I have ensured all safer recruitment procedures continue and have spoken personally to all applicants as part of the shortlisting process. I have discussed the risks to taking a job somewhere you have not visited with each candidate and would be prepared to swiftly end a contract if we felt the appointment was going to be unsuccessful when we saw the new recruit in situ.
- School struggles to return to a teaching and learning focus and loses its drive to improve.  
I am confident that the strengths above will mitigate against this and in addition, have taken the support offered from East Sussex Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service in advisor support for school recovery. Bob Wall is undertaking this role. In addition, Governors will support in school leaders in this aspect.

**5.1 School data:** not relevant/useful for this period

**5.2 Teaching and Learning data:** not available for this period

**5.3 School Development and monitoring:**

Governors will appreciate that monitoring and development activities have had to have a different focus in this period. Monitoring and development plans will be evaluated and re-established over the coming weeks.

### 5.3a Monitoring plan

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| Aspects due for external monitoring Terms 1 and 2 19/20 (yellow highlighted areas are complete/green in process) |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2018/19 pupil outcomes data</li> <li>• Leadership and management - ambition, vision and drive to improve</li> <li>• Learning in lessons (moved to terms 3/4 for new Professional Advisor)</li> <li>• Local Authority safeguarding review follow up</li> </ul> |
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| Aspects due for external monitoring Terms 3 and 4 (yellow highlighted areas are complete/green postponed) |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding Audit</li> <li>• Local Authority Health and Safety audit</li> <li>• Core learning (English, Maths, ICT) – to be completed as part of SLES visit</li> </ul> |
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| Aspects due for external monitoring Terms 5 and 6 (green postponed) |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of post 16 curriculum</li> </ul> |
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### 5.3b 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 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 12                            | 3                     | 7                                | 2                            | 0                                 |

Whilst a number of items remain incomplete, I am pleased that initiatives to update all safeguarding recording (to CPOMS) and minimise teacher workload through a review of assessment, recording and reporting processes are complete. Heads of School should be congratulated on these developments which will maximise teacher time (on teaching and learning) and lessen teacher burden in the coming academic year.

## 6.0 Pupils

6.1 School roll is currently 113 and we are receiving full place funding and top up 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.

6.2 We have 4 pupils leaving year 14 at the end of this school year and 7 pupils starting their Reception year in September. Welcoming parents into school has all taken place via telephone or video call.

6.3 Nursery pupils are currently accessing the main school rather than our Nursery building. We are in discussion with Bexhill College about how both groups may use the Nursery in September. We currently have low numbers for Nursery in September.

## **7.0 Staff – appointments, training and welfare**

- 7.1 Governors will want to know that consideration has been given to supporting staff in this different time. Class teachers and other team leaders remain responsible for regular team meetings (in whatever format suits) with an emphasis on staff wellbeing and support. They are in turn supported by Heads of School. Senior leaders have continued to meet weekly and I have received support from SLES.
- 7.2 Governors are aware that Frances Hall retires from her teaching career at the end of this term. Nicola Banks will also be moving on to Churchwood Primary Academy. The school is deeply grateful for their contribution.
- 7.3 We currently have 1 member of staff within an absence management programme.
- 7.4 Headteacher Performance Management has taken place this year.

## **8.0 Resources – including finance, premises/health & safety**

- 8.1 The set 19/20 budget is running as expected at this point in the year. Covid – 19 has had an unexpected impact on the budget but it is manageable. We anticipate an overspend which should be compensated by re-imburement of Covid – 19 related additional spending.
- 8.2 Bev has not yet submitted our 20/21 budget to the ESFA – this was one of the returns that has been postponed. This budget currently runs at a deficit which we continually seek to reduce (currently £150K). If we cannot reduce within the current context, Glyne Gap School has healthy reserves with which to offset this deficit.
- 8.3 East Sussex Local Authority has proposed changes to special school funding for the coming academic year. This change would mean a possible 60k drop in funding for Glyne Gap. Special Heads are working collectively to further discuss this issue with the Local Authority.
- 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 School improvement works continue this term and over the summer break. In addition to general maintenance, we will be improving the personal hygiene facilities in one class and re-fitting kitchen areas in 3 classes. Our plans for the outdoor gym have understandably had to pause.

**Kirsty Prawanna**