

1 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

News from the Governors

I am writing on behalf of the Governors to share key information about your school and its governance. First and foremost, the Governors publicly praise the Headteacher, Joolz Scarlett, for her excellent leadership of the school during the unprecedented circumstances that have and still are challenging us.

The Governors are:

<p>Parent Governors Fiona ODonnell Tabitha Marsh</p>	<p>Staff Governor Rachel Goymer</p>
<p>Co-Opted Governors Gwenda Lilley Richard Pelly Peter Thorn Geetha Veerasamy Jahseen Foster</p>	<p>Ex Officio Governor The Headteacher, Joolz Scarlett</p> <p>Local Authority Governor Helen McHale</p>
	<p>Clerks to the Governors Sharon Glover</p>

We have just updated our Instrument of Government to increase the number of governors from eight to ten. We have done this to enable the Governing Board to reflect better the diversity within our students and the wider community. We welcome Geetha Veerasamy and Jahseen Foster as new governors.

Governor responsibilities (as stated by the DfE) are:

- a) Working in partnership with, and providing support to, the Headteacher in the strategic leadership of the school, ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b) Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its students, and the performance management of staff; and
- c) Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

For further information about Governors, please visit the school website and explore the 'Governing Board' page within the 'About our school' tab.

We currently have a full complement of governors but would always be keen to hear from anybody who might be interested in becoming a governor. If this could be you, please do contact me or the Headteacher to discuss what this would involve. (There will be an election for a Parent Governor next term).

You can view the School Development Plan by going to the 'About our School' tab on the school's website, and then clicking on 'School Development'. Governors have agreed that their main strategic priorities for this academic year are:

1. Maintaining continued education and operations during disruptions such as Covid19.
2. Focusing on closing the progress gap for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs of ethnic minority students.
3. Exploring the feasibility of becoming an apprenticeship provider to benefit both students and staff.

Reflecting on last year, we are especially pleased to highlight some features:

1. Achieving the Nurture Schools' Award
2. Linking students' EHCP outcomes to the school's assessment and reporting models
3. Consolidating the school's longer term financial stability
4. Improving communications with parents and carers
5. Maintaining, so far as was possible, the education and nurture of our students during the lockdown period from March to June.

The financial situation is much improved from a year ago. We expect to be debt free by 31 March 2021, but do still expect significant challenges balancing the longer term budget in the years ahead. More information is at the Annex.

On a personal note, I became the Interim Chair of Governors in February 2017 at the request of RBWM. In July 2017, I was co-opted as a Governor and elected Chair of Governors. Having worked with the school for nearly four years now, I am continually impressed by the cheerfulness of the staff and their impressive impact on the students. I am proud to be the Chair of Governors.

Finally, we are really grateful for the partnership working between parents and the school that helps our students do their best. We look forward to seeing our dedicated staff and the good outcomes for students continuing to enhance the reputation of Manor Green School as the Centre of Excellence for Inclusion, and one of the most successful special schools in the country.

Yours sincerely



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Chair of Governors
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Annex: Financial information

ANNEX

This Annex provides more information about the financial situation.

£k	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16 Actual	1 Apr 16 - 31 Mar 17 Actual	1 Apr 17 - 31 Mar 18 Actual	1 Apr 18 - 31 Mar 19 Actual	1 Apr 19 - 31 Mar 20 Actual	1 Apr 20 – 31 Mar 21 Budget
Total income:	6,626	6,670	7,192	7,590	8,428	8,443
Total expenditure:	6,553	7,342	7,154	7,508	7,895	8,424
Carry forward	74*	-672**	-634	-552	-19	Zero
Notes:	*Note 1	**Note 2				
Pupil numbers	237 January 16 census	256 January 17 census	258 September 17 intake	263 September 18 intake	263 September 19 intake	270.5 September 20 intake

Notes:

1. The 2016-17 budget was prepared using a carry forward of £418k. Early in 2017 it was found this had been overstated by £344k so that the actual carry forward was only £74k.
2. The deficit was covered by a loan from RBWM, which we were required to repay within five years.

As shown in the Table, the financial year to 31 Mar 17 ended with a deficit of £672k. Once the carry forward problem (Note 1) and other inadequacies had been identified, Governors introduced new financial procedures in May 2017. Staff responded superbly. Our Finance Manager (now Head of Finance), Didem Allen, joined us in October 2017. We now have robust control, forecasting and monitoring of our finances.

Over the last few years, we have implemented various initiatives and as a result we should be debt free by 31 March 2021.

We thank the Headteacher and the Head of Finance for their hard work and thank the school leadership team and cost centre managers for their support. It's been a great team effort that has brought the finances back into balance.

Our challenge for the years ahead will, no doubt, be that expenditure may well rise faster than income as costs increase and Local Authorities' budgets come under increasing pressure.