

COLBY SCHOOL REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2021

The school responded well to the enforced lockdown in March 2020, lessons were delivered via Google classroom and all children who needed to be in school were accommodated. Through business and community donations, laptops and computers were also provided. Mrs Mead's daily challenges were well received as an addition to traditional learning.

Once back in early summer, children were taught in pods of 15, outside as much as possible and inside as necessary – the hall became a classroom thanks to the loan of tables from Banningham and Felmingham village halls. The smaller pod sizes are the best way of managing the regulations within the constraints of our Victorian building. The new outside toilet block with additional meeting room came into its own as a welcome additional resource in September.

All went well until Christmas and the enforced lockdown until March, so it was back to Google classrooms – now the children are back in school in their pods of 15 and we look forward to moving on step by step to what will be a “new normal.”

Colby School is thrilled to have had its link with Vattenfall's outreach programme renewed and we look forward to coming to talk to you about this once everything re-starts.

Currently there are 139 children on roll and the school is over-subscribed for the 2021/22 academic year.

Mo Anderson-Dungar
Governor

CLERK'S REPORT TO 2021 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

So much has happened during the past year! The spring lockdown meant that we had to very quickly find new ways of working so that business could continue – we had to get to grips with virtual meetings once the legislation was in place, and held our meetings via Zoom from April onwards, with the exception of the September council meeting and the open meeting to talk about the village hall. These took place in the hall during a brief spell when it was possible to do so. The legislation comes to an end on 6 May, so all parish council meetings will be “in person” from May onwards, in accordance with government guidance at the time. Working groups, such as the Village hall group and its sub-groups, can still be held virtually as they are advisory groups which do not meet in public.

Zoom has been a mixed blessing – gains in time-saving have been offset by losses of internet connection for some. But, thanks to Noel Bartram, we have just submitted our evidence to Openreach – the support from the parish was around 45%, so we wait to hear their response.

It has been an incredibly busy year, given the circumstances, as you will have read in the newsletter. The extra work associated with the various projects resulted in a re-evaluation and re-grading of the clerk's post, with the hours increased to 7 per week from February onwards.

Normally at this meeting there would be a report from the Neech Loan Fund – a trust that provides loans to start up businesses in the area. The Trustees have not met this year so there is nothing to report, but it is still there and will resume in the near future. If anyone is thinking of starting a new business, you can find information on the fund via the North Walsham Town Council website. The parish council representative to the Board of Trustees will be appointed at the May Annual Council meeting.

Elections tomorrow will give us a new County Councillor and Police & Crime Commissioner, thanks are due to our retiring County Councillor, John Timewell, for his interest in the parish. My thanks also to our District Councillor, John Toyne, who attends most meetings, and lastly to our parish councillors who give so much of their time for this community.

Mo Anderson-Dungar
5 May 2021