

## Dorset Studio School

### Minutes of the Governors meeting held on Thursday 29 April 2021, 4.00pm held virtually via Zoom due to Covid-19

<b>Governors (GB)</b>	*Kaye Chittenden; *Andy Daw; *Mark Gibbens (Chair); Avril Harrison; *Robert Lasseter; Joanne Manley (Parent Governor); *Annetta Minard (Executive Principal); *Luke Rake (Member); Jim Tirrell (Member); *Martha Vigar
<b>Other Attendees</b>	*Vanessa Gifford (KMC Clerk ); *Paul Green (Principal); *Tracey Richards (Business Manager)

\* *Indicates actual presence at this meeting*

AGENDA ITEM		Challenge and Action
1.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>Representatives of Kingston Maurward College (KMC) and The Thomas Hardy School (THS) reaffirmed their standing declaration of interests in items relating to the financial / legal relationships between those sponsoring bodies and the Dorset Studio School (DSS).</p> <p>There were no further interests declared.</p>	
2.	<p><b>APOLOGIES</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and noted from Joanne Manley and Jim Tirrell.</p> <p>The Principal and Business Manager were welcomed to the meeting.</p>	
3.	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2021</b></p> <p>The Governing Body (GB) <b>APPROVED</b> the minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 as a true and accurate record and <b>APPROVED</b> the non-confidential minutes for website publication.</p>	
4.	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</b></p> <p>The following matters arising were <b>NOTED</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Grievance Procedure still had to be shared to the GB.</li> <li>It was noted that the Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed with the Safeguarding Governor and would be approved by the GB in due course.</li> </ul>	<p><b>AM/VG</b></p> <p><b>AM</b></p>
5.	<p><b>RATIFICATION OF ELECTRONIC DECISIONS</b></p> <p>The GB <b>RATIFIED</b> the approval of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Lease for the Poundbury Centre</li> </ul>	



<p>6.</p>	<p><b>MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 MARCH 2021</b></p> <p>The Management Accounts to 31 March 2021 were discussed and the following points <b>NOTED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Income narrative was scrutinised, and noted that the income for an additional 9 students would not be received until the following year due to the lagged funding methodology.</li> <li>• From September 2021 there would not be separate Covid catch up funding, it would be included in the normal funding per student.</li> <li>• The ICT Devolved Capital funding had been honoured by the DfE from the new school grant.</li> <li>• It was confirmed that a new procedure had been set up to record and action transport income and costs.</li> <li>• The Budget Monitoring Report was scrutinised with no additional questions.</li> <li>• The Financial Key Performance Indicators (KPI) were noted, especially noting that the total staff costs were 86.40% of GAG income which was in line with national benchmarks.</li> <li>• The Business Manager confirmed that the KPI's would be updated on a monthly basis.</li> <li>• The Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021 was noted.</li> <li>• The GB was pleased to receive the Cashflow forecast. It was agreed that it would be useful to receive an annual cashflow report to ensure that the balance sheet and Profit &amp; Loss account all related to it and no journals were out of sync.</li> </ul> <p>The Business Manager was thanked for her reports and it was agreed that benchmarks would be included going forward, however the Executive Principal advised that it was difficult to find similar schools for comparison but this would be investigated.</p> <p>The Business Manager left the meeting.</p>	<p>TR</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b></p> <p>The Principal updated the GB and the following points were <b>NOTED:</b></p> <p><b>Progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal advised that a different method had been utilised again for the current year due to the Government advising that teacher assessment would be submitted due to the pandemic and no public examinations would take place. It was noted that full guidance had been released just before the easter break.</li> <li>• The Principal confirmed that the school was prepared for teacher assessment with all Heads of Department having been requested to produce portfolios for each student, and a Policy document produced for guidance.</li> </ul> <p><i>Continued overleaf</i></p>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was noted that some schools were undertaking examinations, with weightings, and others were producing similar portfolios, so in general most schools were conducting a similar procedure.</li> <li>• The Principal confirmed that all progress data had been quality assessed. Staff were experienced and an accurate set of grades had been agreed. The internal moderation had been completed, and Progress 8 was noted as 0.26 which was in line with the trajectory. The Progress 8 for SEND was also encouraging at 0.37.</li> <li>• High Attainers had made good progress, which was a testament to all staff.</li> <li>• It was noted that ambitious targets had been set for English and maths which was higher than national expectations. It was agreed that the national benchmarks would be shared in due course.</li> <li>• It was noted that English had always been an area for focus with a lot of intervention and catch up put in place with additional staffing. It was reported that new staff appointments were encouraging and should make a difference. Maths continued to improve year on year.</li> <li>• The Centre Policy for GCSE's for the Summer of 2021 was noted.</li> </ul> <p><b>Attendance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance was noted as 89% with the national benchmark of 91%. In normal circumstances the DSS was around 94.6%.</li> <li>• The school was increasingly complex and attendance was a key area of concern, with constant monitoring. The Dorset Council Inclusion Team was supporting the school when necessary.</li> <li>• There was a lot of mental health related issues related to Covid which had impacted on attendance.</li> <li>• An additional 18 students had been classed as vulnerable and had been encouraged to attend school, however had not and had to be reported as 'absent', which included two 'Looked after Children' who were absent with Covid related issues.</li> <li>• Dorset Council's involvement was questioned and the Principal advised that it was slow progress, although some home visits had been undertaken. There had been no support with the impact on results, although representatives had visited the school. There had been some assistance with referrals to the Learning Centre and tuition at home.</li> </ul> <p><b>Online Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was agreed that the report was positive and involvement had improved.</li> <li>• It was considered that the Staff Team had excelled with online provision.</li> <li>• Pastoral contact had continued.</li> </ul> <p>The GB requested that thanks were passed to the School Team for the continuous work in challenging circumstances.</p>	PG
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>ACCOMMODATION UPDATE</b></p> <p>The Executive Principal updated the GB on developments with the capital projects, and the following points were <b>NOTED</b>:</p>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A meeting had been held with the DfE to provide an update and nothing new occurred. It had been agreed that a temporary building would be installed to cover health &amp; hygiene which would accommodate two small changing rooms.</li> <li>• The Executive Principal thanked the GB for the approval of the Lease for the Poundbury site.</li> <li>• The Executive Principal had met with all parties on site to resolve the safeguarding issues. Certain actions had been agreed and these had been shared with the GB previously. The two main resolutions were that the gates would be shut during the day, including the access to Unit 7 and would be opened as required by the DSS Reception; and cars would access to the right and the area would be fenced off. The GB was reassured that the issues had been resolved.</li> <li>• Representatives from the DSS and KMC had recently met with the DfE for an update on the long term capital project. It had been disappointing with no new documentation. The Executive Principal emphasised that the GB had to be clear on progress as time was running out and parents had to be informed of any changes for September as soon as possible. She confirmed that staff had now been informed. There was also concern that any project would impact new applications as parents would not be able to see where the students would actually be going and it could possibly be a building site. It was agreed that it was now likely that the temporary accommodation at Poundbury would extend to three years and the ethos of the school would have to be considered and the challenges of a dual site. The longer the situation went on for the more difficult the unity of the school would become.</li> <li>• The KMC Principal advised that conversations had been ongoing for over 12 months and there was still no option on the table, and as landowner there was nothing further that the College could do to assist. He shared the concern that there would be a reputational impact, with applications declining, and planning approval would not be straightforward.</li> <li>• It was agreed that staff had to be kept 'on side' and some benefit should be considered as recompense.</li> <li>• It was agreed that it was important to emphasise the end result and ensure that Poundbury did not become a satellite site. The GB was confident that the Executive Principal had the ability to ensure that staff and parents were 'on side', and gave its full support.</li> </ul> <p><i>5.10pm Martha Vigar joined the meeting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair considered that it was important that LocatEd joined the next meeting with the DfE to ensure that all progress and options were understood and he agreed to contact the DfE to request.</li> <li>• The Chair thanked KMC for being supportive during the whole process.</li> <li>• It was agreed that all the issues were complicated but any outcome would be an improvement and slow steps were being made.</li> <li>• The Executive Principal advised that IT was a further issue and she was currently attending workshops to review the tenders for Poundbury and any new build.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: right;">AD</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The curriculum analysis was in the hands of the DfE and the Executive Principal had ensured that it was in-line with the current school experience.</li> <li>The Executive Principal had considered all the costs for running the Poundbury site and had submitted it to the DfE. She had spent a lot of time planning to ensure that the dual site was operationally sound.</li> <li>The DSS was currently well above the national average with 'Characteristics' and it was important to know students with EHCP's to ensure that all needs were met.</li> </ul>	
9.	<p><b>SCHOOL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SELF ASSESSMENT 2020</b></p> <p>The School Resource Management Self-Assessment for 2020 was <b>AGREED</b>.</p>	
10.	<p><b>APPOINTMENT OF CLERK</b></p> <p>It was noted that the SLA for Governance with KMC would end on the 31 August 2021.</p> <p>A draft Job Description was considered and agreed that the Chair, Executive Principal and the Clerk would meet to finalise taking into account the comments of the Parent Governor. A final copy would be uploaded to GVO for approval.</p> <p><i>5.35pm Robert Lasseter left the meeting and it remained quorate.</i></p>	AD/AM/VG
11.	<p><b>ADMISSIONS</b></p> <p>The Executive Principal advised that Admissions would have to be considered very shortly as they had not been reviewed since the school opened and had to be reviewed every seven years. It was agreed that there was much to consider.</p> <p>However, it was noted the Dorset Council had submitted a complaint direct to the Schools Adjudicator without any communication with the DSS. The Executive Principal advised that she could see no reason for the complaint as the school was part of a co-ordinated process with Dorset. The DSS had accepted all students whilst under subscribed, and the reason that had been stated was that the website was incorrect. The Executive Principal suggested that this was acceptable if a full quality assurance had been carried out across all schools, but after checking other school websites they were in the same position and there had been no consideration of the pandemic. The GB noted that the Clerk had submitted a holding email to the Schools Adjudicator whilst the Executive Principal contacted the Head of Education at Dorset Council to understand the issues, which was scheduled for the following day.</p> <p>The GB had previously recognised that it was time to review the Policy and would work with the Dorset Council to ensure that all schools were best placed to serve Dorset. All issues would be taken into account when reviewing the policy, including a consultation ready for acceptance in 18 months time. It was agreed that the DSS had been set up to serve a particular student and had been successful and it was committed to its specialism.</p>	

	5.50pm Kaye Chittenden left the meeting and it remained quorate.	
<b>12.</b>	<b>EXCLUSION POLICY</b>  The updated Exclusion Policy was <b>APPROVED</b> .	
<b>13.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS FOR REPORT</b>  The following business was <b>NOTED</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal KMC advised that he had supported the DSS as a Governor and a Member but was now struggling with potential conflict of interest between the two organisations and would be stepping down as a Governor after the June meeting. He suggested that this was for both parties benefit and the time was right and proper to step away especially with the current land discussions being undertaken. The DSS was now in a good position and was fully viable.</li> <li>• The Chair of KMC advised that he was in the same position as the Principal KMC and would be following and standing down as a Governor.</li> <li>• It was agreed that the Skills Audit would be updated and the Members would consider new Governors in due course.</li> <li>• The Chair advised that the MAT Working Group had met once and would now follow up with further meetings with other parties to enable a recommendation in due course.</li> </ul>	
<b>14.</b>	<b>2020/21 MEETINGS</b>  The following meeting dates were <b>NOTED</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 June 2021</li> </ul>	
<i>The Meeting closed at 6.10pm with no further business</i>		

Chair ..... Date .....

