

Dorset Studio School

Meeting of the Full Board of Governors

THURSDAY 25th April September 2024, 4.00pm, at Poundbury

Minutes

The Code of Conduct for Governors requires governors to be honest and open with regard to conflicts of interest (either real or perceived). Governors must not use their position for personal gain in business, political or social relationships. Therefore, a governor who has, or may be perceived to have, such a personal interest in a particular matter under consideration should declare that interest, withdraw from all discussions relating to it and take no part in any vote on such matter.

Items marked * are those in which a majority of Governors may have an interest because of some shared attribute. When considering these items, Governors should aim to achieve a balanced view, paying particular attention to the sources of information and advice, and remind themselves of their duties as governors and to act in the public interest.

Governors:	Andy Daw; Mark Gibbens; Kaye Chittenden; Chris Biggs (Parent Governor); Rosie Pike (Parent Governor); Nicholas Spearing (Governor); Kerry Aston (Governor); David Humphreys (Staff Governor); Paul Green (Principal)
In attendance:	Andy Daw, Kaye Chittenden, Mark Gibbens, Chris Biggs, Nicholas Spearing, Kerry Aston, Paul Green, Tracey Richards (Clerk), Archie Lasseter, David Humphreys

Item		Detail	
1.	Verbal	<p>Welcome</p> <p>The Chair of Governors welcomed all.</p> <p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>To Note any Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Nicholas Spearing declared that he was to be appointed as trustee with The Ambitions Academy Trust. This has no conflict</p>	Chair
2.	Verbal	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>To Note any apologies for absence</p> <p>The Clerk noted no apologies, Chris Biggs?</p>	Chair
3.	Minutes	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 8th February 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To Approve minutes as a correct record ▪ To Approve non confidential minutes for website publication <p>All minutes were confirmed as correct and AGREED.</p> <p>Page 5, spelling mistake on School Business Manager report to change.</p>	Chair

		No further matters arising.	
4.	Minutes	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</p> <p>No outstanding matters from previous meeting</p>	Chair
5	Paper	<p>TO RECEIVED THE PRINCIPALS UPDATE / REPORT</p> <p>A full report was distributed to Governors prior to the meeting for circulation.</p> <p>Admissions</p> <p>Student roll is marginally lower than at the same point last year, as numbers have fallen slightly. This reflects a national and county wide issue with regards to falling rolls. However the school is moving forward with a business plan and marketing strategy. The Principal, Business Manager and IT Manager have attended day one of a marketing course, which looked at recruitment of staff and students, and a business plan will aim to achieve this.</p> <p>Q - A governors noted that the school having a wider catchment is promising</p> <p>A – Principal responded with advising that in 2023/24 the school took from 51 feeder schools, which yes can certainly be seen as an opportunity, the school being a genuine parental choice across Dorset.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked “What are the key aspects of a marketing plan in a school?”</p> <p>A – The Principal responded that this would involve future proofing the school, having a good Ofsted, joining the WMAT, a great time for recruiting staff and students. Strategies will be implemented within a business plan.</p> <p>Q – A governors asked who is the schools target audience? The school needs to ensure the clear key message is getting to the right people.</p> <p>A – Yes being a unique school is a great position, it is an advantage as what we do is different to other schools. We are conducting a range of research methods and implementing a range of strategies to achieve</p> <p>Recent public audiences have been reached with the launch of a new facebook page, school website which includes a staffing pool, and LinkedIn.</p> <p>Current numbers are at 337. At the previous census we reported 362. The school mobility shows a movement of marginally more students this year (2)</p> <p>Q – A governors asked what EHE meant in the report.</p> <p>A – The meaning is Elective Home Education.</p> <p>The Vice Principal carried out tours and meetings yesterday with potential new students.</p> <p>Mobility in schools would normally be 10%, Dorset Studio School is slightly higher than this, and this is not unusual in our setting.</p>	Principal

		<p>Transport has been a central factor this year as, when students have left, parents have sited transport as an issue, often due to financial hardship.</p> <p>Students leaving the school showed that 5 who left were from the Dorchester and surrounding area with 34 from the further catchment. There may be a need to consider a more active recruitment of local students as part of the strategy, as well as countywide.</p> <p>Before the end of summer term, the Principal will visit local schools to give a presentation to the Year 5 students.</p> <p>All Governors supported this strategy.</p> <p>Marketing materials will be branded and purchased and investigation into advertising on local roundabouts, open events, and further opportunities to visit schools.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked whether the leaver figures are mid-year or includes the students leaving in August 2023 A – Clarification was given the figures shown are after the September 2023 joining date.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked regarding the Year 7 admission numbers for the new intake, are they 75 A – It was confirmed that they are.</p> <p>Discussion are taking place with regards to IYFA applications regarding Dorset schools.</p> <p>Attendance</p> <p>Attendance remain lower than the national average, although SEN, FSM and LAC students are showing higher than the national average.</p> <p>Non vulnerable is showing at national average. Governors were reminded that in the recent OFSTED inspection, it was felt that the school was doing all that it can in terms of encouraging and supporting good attendance.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked if a document could be tabled to show the characteristics groups against a national average. A – Yes this could be shown in the future</p> <p>Q – A governor asked what was meant by PA A – PA is Persistent Absence, at present this is greater at 33% which is higher than the 10% expectation</p> <p>Q – A governor asked whether all parents know if their child is identified as PA. A - The school is working through national and county procedures, using their approach, through research, showing that the schools are working together to improve the attendance, along with parent support. The school has trialed Alternative Provision with some of these students this year, but this has not encouraged them back into school as would have hoped, it had a positive impact for students but not the school.</p> <p>SEN</p> <p>The report identifies the number of suspensions. There has been one case of a 15 day suspension for 1 student.</p>	
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	<p>Progress</p> <p>The current progress for Year 11 is a concern, however, Year 10 has improved and on track.</p> <p>Q- A governor asked how this is measured? A – Student national scores are identified in a subject and assessed at assessment points of the year.</p> <p>Q – The Chair of governors asked for an update on this at next meeting ACTION</p> <p>A – The Principal identified the following levels:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -0.5 would be concerning, • + 0.5 is good. • A present the school is showing -0.39 which is below average. These are internal figures at present, national measures are formulated after results are announced and produced. <p>Q – Is there an explanation why Year 11 progress scores appear to be regressing at this key time?</p> <p>A - Because we have a number of students (7 – over 10% of our cohort) who were attending the school at the beginning in Year 11, and yet these students with SEMH have gradually reduced attendance or attending an alternative provision. They would have been due to take exams, however these students will not be sitting all the exams.</p> <p>Vocational exams, (Btec) have changed to technical awards over the last 2 years, demonstrating a move form course work to synoptic assessment, which essentially is an additional exam. The model of the technical awards has changed. These are subject to internal assessment, and only count if students are assessed in year 11, this can and is having a negative impact on all year 11 results, including the vocational awards</p> <p>2023/24 is a transition year in terms of academic results for the school. This is a central reason to review the curriculum. For example, there are new subjects including natural history. Therefore this is a time to look at other qualifications to see if they are suitable for the school.</p> <p>Q - A governors asked whether the number of LAC students had decreased by two? A – This will be checked by the DSL ACTION</p> <p>Three members of teaching staff are subject to capability actions and these are identified in the report circulated.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked whether this has an impact on the school’s progress scores? A - Yes , Maths is significant lower than English, discussions are in place with the Lead of Maths</p> <p>The English and Maths crossover is significantly lower, and this is where targeted intervention is taking place in Maths.</p> <p>For the next two years there will be no progress score, which is a result of there being no KS2 scores due to the pandemic. Only thresholds will be shown for these years. These</p>	
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		<p>measures misrepresent the school as the intake is significantly lower than national averages.</p> <p>WMAT Update</p> <p>The joining of the WMAT will now be 01/09/2024, the slight delay has been due to the legal work with respect to the complexity on the leases due to the split site.</p> <p><i>David Humphreys joined the meeting at 5.05pm.</i></p> <p>New Build Update</p> <p>Dfe have confirmed that the feasibility study has now been signed off. The next stage is the procurement stage which will commence this week, all on target for readiness in August 2026.</p> <p>Funding had been approved at ministerial level</p> <p>Q – A governor stated that this would be a good time to have the information in the business plan. A- This was agreed</p> <p>Q – A governor asked with regards to the new build, future proofing, to ensure it is cost effective, when would it be a good time to discuss this. A – The principal advised that once a contractor has been established then this will be the point of time to discuss.</p>	
6.	Paper	<p>TO RECEIVE SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER UPDATE</p> <p>Full report was circulated to governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Successful interviews have taken place for a 0.4 Art Teacher and 0.6 Music Teacher for September 2024.</p> <p>Staffing absences for the period 01/09/2023 – 31/03/2024 are showing 7% including teaching and support staff. Currently three members of support staff are on long term sick.</p> <p>All Fire drills to take place on both sites, and a mock lock down drill will also take place.</p> <p>All Health & Safety checks are in place and compliant, with no accidents to report.</p>	Business Manager
7.	AOB	<p>10th Anniversary Celebration</p> <p>It is the 10th Anniversary for Dorset Studio School and a celebration will take place at Kingston Maurward House on the 17th June where Governors, alumni of students, employers will be invited.</p> <p>Ofsted Report</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Ofsted Report will be due shortly.</p>	

		School Day Proposal PG working to move to a 5 period from a 6 period day, however the start and end of day would remain the same in order to ensure that there is no change for the buses.	
		Meeting finish 17.45	