

Dorset Studio School

Meeting of the Full Board of Governors

THURSDAY 28th September 2023, 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, Mark Gibbens, Chris Biggs, Nicholas Spearing, Kerry Aston, Paul Green, Kaye Chittended (via Video Link); Tracey Richards (Clerk)

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>Andy Daw noted working with Brutan Knowles – Chartered Surveyor</p>	Chair
2.	Verbal	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>To Note any apologies for absence</p> <p>The Clerk noted Rosie Pike, David Humphreys and Archie Lasseter sent apologies</p>	Chair
3.	Minutes	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 22nd June 2023</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>Paul Green advised that a training morning had taken place with Mike Foley from Wessex MAT trust with regards to the 90 minute pre ofsted telephone call. Andy Daw attended this as the Chair and reiterated that the role of governors is to hold</p>	Chair

		the school to account.			
4.	Minutes	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES		Chair	
		Item	Action		Actioner
		5	Governors to let clerk know if they would like to join Audit & Finance Committee		All governors
		6	An overview of Attendance in readiness for Ofsted		PG
		6	Detailed analysis of Attendance		PG/PC
		6	Governors school email accounts		Clerk
		6	Link Governors visits added to the calendar		Clerk
5	Verbal	<p>ANNUAL APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR</p> <p>There were no nominations sent to the Clerk Prior to the meeting. The Chair Andy Daw and Vice Chair Kaye Chittenden were re-elected for 2023/24.</p> <p>Nicholas Spearing was elected to Chair Audit & Finance Board, members of the board to be Mark Gibbens and Andy Daw also.</p> <p>Link Governors PG suggested that Nicholas Spearing take on link governor for Health & Safety and Human Resources Chris Biggs to be link governor for Quality of Education and Appraisal.</p> <p>Governors AGREED with the link governor roles.</p> <p>PG advised that the governors are critical friends who hold the school to account through having a detailed understanding of the school. This can be achieved through Link Governors. Governors are asked to visit at least once per term. Clerk will send out calendar to governors to collect idea of dates. PG will ask senior staff to identify suggested dates and times ACTION</p> <p>Clerk invited all governors to the celebration evening taking place on 12th October 2023 6-7pm at Kingston Maurward House.</p> <p><i>Chris Biggs joined the meeting at 16.25pm</i></p>	Chair		

6.	Paper	<p>RATIFICATION OF POLICIES</p> <p>Governors APPROVED the following policies of which had been circulated for commenting on GVO prior to the meeting: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection Policy • Early Career Teacher Policy • SRE Policy • Staff Capability Policy • Children Missing Education • Children with Health Needs who cannot attend school Policy • Designated Teacher Policy • Exclusions Policy • Premises Management Policy • SEND Policy • Supporting pupils with medical conditions 	Chair
7.	Paper	<p>PRINCIPALS REPORT</p> <p>Improvement priorities –</p> <p>PG had invited the Chair and Vice to attend a presentation about the changing profile of the school and the significant changes since the last OFSTED inspection. Amanda Davies, Education lead from Dorset County Council had also been invited into and visited the school. PG had reiterated the accommodation and capacity issues on each occasion, the impressive work that we do with a ‘vulnerable’ cohort, and yet the very real pressures that the school is facing as a result.</p> <p>Mike Foley from the Wessex MAT had also visited in order to go through some OFSTED preparation details with the Senior Leadership team. The meeting enabled the team to develop an improved understanding of the position of the school.</p> <p>Curriculum evenings have recently been held and were the best ever attended. This has been a key part of the parent engagement strategy. Comments and feedback were very positive.</p> <p>Admissions</p> <p>Current numbers on roll are 348. However, students are joining the school today and numbers will increase to 353. An additional 5 further students are due to start week commencing 02/10/2023, so this will bring the total numbers to 358. The waiting list will continuously be reviewed along with in-year fair access applications.</p> <p>Q – A Governors as whether the school can admit students at any time? A – The answer is yes</p>	Principal

		<p>PG discussed the possibility of having a 10% selective criteria going forward could be an option in the Admissions Policy, if this is a possibility it would mean the Policy being reviewed</p> <p>Q – A Governors asked what the timing would need to be if the change was to be made? A – The deadline would be February 2024 to implement for 2025/26 – A draft will be forwarded to ACTION at the next Governors meeting.</p> <p>PG advised the board that the school took students from 51 feeder schools in September. The highest numbers of students from one school was 5. PG plans to visit schools to present to students and parents.</p> <p>Attendance</p> <p>There are positives and negatives. Current attendance is showing 90.45 which is the same as last year. The end of year attendance for 2022/23 was 89%, 2 % lower than national averages last year.</p> <p>The school has a significant number of SEMH students (13%), almost higher than the national average of <i>total</i> SEN in other mainstream schools (which stands at 16%). The EBSA students do impact on the attendance figures.</p> <p>SEMH currently 77% (same as last year), Non SEMH currently 91%. An attendance strategy is currently being drafted.</p> <p>Attendance has been in the news recently, demonstrating a clear shift in parental attitudes post covid. A letter was sent to all parents via parent pay regarding information on attendance, highlighting lost learning rather than a percentage. The school will continue to work with parents. The Academic mentor and pastoral team will visit homes. An offer to send tutors out to homes has not always been welcomed and accepted. Student mental health is a cause of concern.</p> <p>Q – A Governors asked how do you classify a student by SEMH? A – It is a broader definition, students arrive on entry having identified SEN needs or SEMH, the school reviews this to ensure they should still be on the register, it is not due to historic reasons.</p> <p>Persistent Absence is at 24% which is greater than the Dorset average of 22%.</p> <p>Q – Does the school transport effect the attendance and impact? A – yes some students have been unable to attend school, however the picture is looking more positive. Governors should be aware that this is a key area of development.</p> <p>Safeguarding incidents</p> <p>The school has been awarded the united bronze against bullying award, which</p>	
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	<p>has been welcomed. Two surveys were sent out this year. It shows that pupils report feeling safe and happy.</p> <p>PG asked governors if they had any further questions. Q – A governor asked whether the Appraisal programme was on course? A – PG responded in the affirmative.</p> <p>SIP</p> <p>PG advised the board that they should be clear about key developments and which areas for development have been identified. The School Vision Statement had been circulated and shown that it had been reduced from four to two statements.</p> <p>Q – A Governors asked whether Animal Care was incorporated in land & environment, and why was Travel & Tourism introduced? A – PG responded that Travel & Tourism is the biggest sector within the county with direct links with farms and other areas of the specialism including camping.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked whether there is enough focus is put on the Travel & Tourism course? A – Yes, it is well developed. The school has had a new humanities team over the last 2/3 years and it has been led well, resulting in good results. A new technical award has started this year with a greater element of synoptic assessment.</p> <p>SEF</p> <p>The SEF was circulated prior to the meeting for Governors to review and agree. It is a large document. A single – sided SEF summary has been provided.</p> <p>Ofsted</p> <p>An OFSTED preparation paper was circulated prior to the meeting with governors asked to ensure that they understood the document. Any areas for development from the last inspection included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance • Parent communication • Variation of GCSE scores • Stretch and challenge • Middle Leaders development <p>Q – A governor asked whether Ofsted could call tomorrow A - At this time they could call at any point. The school is due an ungraded inspection.</p>	
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		<p>Strategy document</p> <p>The strategy documents show the context of the school, with SEF areas for development, staffing, and identifies what has been done thus far.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked whether a change of SLT structure has been identified? A – yes – the roles and responsibilities document shows this.</p> <p>SIP</p> <p>The documents identify the key improvements and priorities at this time.</p> <p>Q – A governor stated that it is a very detailed and thorough document, though wondered whether the timelines were ambitious. Therefore, prioritisation is valuable to be able to deliver this. A – PG advised that the SLT are working incredibly hard to achieve the improvement areas. So far they have achieved a great deal within the last 3 weeks and are now consolidating the areas.</p> <p>Governors AGREED to adopt the SEF and SIP</p> <p>Q – A Governor asked how these documents will be updated going forward? A - PG advised he will update on the Principals report for Governors meetings going forward.</p> <p>Curriculum plan</p> <p>A curriculum overview was given by PG. Changes to the Ofsted framework following the Ruth Perry situation, Ofsted are conscious of carrying out inspections to be broader, having impact and the changes are positive.</p> <p>Document Ofsted prep arrangements</p> <p>Governors noted that procedures are in place regarding a timeline and accountability and that all staff are aware of this. A document has been produced and circulated identifying “What is it like to attend our school”</p> <p>Q – A governor asked if this document could be uploaded on GVO for governors to comment on. Clerk to ACTION</p> <p>Performance</p> <p>There was an expectation for a challenging set of results for 2022/23. In the news media it showed that the government were to raise ground boundaries back to pre covid. The effect of this has been widespread with many schools reporting a challenging set of results. Our grades appear approximately one third</p>	
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		<p>of a grade lower than expected.</p> <p>Analysis demonstrated that the results were consistent, and that there were no individual anomalous subjects. Early analysis demonstrated a progress score could return -0.49, but this was based on 19/20 results. The 4 matrix share and compare system (where other schools input real time results, 661 schools uploaded their results) demonstrated an improved score of -0.16. We await the validated scores.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked if the EM4+ figure is correct and looking at prepandemic figures and current figures it shows improvement. A – yes this is correct</p> <p>Q – A governor asked whether the school document refers to our best results, 2022? A - Yes, however Ofsted will prioritise what is going on in a classroom, meaning data is less important.</p>	
8.	Paper	<p>BUILDING UPDATE / MAT</p> <p>Building update</p> <p>The chair advised that Annetta Minard and himself had attended a recent meeting with the DFE and circulated to governors, drawings showing the proposed layout for the new school. A location for the build had now been identified and this will go to planning in December 2023.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked whether the Land had been purchased? A – This is currently being actioned with the DFE.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked whether there is a latest date for completion of the school? A – Yes the timeline is two years.</p> <p>Q – a governor comments that due to funding it is in the best interest for all parties for this to progress on track.</p>	Chair
9	Verbal	<p>SAFEGUARDING</p> <p>No Safeguarding reports to disclose</p>	Principal
10.	Verbal	<p>BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT</p> <p>The School Business Manager / Finance Report was circulated to governors via GVO prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Business Manager went through the report advising of staff changes from</p>	

		<p>01/07/2023. At this time there are no staff capability issues in progress.</p> <p>Total staff absence days for 2022/23 equalled 2.9%.</p> <p>Internal audit from European Electronique took place in July and circulated to governors, any identified risks will be worked on by the ICT coordinator to ensure full compliance.</p> <p>Academies Handbook 2023 was circulated to all governors and uploaded to GVO and the headline changes discussed.</p> <p>Teachers pay conditions have not been finalized to date but the unions have advised the Teachers pay rise will be set at 6.5% from September 2023.</p> <p>All Financial reports were discussed and income received to date.</p> <p>Q – A governor asked how the school transport is charged to parents A – It is an annually price of £1,300 per student which is an annual amount, however parents are able to spread this over monthly payments of £130 per month.</p> <p>Q – A governor comment that there had been some negative comments on social media regarding the new school transport provider. A – The school is aware of this and understands the frustration. The support from parents has been increasingly good.</p> <p>Tracey Richards asked if the governors had any further questions. Governors happy with the report.</p>	
11	Verbal	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS FOR REPORT</p> <p>No other business</p>	

Matters arising from the minutes of the Full Governing Board held on 28th September 2023.

Item	Action	Actionee	Status
5	senior staff to identify suggested dates and times FOR Link Governor visits	PG	
7	Admissions Policy including the 10% selection criteria for next Governors meeting.	PG	
7	Ofsted preparation list to be added to GVO	Clerk	