

# Dorset Studio School

## Meeting of the Full Board of Governors

### THURSDAY 19 December 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.

<b>Governors:</b>	Andy Daw; Mark Gibbens; Chris Biggs (Parent Governor); Nicholas Spearing (Governor); Kerry Aston (Governor); David Humphreys (Staff Governor); Archie Lasseter; Paul Green (Principal)
<b>In attendance:</b>	Andy Daw, Mark Gibbens, Nicholas Spearing, Kerry Aston, Paul Green, Nadine Hill (Acting Clerk), Chris Biggs, David Humphreys

Item		Detail	
1.	Verbal	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>The Chair of Governors welcomed all.</p> <p>The Chair advised that Avril Harrison will be joining the Governing Body as a Co-opted Governor.</p> <p>Q - A governor asked if there was a need to recruit a further parent governor?</p> <p>A – yes this process will be carried out</p> <p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>To <b>Note</b> any Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest noted</p>	Chair
2.	Verbal	<p><b>APOLOGIES</b></p> <p>To <b>Note</b> any apologies for absence</p> <p>The Clerk noted apologies from Archie Lasseter</p>	Chair
3.	Minutes	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 28<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To <b>Approve</b> minutes as a correct record</li> <li>▪ To <b>Approve</b> non-confidential minutes for website publication</li> </ul> <p>All minutes were confirmed as correct and <b>AGREED</b> and thanks were expressed to Nadine</p>	Chair

		Hill for acting as Clerk to Governors in the absence of Tracey Richards.  No further matters arising.	
4.	Verbal	<b>NEW BUILD UPDATE</b>  Chair of Governors expressed that sadly there was no update on the new build due to government changes. Meetings with the Dfe had been postponed awaiting a further update.	Chair
5	Paper	<b>PRINCIPALS REPORT</b>  <b>The Principal report had been circulated prior to the meeting</b>  It had been a successful term. The open events were successfully attended with potential students for September 2025. The Open event had attracted approximately 400 visitors and a further evening event took place which attracted a further 100.  A celebration of the Annual Awards took place; 68 awards were presented. First round of Year 11 mocks had taken place Staff Training days had been centered on “checking for understanding” linking to Ofsted feedback. A deep dive into ‘checking for understanding ‘was completed and 85% of students shown improvement. Thank you to staff who contributed to a successful Christmas concert at Stinsford parish Church, and thanks to David Humphreys who organised an employability day with consisted of twelve employers exhibiting and engaging with students. A residential visit to Berlin had taken place for 42 students which had been a success.  One of the targeted areas for improvement is Maths. A new Head of Maths will be starting 01 January 2025 and an additional Maths teacher who brings a wealth of skills. The new timetable in January will enable year 11 to be split between 4 groups with more intervention in readiness for GCSE.  Q – A Governor asked whether a survey took place on the Open Events / Day to identify where students were coming from and identify interests? A – The school has previously carried out paper surveys and most recently set up a QR code to track the information, however people did not engage with this.  Q – A Governor stated that the Open Day event may need to be reviewed. A – The Director of specialism stated that yes plans for the day will be reviewed to reflect the customers and the school needs.  All governors expressed that any new students need to be interested in the specialism of the school. It is a specialism school for Land and environmental sciences.  The Principal discussed the plan to review the curriculum with a drive to recruit students due to the falling numbers countywide.  The Chair of Governors will be part of the curriculum review and plans of change.	Chair

	<p>The Director of Specialism that through Gatsby benchmarking the school is able to identify gaps which can enhance career programs.</p> <p><b>School Improvement Priorities</b></p> <p>Staffing &amp; Student recruitment and retentions remains a high priority. Exam results remain a concern. The curriculum review will be in readiness for September 2025.</p> <p><b>Attendance</b></p> <p>Attendance has shown an improvement to date. The Assistant Principal responsible for attendance has worked alongside parent / carers to identify and address problem areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authorised absences are at 6.7%, last year was 10.3%, national average 4.5%</li> <li>• Unauthorised absence is 2.50% lower than national 3.0%</li> <li>• Persistent Absence is 28.3%, last year 40.6%, national average being 21%</li> </ul> <p>Assistant Principal is working alongside the LA attending meetings and penalty notices are now taking place.</p> <p><b>SEN</b></p> <p>Current SEN register has 52%, national average being 16% EHCP's are 11%, national average being 4%.</p> <p><b>Students on Roll</b></p> <p>Numbers are lower than last year, current 325, last year 343</p> <p><b>Q – A governor stated that the chart shows a reduction in 11 year olds A - September 2024 showed the biggest decrease over the county in the last decade, this remains stable over the next few years with a further drop in 2028.</b></p> <p>The principal explained that it is important for the school to have adequate first choice numbers for admissions in September. That is why the marketing strategy is so important and that he had visited primary school, rebranded the school website. Admission numbers for September 2025 at present shows 102 applications for place 1 and 2.</p> <p>Analysing the students leaving mid-year has shown as follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 due to non-school attendance</li> <li>• 3 due to transport</li> <li>• 3 due to dissatisfied provision</li> <li>• 3 other</li> </ul> <p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>153 my concerns were logged on the KMC site 54 on the Poundbury site</p> <p>Q – A governor asked how this compares to other schools?</p>	
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		A – Unable to make a comparison to other school due to the confidentiality of the programme.	
6.	Paper	<p><b>FINANCE &amp; AUDIT COMMITTEE</b></p> <p>Chair of Finance and Audit Committee updated the board on the outcomes of the External Audit for 2023/24 which had been completed.</p> <p>The audit had been a completed and hard process and expressed thanks to Tracey Richards on a successful outcome of the audit.</p> <p>The audit had showed a revenue surplus of £200k. Unrestricted funds had shown a deficit in transport and catering. Governors need to be aware of this as it is charity funding. This will need to be monitored.</p> <p>The school was shown as a going concern due to the future joining of the MAT. The school is in good financial health.</p> <p>The usual checks on internal controls and compliance were completed and any recommendations shown for best practice.</p> <p>No concerns were to be brought to the board and the committee recommended to <b>AGREE</b> the audit.</p>	Chair
7.	Paper	<p><b>SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER UPDATE</b></p> <p><b>A report had been circulated prior to the meeting</b></p> <p><b>Staffing</b></p> <p>Resignations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal</li> <li>• Head of Maths</li> <li>• Senco</li> <li>• Science Teacher Part time</li> </ul> <p>Starters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Maths – Mike Booth, joining from Glenmoor &amp; Winton Academy</li> <li>• Science Teacher – Joanna Phipps, joining from The Cornerstone Acadmey</li> <li>• Maths Teacher – Steve Osborn joining from All Saints.</li> </ul> <p>Vacancies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Principal – Inclusion Lead/SENCO</li> <li>• Principal</li> </ul> <p><b>Teachers Pay and Support Pay</b></p> <p>Pay rises had been given to Teaching staff of 5 % and support staff a minimum of £1,950 per person.</p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b></p>	

		<p>Fire drills on the KMC had taken place on 16/12/2025 and on Poundbury site at the end of term.</p> <p>A Health &amp; Safety incident had been reported to RIDDOR.</p> <p>Autumn School Census had been completed and return to the Dfe within the timescales.</p>	
8	Verbal	<p><b>SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM</b></p> <p>The Senior Leadership team joined the meeting at 5.30pm.</p>	
9	Verbal	<p><b>THANKS TO THE PRINCIPAL</b></p> <p>Governors acknowledged the hard work and commitment Paul Green had given to Dorset Studio School over the years as Deputy Principal and Principal. He had successfully moved the school forward and driven the school through change. Huge thanks for the recent Ofsted Inspection. The governors wished him luck in his future.</p>	
		<p>Meeting ended at 6.00pm</p> <p>Next Meeting 13/02/2025</p>	