

Dorset Studio School
Meeting of the Full Board of Governors
THURSDAY 3rd July 2025,
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 (Chair of Governors); Mark Gibbens (Vice Chair); Archie Lasseter (Governor); Chris Biggs (Parent Governor); Nicholas Spearing (Co-opted Governor); Wayne Clarke (Co-opted Governor); Michael Chitty (Co-opted Governor); David Humphreys (Staff Governor); Jason Malone (Principal)
In attendance:	Andy Daw, Mark Gibbens, Nicholas Spearing, Michael Chitty, Jason Malone, Tracey Richards (Clerk), David Humphreys (Staff Governor), Annetta Minard (Exec Principal)

Item		Detail	
1.	Verbal	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations to declare	Chair
2.	Verbal	APOLOGIES Apologies were given from Wayne Clarke.	Chair
3.	Minutes	MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 25th April 2025 Minutes were Approved as a correct record	Chair
4.	Minutes	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES There were no matters	Chair

5	Verbal	<p>AUDIT & FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE</p> <p>The Chair summarized the meeting advising on additional grants which have contributed towards additional costs. The in year budget is estimated to be in a surplus of £39k at this time, however this does not include the expenditure from the reserve pot. The budget for 2025/26 has been agreed with a surplus of £7k. The committee felt this was all in line and achievable. However there is a concern if numbers do not increase over the next 12 – 24 months.</p> <p>Staffing and KPI were discussed. The area of concern is the ongoing challenges regarding the increase of student transport. Families with hardship not being able to make the payments at present are a concern of which needs to be monitored.</p> <p>All Governors AGREED to adopt the 2025/26 Budget.</p> <p>Business Manager was tasked to investigate moving of reserves into the savings account.</p>	Chair of Audit & Finance
6	Paper	<p>PRINCIPALS REPORT / UPDATE</p> <p>The full report was circulated to governors prior to the meeting</p> <p>Strategy Day</p> <p>The school culture and skills are based on the five pillars which were agreed at the governors' strategy day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialism – the heart of everything the school does • Curriculum – an inspiring curriculum • Thrive – all students to thrive, making progress • Experience – knowledge and skills required for employment • Character – develop character to ensure students are safe, respectful and responsible <p>School Vision and Specialism</p> <p>The Principal emphasized the importance and commitment to the land and environment specialism.</p> <p>It was agreed that the specialism must be integrated across the entire curriculum. Meaning that it is non-negotiable, that all students will participate in the land-based qualifications whether level 2 or level 1.</p> <p>Strategic priorities</p> <p>Leaders and governors to continue to raise the school profile nationally.</p> <p>Recruitment drive of student intake with a focus on the land and environment being the interest.</p>	Principal

		<p>With regards to the coming results to focus on student progress moving forward over attainment.</p> <p>Curriculum Development</p> <p>From September 2025 GCSE History will be introduced to the 2 pathways in year 10. At this time the school will not introduce Natural History as a qualification due to it being a new subject and there is not a great deal of information around regarding this. However, will continue to explore it in the future.</p> <p>Also in Key stage 3 the introduction to STEM as a subject which will combine land-based and mathematical applications.</p> <p>The subject Personal Development will be incorporating outdoor skills and experimental learning.</p> <p>Practical Learning Principles</p> <p>The principal emphasized the requirement of practical application alongside theoretical knowledge. Using field work and outdoor experiences as learning methodologies. Developing students' skills relevant to the land and environment sectors.</p> <p>Curriculum Design Objectives</p> <p>To ensure that the specialism is "woven into the fabric" of all educational experiences. Students are to be prepared for future careers in the land based industries.</p> <p>Governors endorsed the holistic approach to curriculum design and the specialism integration.</p> <p>Transition Day</p> <p>Students are to be provided with a bag containing a Dorset studio school water bottle, leaflets, plant pot with soil and seeds to grow. The instruction of let's see some growth. For them to plant over the summer to discuss on return to school.</p> <p>AI</p> <p>The school is starting to introduce AI. Paul Chapman, Assistant Principal will be leading on this moving forward.</p> <p>Staffing</p> <p>Roles for 2025/26 within the structure were discussed, ensuring adequate</p>	
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		<p>leadership and responsibilities to drive the curriculum changes. Looking to increase the technicians in support of the specialism.</p> <p>Governors expressed their Thanks o the principal in what had been achived over the last few months.</p> <p>SEMH</p> <p>Discussions with the Local Authority regarding SEMH funding for students. The local authority is looking at projects within local schools where they renovate a building to the requirements for a SEMH need, this includes staffing. For the school it would mean that students from DSS would be able to access it along with some from other students within the area. This would bring further funding. Governors were happy for the school to continue exploring this.</p> <p>The Principal invited governors to attend the two inset training days in September for when staff return for the next academic year.</p>	
7.	Paper	<p>RATIFICATION OF POLICIES</p> <p>The following Policies were distributed prior to the meeting:</p> <p>Complaints Policy discussed and will be finalised for the next governors meeting along with a new SAR policy and Freedom of Information. Ths will ensure there is structure for all parties to follow. Principal requested governors to review these in readiness for adopt ACTION</p>	Principa l
8	Verbal	<p>NEW BUILD / MAT UPDATE / STRATEGY DAY</p> <p>An outline of the strategy day was presented verbally following the 9th May.</p> <p>An online meeting recently took place online with Lloyd Hatton MP, to discuss an update on the possibility of a new build. Unfortunately, at this time there is nothing to update. It was clear that the schools vision going forward with clear agreement regarding the specialism of the school, students having a strong interest in the land and environment.</p> <p>All governors expressed that they were happy with the key priorities. by the Principal.</p>	Dr Minard

9	AOB	<p>Social Media</p> <p>The Chair asked governors that the strategy for social media going forward must be with the specialism being the drive. SLT and governors will work with external marketing team to drive this going forward.</p> <p>GDPR guidelines with regards to students would need to be followed . All staff will follow policies and procedures.</p> <p>September 2025 INSET</p> <p>The principal invited all governors to attend on the 1st Governors to meet with staff.</p> <p>Meeting ended 6.00pm.</p>	
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