Dorset Studio School

Meeting of the Full Board of Governors
THURSDAY 7th MAY 2026 at 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 (Chairman); Mark Gibbens (Vice Chairman); Chris Biggs (Co-opted Governor); Nicholas Spearing (Co-opted Governor); Michael Chitty (Co-opted Governor); Wayne Clarke (Co-opted Governor); David Humphreys (Staff Governor); Christine Thresher (Parent Governor); Jason Giladjian (Parent Governor); Jason Malone (Principal) & Annetta Minard (Associate Governor).
In attendance:	Emma Evans (Clerk), Judith Rutherford (NGA Consultant)

Item		Detail	
1.	Verbal	Chair welcomed all and introductions. Judith introduction – update re review. Report due shortly, obs of FGB one last item. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** • To **Note** any Declarations of Interest • None.	Chair
2.	Verbal	**APOLOGIES** • To **Note** any apologies for absence • Apologies were received from Wayne Clarke, Chris Biggs would arrive late and Annetta would arrive to present Item No. 6.	Chair
3..	Minutes	**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26th FEBRUARY 2026** • To **Approve** minutes as a correct record • To **Approve** non confidential minutes for website publication • Typos as noted on GVO. • Point No. 3 CHANGE - 58 % English 4 plus. Further to amendments noted the Minutes were **AGREED.**	Chair
4.	Minutes	**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES** • To **Consider** any matters arising from the minutes • Item No. 7 – Sub-Group Establishment - **ACTION –** Governors to contact the Clerk to express interest in membership to the sub-groups.	Chair

		• No emails had been received by the Clerk. • Policies - Uploaded to GVO. • Remove comment re Christine and marketing. • Marketing meetings – not really governance issue. Marketing affects attendance and how viewed in community. All meetings minuted by AI. • The Principal provides data re: marketing. Perhaps this could be sent to all governors. The marketing is addressing preconceived opinions in the community and is stretching both east and west throughout Dorset. • Marketing is seen as good value for attracting more pupils. **Governor Question –** How do we measure success of marketing e.g. is a question asked at Open Days "How did you hear about us?" **Response –** The Principal confirmed he would speak with reception staff regarding asking new admissions/open day attendees how they heard about the school. **Governor Question –** It was further asked whether there is tangible data e.g. a certain about of hits on FB etc? **Response –** The Principal confirmed he would speak with reception staff regarding asking new admissions/open day attendees how they heard about the school. Comparison with last year data/ extra pupils on seats to see the financial benefit. It was noted that direction is crucial and laying out expectations at the outset to keep marketing on task, e.g. targeted marketing is triggered by filling a lower admission year however the marketing data can be lagged and therefore difficult to know when to alter direction.	
5.	Verbal	**AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** • To **Receive** an update following meeting held on 16th April 2026 • The draft Minutes had been uploaded to GVO. • Deposit account required and steps were being taken to open account. • Year to date £60K over budget due to SEND, supply and staffing pressures. Absence rates were noted (high rate of staff absence). • New Finance Officer, Bob Pride, had been appointed and commenced role. • Risk Register – priority risk continued to be the relationship with CC. Transport issue. Constant review on what might be required and potential strategies. • Current budget outcome small surplus £5K The Principal confirmed that he had met with representatives from Coastland College to review current transport arrangements and associated costs. It was noted that there are currently 11 transport routes, of which 9 are used by Dorset Studio School pupils. **Governor Question** At the Audit and Finance Committee meeting, were the financial forecasts looking further ahead? **Response** The Principal confirmed that the Business Manager was continuing to work with the DfE on budget planning and potential funding support associated with maintaining the Poundbury site. Budget forecasts include anticipated pay awards and are based on current pupil number projections. Governors were advised that some funding streams are received annually rather than monthly and that a number of costs remain subject to change as circumstances develop.	Chair of A&F Committee

		An update was also provided on the new school project, with a second stakeholder engagement meeting anticipated before the expected completion of the new building in July 2028.	
6.	Paper	**BUILDING AND COMMUNICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE** Annetta joined the meeting at 4.35 p.m. Annetta shared slides and presented the proposed internal arrangements for the new build. **ACTION** – Provide access to GVO to Annetta. EE/TR **Governor Questions –** Questions were raised regarding the internal set up, room sizes and finances. **Response –** Annetta made note regarding whether there would be enough natural light on back wall for the Art room. Chris Biggs arrived at 4.55 p.m. **ACTION** - Put plans on GVO. The Chairman will forward to the Clerk to upload. **ACTION** - Any questions to be forwarded to Annetta to be raised at the meeting on 5th June. It was noted that the final design should be able to view at the FGB on 2nd July. • To **Agree** Terms of Reference for Sub-committee The ToR was tabled. The Chairman ran through the purpose, membership and delegated powers. It was noted that the ToR state that Mark, Annetta and Jason are attending meetings and representing Governors. **ACTION** - folder to be created or more accessible on GVO. The Sub-committee will report to FGB. Service level agreements with CC. • To **Confirm** Sub-committee Membership Andy, Mark, Anetta, Jason, Tracey. **ACTION** – The Clerk to format ToR as per the Curriculum and Specialism (draft) • To **Receive** an update on recent meetings **ACTION** – Following design meetings Jason will pass to the Clerk to upload to GVO. The Terms of Reference were **AGREED**. Annetta left at 5.35 p.m.	Chair
7.	Paper	**CURRICULUM AND SPECIALISM SUB-COMMITTEE** • To **Agree** Terms of Reference for Sub-committee It was noted the Sub-committee would have no specific delegated powers. It was anticipated that the time for FGB would be freed up.	

		ACTION – Email to check membership. • To **Confirm** Sub-committee Membership Jason - Chair of Group – Michael and Christine (lead governor for inclusion). • To **Receive** an update on recent meetings An update to be provided to FGB.	
8.	Verbal	**DfE UPDATE** • To **Receive** an update following meeting with Coastland College An update was received following discussions with Coastland College and the Department for Education regarding the future relationship between the two organisations and the development of the new school. It was noted that Coastland College had approved the land sale to the DfE, subject to Dorset Studio School continuing to operate as a school. It was noted that Coastland College's strategic plans include strengthening collaboration with Dorset Studio School through a series of joint working groups with equal representation from both organisations. Draft Terms of Reference are awaited and will help clarify expectations and responsibilities. The importance of developing a positive and constructive relationship between the two organisations was emphasised, including maximising specialist opportunities for pupils and monitoring student destinations to inform future planning. **Governor comment** It may be beneficial to avoid unnecessary duplication of curriculum provision between DSS and CC.	Chair
9.	Verbal	**OFSTED INSPECTION FRAMEWORK** • To **Receive** an update regarding the new Ofsted Framework The Chairman had received a presentation by Paul Williams and a further update, or a speaker if available, would be invited to the next meeting. Attention was drawn to Governance (two pages) Judgements are changing with a different approach to the inspection. **ACTION** – document to be uploaded to GVO.	Chair
10.	Verbal	**GOVERNOR TRAINING** • To **Confirm** training requirements and completion Training – email from Paul Chapman re Safeguarding from Key. NGA – new Induction training for new governors. **ACTION –** The Clerk to contact Paul Chapman re Safeguarding training from Key.	Chair

11.	Verbal	**POLICIES** • To **Note** the following policies: recently uploaded to GVO for comment/amendments: • Admissions Policy • Attendance Policy • Children Missing from Education Policy • Whistleblowing Policy	Chair/ Principal
12.	Paper	**PRINCIPALS REPORT** • To **Receive** the Principal's Report to include the following: • Deep Dives completed and planned • SEND • SLT Update See Report Headlines were provided by the Principal which included: There had been positive progress reflected in the mock examination data and the significant work undertaken to improve attendance, including home visits and the use of satellite centres to support pupils experiencing difficulties attending school. It was noted that approximately 33% of pupils are identified as having SEND, with 11% having an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). **Governor Question** The March mock results indicate weaker performance in Geography and Science. What actions are being taken to address this? **Response** The Principal advised that subject leaders are working with teaching staff to ensure curriculum delivery is closely aligned to examination requirements. It was also noted that arrangements for externally printing examination papers are being reviewed following issues experienced by some pupils during assessments. Governors were advised that policies are being reviewed and updated and will be uploaded to GVO for governor review and approval. An update was also provided on an ongoing grievance investigation. The Principal highlighted ongoing work to raise the profile of the school, celebrate pupil achievements and prepare for the new Ofsted framework. Governors were informed that additional SEND analysis and support materials would be shared at a future meeting. An update was provided on the School Improvement Plan, which is structured around four strategic priorities, and discussed arrangements for monitoring progress against the plan. **Governor Question** How are staff engaged with the School Improvement Plan and its objectives? **Response** The Principal advised that leaders have responsibility for delivering specific actions within the plan and that regular review arrangements are in place. Consideration is also being given to dedicated strategy session to support staff/governor engagement.	Principal

		A discussion was held around SEND provision and the challenges associated with meeting a wide range of needs within the classroom. **Governor Question** How are teachers supported to adapt learning effectively for pupils with SEND? **Response** The Principal acknowledged the challenge of meeting diverse needs and advised that further work is being undertaken to strengthen consistency in adaptive teaching and classroom practice. It was noted that 163 pupils are currently recorded on the SEND register. **Governor Question** Do all pupils with EHCPs receive one-to-one support? **Response:** The Principal confirmed that one-to-one support is provided where specified within a pupil's EHCP, although not all pupils with EHCPs require this level of provision. **Governor Question** Why are EHCP numbers increasing and has the school experienced an influx of pupils with additional needs? **Response** The Principal advised that the increase reflects national trends, with EHCP numbers continuing to rise significantly. The school's pupil profile is broadly consistent with local and national patterns. A discussion was held around attendance trends and the importance of identifying patterns and responding to emerging concerns at an early stage. **ACTION -** Principal to provide governors with an anonymised example of an EHCP and associated class support plan at the next Full Governing Body meeting. The Climate Action Plan – would be deferred to a future meeting. Two staff members had been attending meetings relating to this.	
13.	Verbal	**COMPLAINTS AND EXCLUSIONS** • To **Receive** a report regarding actions taken following complaints and exclusions It was noted that the Exclusion figures were reported on the back of the document. The school was using every strategy possible to provide the appropriate next steps for each student.	Principal
14.	Verbal	**ANY OTHER BUSINESS FOR REPORT** • To **Consider** Any Other Business for report only **Governor Question** Is a pupil's interest in land-based studies considered as part of the admissions process? **Response** The Principal confirmed that the school is required to follow its published admissions arrangements and statutory admissions guidance.	Chair

15.	Verbal	**2025/26 DATES** • To **Note** dates for 2025/26 meetings: **Full Governing Body** • Thursday 7th May 2026 at 4.00 pm • Thursday 2nd July 2026 at 4.00pm **Audit & Finance Committee** • Tuesday 16th June 2026 at 3.00 pm Meeting closed at 6.45 p.m.	Chair