

**Meeting of Full Governing Board  
10<sup>th</sup> October 2022  
4.30pm in School Library**

**MINUTES**

<b>Governors Present:</b>	Mick Baker, Lara Coleman, Jane Dickson, Matt Hillier, Dick Knight, Millie McDevitt, Catherine Packham, Bronagh Shevlin, Bridget Taylor (Chair)
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Teresa Dee (Clerk)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Andrea Cumming, Roshan Dias-Jayasinghe,

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
	<b>Pre meeting/Presentation - Data Training for Governors</b> Governors received training on student progress and attainment data with reference to the school's current data based on FFT estimates. The school currently are achieving in line with FFT5.	
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>a) <b>Welcome</b> The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome.</p> <p>b) <b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies for absence from Philip Brown, Emma Grose, and Hiba Nour.</p> <p>c) <b>Declarations of Interest</b> There were no declarations relating to items on the agenda.</p> <p><b>ACTION - Governors were reminded to complete and submit their annual declaration of interest forms to the clerk.</b></p>	<b>All govs</b>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Last Meeting Dated 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b></p> <p>a) <b>Approval of Minutes</b> The Full Governing Board reviewed and approved five pages of minutes from the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September. The Chair signed the minutes as confirmation of their accuracy.</p> <p>b) <b>Matters Arising Not Included Elsewhere on Agenda</b> Parental Leave - correspondence had been received by some governors from a staff member regards parental leave. The Chair advised that she respond.</p>	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Chair's Update</b></p> <p>The Chair provided a verbal update on business activities carried out on behalf of the board and current issues and priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those governors that had stepped up and taken on new responsibilities were thanked for their contribution. More support was required to share out the workload as there were pressures on the Chair from several processed including a collective dispute, a complaint, a whistleblowing investigation, and staff panels. Governors queried</li> </ul>	

	<p>whether the proposal to reduce the board to twelve members should be put on hold whilst the current formal processes were worked through.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p><b>Head's Report /Update</b> The Headteacher presented his written report to governors highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current year 11 group had an attainment 8 target between 5.5 and 5.9 with likely outcomes to be similar to the 2021-22 cohort. For 2023-24 cohort a dip was expected that group had a larger percentage of boys as well as being the group most affected by covid lockdowns.</li> <li>• The student headcount was slight below the 330 pupil admission numbers (PAN) in year 7 despite the school having been allocated above PAN. Spaces were only removed once a place had been turned down, sometime very close to the start of the academic year.</li> <li>• New wall wraps and final aspects of summer building works had been completed. Both science lab and toilet works had been signed off.</li> <li>• The next area for focus was the front reception which was looking dated and could do with an upgrade on security. This would be funded by the basic needs funding.</li> <li>• Temporary vacancy in maths to be filled with supply until January.</li> <li>• Adverts out for maternity cover in languages and science technician support.</li> <li>• Student attendance was a focus for the government, with updated guidance received which included a requirement to authorise sickness related absence. There was an increase in requests for holidays related absence which could not be authorised. Fines were implemented once 10 sessions had been missed</li> <li>• Safeguarding training lead governor had visited to oversee the single central register, the latest data for incident recording was included within the document pack. Race/ethnicity was the highest recorded prejudice incident, mostly related to a specific year group. Collaborative work and discussions ongoing with students and families.</li> </ul> <p><u>Comments and questions from governors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long was left on the current PFI contract?</li> <li>• The automated email for student absence was a bit insensitive and could be upsetting for some families, how could this be mitigated?</li> <li>• Was there a way of looking at the standard messaging when dealing with parents of children with long term medical conditions who were missing a lot of school?</li> <li>• What was the nature of the recorded SEN related incident, does this type of incident get the same scrutiny as racism?</li> <li>• Could more be said about the recorded harmful sexual behaviours against staff?</li> <li>• The open evening had gone very well.</li> <li>• What was the current year 6 looking like, was it likely that there would be over subscription for paces again?</li> </ul> <p><u>Response to governor comment and questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was five years left on the current PFI contract, an end of contract survey would be completed to assess the current buildings condition. The cost of the PFI contract to the school increased annually as an inflationary factor had been included within the original contract.</li> <li>• Tutor phone calls to parents about student absence help to soften the messaging from standard letters.</li> <li>• The school leaders were open to having a look at the standard absence messaging to see what changes could be made particularly for those children with long term conditions.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There had been two reported SEN incidents reported by staff working with the children.</li> <li>• There had been student comments made in front of a young female member of staff recorded under the harmful sexual behaviour incidents.</li> <li>• Feedback following the open evening had been positive, more students had been involved with tours than previously.</li> <li>• It was difficult to predict student numbers coming into year 7, according to data all students within catchment should get a space in either Dorothy Stringer or Varndean schools, however the Local Authority oversee all admissions with April being the offer day.</li> </ul>	
5	<p><b>Business Group Report</b></p> <p>The Chair of the Business Group provided an update on business conducted at its recent meeting, notes from the meeting had been included withing the documents circulated to governors. There were two issues putting pressure on the school budget being staff salary increases, rising energy costs. The money that had been set aside for school improvement would likely be needed to cover the unexpected cost as outlined. Another area of focus for the group was the cost of living and impact on staff members. The next group meeting would have a health and safety focus looking at risk assessment processes.</p> <p>The Business Manager picked up on the points outlined providing some further detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initial estimate for staff pay awards had been around £230k with current estimates nearer £410K.</li> <li>• There had been some long-term absences covered by support staff, additionally finders' fees were having to be paid for appointing staff for the first time as recruitment became more challenging.</li> <li>• There had been a slight increase in energy costs, the real impact would be the following year when the fixed price deal expired. Oil price was fluctuating with the school being charged on the day of ordering the price for that day.</li> <li>• The swimming pool as a high energy use facility would be at risk with rising prices, efforts would be needed to ensure the facility was well used and covering costs.</li> </ul> <p><u>Governor comment and questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was the estimate for energy use in the schedule provided a revised estimate?</li> <li>• The school were facing a 100% increase in energy costs over two years, that would need to be monitored closely. A decision regarding opening the pool may be needed if revenue did not cover costs.</li> <li>• There was a mandatory requirement from the football foundation to spend the sink fund on the pitch.</li> <li>• Should the pitch maintenance contingency be ring fenced?</li> <li>• Some governing boards had mandated their headteacher to out up banners outside of the school highlighting the challenge over school budgets, was this something to consider?</li> <li>• The cost of living for staff members was something that had been discussed at business group, governors should keep this is mind.</li> </ul> <p><u>Response to governor comment and questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised estimates had been received for energy costs for future years and included within the schedule.</li> <li>• The risks going forward were energy and unfunded pay awards in future years. The ATP sink fund was there as a buffer but maintenance would be needed soon on the pitch to keep it to required standards.</li> <li>• To keep the pitch on the FA register and as part of the conditions of the grant the condition of the pitch surface needed to be maintained. The required amount in contingency for pitch maintenance had initially been £125k increasing to £200k, though actual potential cost was unknown.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was expected that the spend on the pitch maintenance would be later than originally planned, providing some flexibility.</li> <li>• Drafting of a policy to support staff members in financial hardship was being looked at under advice from HR and finance teams.</li> </ul> <p>There was a question posed to governors about whether they wished to enter active membership of the “save our schools” campaign. A discussion followed with some comment about not being up to date with the campaign and the action taken by the local authority and headteachers in attempting to clarify funding streams to support schools through the current difficulties.</p> <p>5.41pm - Millie McDevitt left the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair advised governors that the catering consultation had been put on hold following a collective dispute from the unions, the money that was hoped to be saved from the restructure would therefore not be realised. There had been an additional a collective dispute raised by GMB union about the school’s relationship with them.</p> <p><b>a) Budget Monitoring Report</b> The budget monitoring report for August 2022 had been included within the meeting pack of documents. This had been scrutinised by the business group at its meeting.</p> <p><b>b) Terms of Reference</b> The terms of reference for the group had been included within the meeting pack with a suggested slight amendment.</p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Board approved the business group terms of reference as presented.</b></p>	
6	<p><b>Other Reports</b> None</p>	
7	<p><b>Policies and Other Documents for Approval</b> Several policies were presented for approval with updates marked in yellow.</p> <p><b>a) Non-Examined Assessment Policy</b> There was comment from the SEND link governor about the wording around assistance required for children with SEN to access assessments being a bit vague. Some clarity on who was responsible for access for SEN children suggested.</p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Board approved the non-examined assessment policy subject to the amendments suggested being incorporated within the policy. Approval level to be lead member of SLT.</b></p> <p><b>b) Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy</b> There were comments around the complexity of the policy, the number of child protection agencies and types of issues, a duplication on page 44 and the trauma informed approach within the ethos section being isolated to that point and not carried through as a theme in the policy. There was mention of racism as one of the main sources of trauma not being more specifically detailed or a requirement for mandatory training.</p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Board approved the child protection policy/safeguarding policy subject to suggested changes being made excluding the requirement for mandatory training.</b></p>	

	<p>c) <b>Data Protection Policy</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Board approved the data protection policy as presented.</b></p> <p>d) <b>Relationship &amp; Sex Education Policy</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Board approved the relationship and sex education policy as presented.</b></p> <p>e) <b>Early Careers Teachers Policy</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Board approved the early careers teacher’s policy as presented.</b></p> <p>f) <b>Policy Schedule - Approve Delegations and Frequency</b> Governors received a schedule of statutory policies and documents with proposed approving bodies and frequency of review marked in red. It was noted that non statutory polices would be added to the schedule as they came before the board. It was suggested that the schedule should be noted that if there were any significant changes to legislation the related policy would be updated without delaying until the next due review date.</p> <p><b>ACTION - Governors to individually go through the schedule of policies and raise any queries regards proposed delegations and frequency of review.</b></p>	<b>All Govs</b>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Governance</b></p> <p>a) <b>Election of Vice Chair of Governors</b> There had been no nominations for Vice Chair of Governors. The previous holder of the position would be stepping down as a governor in January 2023. There was agreement to advertise for a Vice Chair of Governors.</p> <p>b) <b>Instrument of Government - Draft for approval</b> Governors put a pause on approving the revised instrument of government. It was noted that Jane Dickson’s term of office would be expiring shortly and that it was her last meeting. She was thanked for her contribution over the past four years. Her replacement of the headteacher review panel was confirmed as Millie McDevitt. Other changes to governor responsibilities were confirmed, Catherine Packham would take on lead for curriculum and Philip Brown would take the lead for safeguarding and PFI.</p> <p><b>ACTION - Nominations Panel to revisit the board structure and membership and make recommendations at the next meeting. The panel were Mick Baker, Matt Hillier, Millie McDevitt, and Bronagh Shevlin with Teresa Dee as a nonvoting member.</b></p>	
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>a) <b>Curriculum Learning Walks</b> Governors had been asked to put themselves forward for the curriculum learning walks, the schedule of visits had been shared.</p>	

	<p>Meeting ended at 6.34pm Date of next meeting - 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022</p>	
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Minutes Accepted

Signature .....

Date .....