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The Vineyard School Governing Board

Friars Stile Road, Richmond TW10 6NE

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Minutes of Resources Committee virtual meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020 via Zoom

**Governors** Melanie Bywell (MB) Chair  
**Present:** Firas Ali (FA)  
James Lane (JL)  
Graham Stewart (GS)  
Ruth Whymark (RW) Head Teacher  
Alice McArdle (AMcA)

**In Attendance:** Richard Rosewell (Associate Member) (RR)  
Anna Mantle (Clerk)

**Absent:** None

Meeting started at 9.05am

Item	Action
1. <b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> None. All governors present. The meeting was quorate throughout.	
2. <b><u>Governors' Declaration of Interests</u></b> No direct or indirect pecuniary interests were declared.	
3. <b><u>Terms of reference and scheme of delegation</u></b> Terms of reference were agreed.  Extra detail had been added to the scheme of delegation with specific reference to the financial oversight duties that the committee has. More detail was requested by governors to review these additions. Governors agreed to review and feedback over email for final review and sign off at the next Resources Committee meeting. Feedback to be sent to MB and SS via email.	All  Clerk add to agenda
4. <b><u>Minutes from last meeting and matters arising</u></b> Governors agreed that the minutes from the last meeting (9 June 2020) are a true and accurate record. Minutes to be signed in hard copy at the next available opportunity. Electronic version filed online.  Governors also agreed that the minutes from the working group (3 July 2020) to agree the award of the school's cleaning contract are a true and accurate record. Minutes filed electronically.	

	<p>There was a brief discussion about the school's satisfaction with the new cleaning contractors. SS explained that their standards are high and they also have regular visits from the area manager.</p>	
5.	<p><b><u>Budget monitoring</u></b></p> <p>SS provided governors with highlights from the budget monitoring information circulated ahead of the meeting.</p> <p>There is a predicted budget deficit of £16K for this year, therefore the projected end of year carry forward is £112K.</p> <p>SS stated that this looks healthy, however next year's budget will be tight and the school needs to find £50K savings to balance next year's budget.</p> <p><b>Governors asked about the reduction in income from EHCPs.</b> SS explained that children who were in receipt of higher funding had left and the remaining children did not receive the same level of funding.</p> <p><b>Governors asked about the absence of supply teacher costs.</b> RW explained the staffing strategy. The school employs two Schools Direct trainee teachers who work with Directors of Learning (DoL) as Associate Teachers. It has been a successful programme in past years, resulting in the development of excellent teaching staff, and enables the school to cover absence because the Associate Teacher can replace the DoL in their class, while the DoL covers absence elsewhere. RW also explained that the staggered school day, with Wednesday afternoon set aside for PPA, means that the school's higher level teaching assistants are in class more (rather than providing cover for PPA throughout the week), and they are able to assist with covering absence. One of the DoLs is also out of class to cover interventions and provides absence cover as well. This results in higher quality teaching in class and no supply teacher costs.</p> <p>FA shared a website (Zeneducate.com) – a social enterprise for the provision of supply teachers – for information.</p> <p><b>Governors asked about staff absences.</b> RW said they would prepare a report for the next meeting, including an update on long term sickness absences. There have been absences due to the lack of tests available, but no one has tested positive.</p> <p><b>Governors asked whether the school is confident of its staffing strategy since Covid-19 infection rates are high in Richmond.</b> RW said that she had access to a website to check the area around the school and it showed rates were lower in their area, compared to the rest of Richmond. However she stated she is not complacent. There is a robust plan to provide remote education even if teachers are not in school so that they can work remotely in the short term, while self isolating. RW explained that they are using Wednesday PPA sessions to plan in advance. Children currently isolating as a result of a Koosa Kids (wraparound care provider) employee testing positive are receiving access to slides voiced over by the teacher and more guided learning. She stated that it is harder to manage remote learning when some children are in school and some are at home. RW explained that they are preparing a plan for the event of having to send whole bubbles home.</p> <p><b>Governors asked about how the news of the positive test of a Koosa Kids' employee had been received.</b> RW explained that there had been some confusion regarding the requirement for the children to self isolate for 14 days. She had referred to Public Health England and clarified the situation with all involved. She was liaising directly with a small number of families anxious about this development.</p> <p>Governors fed back positively about the speed and clarity of the school's response.</p>	

	<p>RW thanked them and explained it is a team effort.</p> <p>Discussion returned to the budget. SS explained that information about the new CFR categories for funding and grants was included below the summary spreadsheet.</p> <p>She explained that the catch up funding had been estimated.</p> <p>SS highlighted that budgeting for school trips and school voluntary contributions was reduced, and lettings income was reduced. However, lettings are likely to pick up soon with Koosa Kids running holiday clubs and a drama club likely to start at weekends.</p>	
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6.	<p><b><u>2020-21 budget</u></b> There was a discussion about the reduction in income due to the number of pupils on roll being down by 25 on census day. Reception and Y1 are over subscribed. The vacancies are mostly in Years 2,3 and 4. RW confirmed that the school is in constant conversation with AfC Admissions to fill the spaces.</p> <p><b>Governors commented that the bottom line had improved by £150K and asked how this had happened.</b> SS explained that she had projected 5% pay rise for support staff, however the rise had actually been 2.75%. The curriculum line is also underspent by £24K.</p> <p>There was discussion about the projected deficit which were resolved when it was discovered that there was a typo on the budget notes sheet which requires updating. Notes refer to 2021-22.</p>	
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10am Firas Ali leaves

6.	<p><b><u>Budget continued</u></b> Staff Absence Scheme information included as paper for this meeting. SS commented that she had left this in the budget for 20-21, but its validity should be discussed at a later meeting to decide whether the school should stay in the scheme.</p> <p><b>Governors asked how confident the school is on increasing income projected in budget, despite the funding hit due to reduced numbers on census day.</b> SS explained that the funding reduction due to reduce numbers will take effect next year. She explained that catering costs are lower than budgeted at the moment and she is confident that lettings income will increase due to holiday clubs.</p> <p>Governors thanked SS for the the update.</p>	
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7.	<p><b><u>Capital Funding</u></b> Information on capital funding was included in the papers for the meeting. No questions in the meeting. Governors were asked to send questions to SS via email if they had anything to ask.</p>	
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8.	<p><b><u>Health &amp; Safety Update</u></b> JL agreed to organise a Health &amp; Safety Walk during this term.</p> <p>There was a conversation about the school's plan to cut down/prune some trees. An additional site manager assistant has been recruited to assist for three hours a day and part of his responsibilities at this time of year involves clearing leaves.</p> <p>SS updated the meeting that the school had not had an H&amp;S audit this year, although they had met virtually with the H&amp;S consultant.</p>	JL
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	SS updated the meeting that Covid-19 risk assessments were provided by the H&S consultant and all updates are communicated to staff, visitors and contractors. JL to review the latest risk assessment during his visit.	JL
9.	<b><u>Policies</u></b> Health & Safety Policy and Bad Debt Policy to be included in agenda for next meeting.	Clerk
10.	<b><u>Any Other Business</u></b> RW raised that the school had been approached by independent sector senior schools to host the sitting of entry exams on their site. Rather than administering numerous exams, the schools in question have moved to all using the IECEB online test, so children attend one venue, take one test and the results are shared with the schools they are applying to. She asked governors for their opinion and whether the school should charge to provide this. There was a discussion about the pros and cons. It was agreed that if there is parental interest in the school providing this service, the school should charge for it, since the school will need to be opened and cleaned over the weekend and staff will have to be available to administer it. It was agreed to canvas Y6 parents and then review the Charging & Remissions policy in light of the feedback.	

Meeting concluded 10.20

**Date of next meeting: 18 November 2020**

**Professional Negligence Statement:** Advice given by governors at The Vineyard School is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity.

**Confidentiality Statement:** Governors should respect the confidence of those items of business which the Governing Body decides and not disclose what individual governors have said or how they have voted within a meeting.

Signed: ..... Dated: .....

Name: ..... Chair of Resources Committee

#### Summary of action points:

Action point	Responsibility
Review additional detail including in scheme of delegation specific for Finance – and send feedback to MB and SS.	All
Put sign off of the scheme of delegation onto the next meeting agenda	Clerk
File minutes electronically and update hard copy file when appropriate	Clerk
Organise a health and safety walk	JL
Review Covid-19 Risk assessment as part of health and safety walk	JL
Add H&S policy and Bad Debt policy to next meeting agenda	Clerk
Add Charging & Remissions policy review to next meeting agenda depending on exam charge feedback	Clerk