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The Vineyard School Governing Board

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Minutes of School Development & Pupils Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 6pm at the school

**Present:** Stuart Nevill (SN)  
Ruth Whymark (RW)  
Antony Cook (AC)  
Emma Tuck (ET)  
Anke Monestel (AM)  
Lynne Woolley (LW)

**In Attendance:** Julia Bryant (JB)  
Rufus Cooper (RC)  
Richard Rosewell (Associate Member) (RR)  
Anna Mantle (Clerk)

**Absent:** Simon Williams (SW)  
Christine Gooch (CG)

Meeting started at 6pm.

Item	Action
<p>1. <b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> Apologies were received and accepted from Christine Gooch and Simon Williams. Lynne Woolley was running late and was not present when the meeting started.</p>	
<p>2. <b><u>Governors' Declaration of Interests</u></b> No direct or indirect pecuniary interests were declared.</p>	
<p>3. <b><u>SRE scheme of work</u></b> Julia Bryant and Rufus Cooper had been invited to provide an overview of the new scheme of work covering the SRE curriculum. Having signed off the policy earlier in the year, governors had requested to review the scheme of work once it had been developed.</p> <p>The presentation set out an overview of the lesson plans for each year group. A copy of the presentation is circulated with these minutes.</p> <p>Specific comments or questions that the governors raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Comments about the Y3 curriculum including challenging gender stereotypes sparked a discussion about how the school reinforced this message through assemblies, participation of a group of girls in a Dare To Be challenge day and refusal to take part in gender specific sports events if there isn't an equivalent event for the other gender.</li><li>• How is LGBT covered in the curriculum? Governors were told that lessons talked about different types of relationship in a balanced, non-</li></ul>	

	<p>judgmental way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commented on the progression of themes across the years.</li> <li>• Discussed the focus of the EY curriculum on physical development and how the YR and Y1 teachers are skilled at exploring these issues with the class and individuals, as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Governors asked what areas of this scheme of work are optional and how is this communicated to parents?</b></p> <p>RW informed them that they followed good practice and sent letters home to help prepare parents for the inevitable questions. She explained that there is currently a consultation on whether SRE should be statutory but at the moment the science elements are statutory and the SRE elements are not.</p>	
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6.12pm Lynne Woolley arrives.

<p>3.</p>	<p><b><u>SRE scheme of work continued</u></b></p> <p>RW explained that in the past she had organised a talk with parents outlining the division between the statutory and non-statutory elements of the curriculum, and, in her experience, parents are often more uncomfortable with the statutory science parts which they cannot opt their child out of. She emphasised that providing a workshop to help frame parental conversations with their children at home and provide resources parents can draw on helps to dissipate their fears.</p> <p>RC explained that he thought the introduction of this curriculum now might cause a bit of a shock because there is a marked step change in Y4. However, once the scheme of work is embedded, the flow of information will be slow and steady starting in YR and building throughout the school, and there will be hardly any parental complaints.</p> <p>RW also explained that SRE is a statutory policy and is published on the website, so there is the opportunity for parents to review this there. It includes a glossary of the terms referenced in lessons.</p> <p><b>Governors asked how the delivery of these lessons is distributed.</b> They were told that there is not a formulaic programme for these lessons. They are delivered throughout the year and elements addressed at appropriate times across the year.</p> <p><b>Governors asked how teachers will be trained to deliver this, since some might be uncomfortable.</b> A charity, LVA, (run by a Vineyard parent) which delivers high quality sex and relationships education for secondary schools is running a pilot with the Vineyard and will deliver the Y5 and Y6 curriculum in the summer term. The school is also in discussion with them to offer training to staff based on the scheme of work reviewed in this meeting.</p> <p>RW also suggested that children's questions are submitted in advance via a question box in the classroom. Direct questions are sent home for parents to frame within their cultural/religious understanding). Teachers should not answer questions that make them feel uncomfortable and should stick to facts, not offer judgment.</p> <p>All this will be explained at the parents' briefing to take place ahead of the Y5 and Y6 lessons and discussions about the timing of the staff training are underway.</p> <p><b>Governors wanted confirmation that the charity LVA's values are aligned with the school's view and non-judgmental approach.</b></p> <p>RW confirmed that she has met and had extensive discussions with the charity, including their values.</p> <p>Governors had no further questions. They thanked Rufus Cooper and Julia Bryant for their presentation and the hard work that had gone into preparing this scheme of work.</p>	
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	<b>Governors approved the SRE scheme of work.</b>
Rufus Cooper and Julia Bryant leave the meeting.	
<p><b>4. <u>Minutes of last meeting – 30 November 2017</u></b> Matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add SRE to March agenda – completed</li> <li>• FoV and PTA budgets – SN shared pros and cons document with RW. (Document was drawn up before PTA became registered charity to explore pros/cons of registering jointly with FoV or separately. Governance of charity is important consideration. School can take firmer line if more heavily involved as part of FoV. Agreed that merging FoV and PTA should form part of next FGB agenda. AC to look into who are PTA Trustees.</li> <li>• Parent/teacher consultation feedback to be brought to March committee – completed</li> </ul> <p>Additional comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EpiPens – <b>governors questioned whether the school needed an agreed standard approach and protocols for administering the school EpiPen to children without a healthcare plan.</b> There followed a discussion about whether there was adequate wording in the medicines policy to not require an opt out. It was agreed that it should be clear the school EpiPen should be administered in an emergency situation to any child.</li> </ul> <p><b>Governors agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2017 were a true and accurate record.</b></p>	<p>Add FoV and PTA merging to July FGB agenda – Clerk/CG</p> <p>AC to contact Chair of PTA</p> <p>RW to send doc to Clerk for circulation ahead of the FGB</p> <p>RW to check wording of medicines policy and communicate to whole school.</p>
<p><b>5. <u>Code of Conduct</u></b> It was agreed that this should go to the Resources Committee to be signed off because it is an HR matter. However, because some of the areas it covers cross over significantly with the interests of this committee, those areas would be discussed and feedback provided to the next Resources Committee.</p> <p>Discussion covered the following areas of the code of conduct:</p> <p><i>4.4 Staff must refrain from the consumption of alcohol and other substances at school/pupil events (i.e. residential visits) both within the school premises and outside the school setting.</i></p> <p><b>Governors raised that an unintended implication of this would be that staff could not drink at the school quiz night or other after school social events</b> RW acknowledged that she thought this point might be contentious. There followed a discussion about the requirement for a code of conduct which is clear, unambiguous, enforces a professional standard and maintains the reputation of the school. <b>The committee recommended that a firm line of no alcohol be maintained except at social events where the welfare of the children is not the responsibility of the staff in attendance (e.g. weekend school fair events).</b></p> <p>It was also recommended that “other substances” be defined more clearly as “illicit drugs or other illegal substances” as in 4.3.</p> <p>There was discussion about whether no smoking includes e-cigarettes. They agreed it does and that e-cigarettes should be explicitly mentioned.</p> <p><i>15.5 Staff should not make contact with pupils’ family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow pupils’ family member’s account on any social media platform.</i></p> <p>Governors commented that this needs to be clearly communicated to parents if staff are expected to sever existing contact with existing relationships on Facebook or other platforms.</p> <p><b>Governors questioned whether the boundaries around relationship between staff and parents need to be declared.</b> SN has policy wording that</p>	<p>Clerk to ensure that Code of Conduct is on next Resources agenda</p> <p>Clerk to pass feedback to Resources committee</p> <p>SN to send policy wording to RW</p>

<p>covers this. He will send it to RW.</p> <p><i>7.3 Staff must not accept significant gifts (a sum to be assessed by the school) or hospitality from pupils, parents, carers, actual or potential contractors or outside suppliers. All such gifts/offers of hospitality should be reported to your line manager and recorded.</i></p> <p><b>Governors questioned the sum assessment.</b> RW indicated that she felt £10 per parent/pupil would be the boundary (i.e. total £300). There followed a discussion about the logistics of reporting gifts (shared Google doc and reporting the line manager), the importance of communicating any upper limit on gifts to class reps to avoid awkward situations and the importance of the task of reporting gifts not being too onerous for staff.</p> <p>Management to define this is at leadership team meeting.</p> <p>16.1 Recommendation to remove reference to Data Protection Act and change to GDPR to future proof the document.</p> <p>Online safety section – talks about Facebook. Change reference to social network sites and include WhatsApp.</p> <p><b>Governors asked whether access to pornography should be specifically mentioned.</b> They felt it should be specifically mentioned in the code of conduct even though it is also covered in the I.T. policy.</p> <p>Make sure this code of conduct also references the “<b>Code of ethical practice for school staff</b>”.</p> <p><b>Governors questioned whether the definition of gross misconduct needed to be included in this code of conduct.</b> They were reassured that the disciplinary procedures clearly define behaviour which results in disciplinary action and cross references the code of conduct.</p> <p><b>Governors questioned the point on dress and appearance</b> and discussed that in some cases this will represent a shift and requires clear communication to staff.</p> <p>Governors liked the wording of <i>8.4. Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. Staff should never touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent. Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Staff must not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with pupils.</i> and felt it covered over familiar behaviour between children and staff, with the flexibility to allow for individual children with special needs.</p> <p>Governors asked whether this code of conduct would apply to all staff. RW explained that it would cover teaching, support and school admin staff, as well as casual workers, work placements and parent volunteers. Governors verified that this also covered sports coaches and wrap around care providers. RR explained that they always checked that these providers had completed safeguarding training and were aware of the school's policies. Governors requested that the school mandate providers to have a similar code of conduct for their staff or to adopt the school's code.</p> <p>Feedback will be sent to Resources Committee and once approved there, it will be disseminated around the school, form a large part of the new staff handbook and will be sent out for staff to sign up to.</p> <p>Governors wondered whether this code of conduct also applied to them. They decided to review their own code of conduct in light of this.</p>	<p>Ask to see pre- and after school care and sports providers' codes of conduct – RW</p> <p>RW to track changes in document and pass to Clerk to circulate to Resources.</p> <p>Clerk to talk to Chair.</p>
<p><b>6. <u>Anti-bullying policy</u></b></p>	

<p>RW provided the context for reviewing this policy; she has picked up an increasing number of bullying incidents, including four which should be considered as significant (persistent, repetitive and targeted). She has reviewed the school's anti-bullying policy and it should be considered not just to set out expectations for relationships between pupils, but also staff and pupils and between staff themselves. The proposed policy aims to be very explicit (she acknowledged its length) and then she intends to run training on how to handle, track and measure incidents.</p> <p>Governors were concerned to hear about the bullying incidents. They asked whether they were mostly online. RW informed them this was not the case. They are mainly localised within one year group. She reassured them she was implementing training for pupils and staff and following up with parents in the year group affected.</p> <p>Governors questioned whether harassment is covered clearly enough by the proposed policy. RW stated that she had included the DfE legal definition. However, there was a feeling that more might be considered to cover the psychological, emotional and physical effects of harassment.</p> <p>Governors commented that they liked the practical advice at the back and they felt that there should be more examples covering the behaviour of staff to avoid doubt and prevent the normalisation of poor behaviour. They also discussed making sure the Vineyard Values are referenced at the start.</p> <p><b>Overall governors felt that policy is much more robust and unanimously approved the policy.</b></p>	<p>RW to check whether harassment should be more explicitly referenced in the policy</p>
<p><b>7. <u>Parent/teacher consultation approach.</u></b> RW provided some context for the proposed changes, referencing Damian Hind's push to focus on improving teachers' work/life balance and workload, since this impacts teaching quality.</p> <p>Governors understood the considerable impact parent/teacher consultation preparation and presentation has on teachers and advised that the proposed changes be communicated to parents within the context outlined, because the proposal will have a significant impact on some working parents. They also advised of the potential unwanted side effect of the proposal causing more parents to seek to organise consultations outside of the official schedule, which would create extra work and, in all likelihood, result in longer meetings.</p> <p><b>Governors asked how this proposal compared with other schools.</b> RW informed them that this was the only school she has worked at that does not close partly or completely to accommodate consultations. There is clear reasoning for this, so that the child can attend the consultation with their parents/carers.</p> <p><b>Governors expressed some concern about the proposal to move the consultations to the hall.</b> RW explained that although it was unusual, there had been incidences of verbal assault and it is not reasonable to expect teachers to work in these circumstances. She explained that it is standard practice in secondary schools to hold consultations in the hall, and from her experience the conversation was more focused and better quality. It was also easier to keep to time because a bell would be rung at the end of each time slot. She acknowledged that parents value the intimacy of the classroom, however they would have ample opportunity to visit the classroom before/after the consultation time to view books. RR commented that in his experience at the school they had never been wholly satisfied by the consultations but had not made any changes. He felt it was time to try something new.</p> <p><b>Governors asked whether there was more the school could do to make up for the extra hours teachers are required to put in for consultations, including Time Off In Lieu (TOIL).</b> RW indicated that she was keen to find ways to be flexible and use her discretion to allow staff leave in special circumstances, in response to</p>	<p>RW to ensure that communication to parents includes parameters for off-cycle consultation and that these will be arranged at the discretion of the head teacher within a fixed time limit.</p>

	demonstrating dedication and exceptional hard work. She recognises that there is nothing more detrimental to the quality of teaching in the school than exhausted staff. The school provides more contact teaching time than set out in government guidelines, so there is scope to take a strategic look at other initiatives to address the issue.	
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8pm Anke Monestel leaves

7.	<p><b><u>Parent/teacher consultations continued.</u></b>  <b>Governors asked whether there was a private space available for consultations if required.</b> RW explained that it was her intention to set clear parameters for the scope of the meeting and refer to the Vineyard protocol for visitor behaviour. The placement of the staff around the room would be considered carefully to keep year groups separated and tables would be a distance apart to maintain confidentiality. Very confidential matters should be discussed elsewhere, outside these consultations. The leadership team would be on hand to speak to anyone who is unhappy afterwards. It was suggested that she could organise separate surgeries with the Head and governors as part of the event. Governors could have a questionnaire to take parents through.</p> <p>It was generally agreed that the governors are happy with the general direction of travel for the parent/teacher consultations, however they recognised there could be objections from parents about the changes and the lack of one-to-one space. <b>They agreed to the proposed changes on the basis that a review be undertaken afterwards with both staff and parents and results presented back to this committee.</b></p>	<p>Governors to devise questionnaire and attend parent/teacher consultations - CG</p> <p>Add review of results to appropriate D&amp;P Committee agenda - Clerk and AC</p>
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8.	<p><b><u>Uniform approach</u></b>  RW introduced this tightening up of the uniform approach because she feels the school's appearance has got a bit sloppy. She highlighted the significant proposed changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirement for all children to have coloured house PE shirt</li> <li>• Requirement for Early Years to have waterproofs and wellies kept in school so that there is no excuse for them to go outside in all weather</li> </ul> <p><b>Governors questioned why there was no mention of hair styles.</b> RW admitted that she was used to having something in the uniform policy which referred to shoulder-length hair being tied back (boys/girls) so that it was not distracting or spreading nits. Governors also discussed having a policy about "extreme" hairstyles.</p> <p>Governors discussed whether to make it explicit that boots are not acceptable as school shoes. It was decided to make it clear boots could be worn to/from school in bad weather, but shoes were required in school and that travel to and from school should be in school shoes except in exceptional weather.</p> <p>Governors questioned the "preference" of navy blue coats. This language makes it impossible to enforce. There was a discussion about visibility in the dark vs the homogeneity which is the point of having a uniform. They decided that an appropriate plain navy blue coat should be stipulated.</p> <p>It was decided to remove the different tights colours between KS1 and KS2. Red tights for all year groups.</p> <p>The plan to communicate this is in stages. There will be a reminder before the Easter holidays to smarten up and they will tighten up the existing policy. The significant changes will not be implemented until September.</p>	<p>RW to add hairstyles to uniform policy.</p>
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<b>9.</b>	<b><u>SDP Highlights</u></b> RW ran quickly through the SDP and the RAG rating employed to track progress. A copy of the plan is included with these minutes.	
<b>10.</b>	<b><u>Any other business</u></b> Governors asked whether the school has started the process of becoming GDPR compliant. RR is the GDPR lead and he indicated that there is a meeting planned before the end of the term with Simon Williams (Governor – data lead) and Allay (?). RW explained that the school has started the process and that Allay has a plan. SN offered to share the plan he is using at work.	SN to share GDPR plan with RR.

8.26pm Meeting concluded.

**Date of next meeting: 28 June 2018 at 6pm**

**Summary of action points:**

Action point	Responsibility
Add FoV and PTA merging to July FGB agenda	Clerk & CG
Send SN's pros and cons doc re. FoV and PTA to Clerk for circulation ahead of the FGB	RW
Check wording of medicines policy regarding EpiPen use in school and communicate to all staff	RW
Code of Conduct to be included on next Resources agenda (May)	Clerk & MB
Pass feedback on Code of Conduct to Resources committee	Clerk
Sample wording regarding boundaries of relationships between parents and staff to be sent to RW	SN
Review pre- and post school care providers' codes of conduct	RW
Track changes in document and pass to Clerk to circulate to Resources.	RW
Review governors' code of conduct	Clerk to discuss with CG
Check whether harassment should be more explicitly referenced in the anti-bullying policy	RW
Ensure that communication to parents includes parameters for off-cycle parent/teacher consultation and that these will be arranged at the discretion of the head teacher within a fixed time limit.	RW
Governors to devise questionnaire and attend parent/teacher consultations.	CG
Add review of feedback from parent/teacher consultations to appropriate D&P Committee agenda	Clerk & AC
Add hairstyles to uniform policy.	RW
Share GDPR plan with RR.	SN
Contact Chair of PTA regarding current Trustees	AC