



The Vineyard School Governing Board
Friars Stile Road, Richmond, TW10 6NE

Minutes of Resources focused FGB meeting held on 20th November 2019 at 8am at the school

Governors Present:	Firas Ali (FA) Chloe Garth (CG) Ruth Whymark (RW) James Lane (JL) Graham Stewart (GS) – Chair Lynne Woolley (LW) Amy Salem (AS) Melanie Bywell (MB) – by phone Kirsty MacEachen (KM)
In Attendance:	Richard Rosewell (RR) Anna Mantle (Clerk) Svetlana Sanders (SS) School Business Manager
Absent:	Simon Williams (SW) Fern Carter (FC) Anke Monestel (AM) Antony Cook (AC)

Meeting started at 8.05am.

Item	Action
1. <u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies received and accepted from Simon Williams, Fern Carter, Anke Monestel and Antony Cook. Melanie Bywell joined the meeting by phone. Kirsty MacEachen was delayed and not in attendance at the start of the meeting. The meeting was quorate.	
2. <u>Governors' Declaration of Interests</u> No direct or indirect pecuniary interests were declared.	
3. <u>Appointment of governors</u> GS introduced Chloe Garth. Having been interviewed in the summer, she has been invited to join the governing body. Governors unanimously agreed to co-opt Chloe onto the board. Term of office: 4 years Start date: 20 November 2019 Staff Governor Amy Salem stood as staff governor and was the only nomination. Amy Salem duly appointed staff governor.	

	<p>Term of office: 4 years Start date:</p> <p>Parent Governor Antony Cook's term of office as parent governor is due to expire on 1 December 2019. The process is underway to request nominations from the parent body. Following the skills audit conducted in September 2019, desirable skills were outlined in the vacancy advertisement. Deadline for nominations is 27th November 2019. If a ballot is needed it will be conducted in week of 2 December.</p> <p>The FGB is keen to retain Antony Cook's experience on the board. He will be co-opted into the last remaining vacancy at the next meeting (27 November).</p>	
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4.	<p><u>Minutes of the last meeting (2 October 2019) and matters arising</u> Governors had reviewed the minutes in advance and agreed they were a true and accurate record. Hard copy signed and filed at school. Electronic version uploaded onto the website.</p> <p>Matters arising all completed or covered in the agenda, with the exception of booking the H&S walk. JL to action.</p>	JL
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5.	<p><u>Update on meeting re: special resource unit</u> Governors were updated on a recent meeting between the school and AfC to discuss siting a special needs unit at the school. SS updated the meeting that she had contacted other schools hosting a similar provision and had been reassured that they were managing to balance their budgets and not putting pressure on their main budgets.</p> <p>Governors asked about whether the LA will conduct a feasibility survey. SS indicated that the governors needed to decide whether to go ahead with this.</p>	
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8.14am Kirsty MacEachen arrives

5.	<p><u>Update on meeting re: special resource unit continued</u> There was a discussion regarding whether nursery provision formed part of the options to discuss.</p> <p>There was also a discussion about the short term use of the vacant bungalow. It will be empty soon and could be rented out to staff.</p> <p>Next steps agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward information from AfC to all governors • Working group (JL, FA, MB, RW) to draft terms and scope of feasibility study and set basic framework • Convene extraordinary FGB (4 December) to decide terms and scope of feasibility study and clear strategy 	Clerk
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6.	<p><u>Budget</u> Governors had received the budget in advance. SS provided them with a top level overview of the current situation. She highlighted the main variances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education support staff budget over spend due to long term sickness. She explained they try to cover absence from within school, but in some areas of school (Reception in particular) agency staff are required. She also explained that their insurance does not cover the full cost of an agency staff member. • Income is down. SS is working on the lettings policy so that she can expand lettings. • SEND funding reduced because the children receiving this have left the school. 	
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	<p>There was a discussion about the finances relating to wrap around care.</p> <p>SS updated the meeting on the budget position regarding salaries. The government is funding 0.75% increase, the school has to find the rest (2%). The school has also had to fund 8% salary increase for support staff with no extra contributions from the government.</p> <p>Budget out-turn projected to be a deficit of £19k. The school brought forward £27k at the end of last year. Therefore should end the year in a slight surplus.</p> <p>SS has applied for a grant for refurbishing a toilet block. However if this is successful, the school will have to contribute £20k towards the works.</p>	
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8.40am Melanie Bywell and Amy Salem leave the meeting. The meeting remains quorate.

6.	<p><u>Budget Update continued</u></p> <p>Governors asked about voluntary income in the budget.</p> <p>SS explained that major capital projects have been funded by the PTA or Friends of the Vineyard. She outlined the school's plan to improve promotion of the school's reliance on the support parental voluntary contributions via FoV or the PTA to encourage further donations, and to update parents on the funding crisis in education at the next parent engagement day.</p> <p>SS explained that the school did not receive extra funding to take into consideration the size of the grounds. Neither did it receive extra funding to assist in dealing with the Health & Safety action points highlighted in the audit.</p> <p>Governors asked about the school meals and how it was considered in the budget.</p> <p>SS explained considering staff costs, and the grant received for YR and KS1 children the catering budget should balance. There is still some way to go to recover the outstanding meals debt. The model in the budget takes account of that.</p> <p>SS also updated the meeting that the school had received complaints about the school charging for secondary school references. Governors were clear that the provision of non-statutory reports should never have been offered for free. The charging policy agreed by them is based on an accurate estimate of the time required to fulfil the tasks involved.</p> <p>SS concluded by re-emphasising her focus on increasing income in order to alleviate the budget pressures.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Bad Debt Update</u></p> <p>Outstanding debt for school meals is £3.5k.</p> <p>SS outlined her efforts to recover historical debts, however lack of proof is a major stumbling block.</p> <p>Measures are in place to ensure payment is made in advance and reminders are sent weekly.</p> <p>SS indicated that when a new parent communication tool is introduced, text messages will be free.</p> <p>It was suggested that staff involved in monitoring lunchtimes and following up to chase debts should log their time in order to get a full picture of the cost of this.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Health & Safety Report</u></p> <p>The report was circulated for review ahead of the meeting.</p>	

	<p>The caretaker is still providing support and conducting regular checks until a replacement site manager can be found.</p> <p>SS provided an overview of particular action points from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirement to install new fire doors and a fire shutter. She has a meeting at the end of the week (Fri 22 Nov) to establish who will be covering the cost of this. Cupboards were reviewed and fixed over half term <p>Governors asked about the requirement for a survey of the brick wall.</p> <p>There followed a discussion about the planning requirements for houses sharing the wall with the school. Governors expressed concern regarding the structural integrity of the wall and the potential absence of party wall agreements regarding work carried out by some neighbours of the school. SS to escalate concerns to the Local Authority.</p>	SS
9.	<p><u>After School Care</u></p> <p>Governors discussed the provision of pre- and after school care. Koosa Kids have increased capacity, however it is recognised that there is still excess demand. The club will be moving to the big hall and it is hoped this will allow more flexibility due to increased capacity. Governors discussed the requirement to set out clearly the expectations that parents can have from wrap around care at school. They emphasised it is important for communications about wrap around care provision be managed by Koosa Kids and not the school.</p>	
10.	<p><u>SFVS</u></p> <p>The new format and also last year's submission had been circulated in advance of the meeting. GS to work on the new format SFVS with SS for this year.</p>	GS
11.	<p><u>Policies</u></p> <p>Lettings policy still in draft format. JL and SS to review Staff Capability, Pay and Health & Safety policies to be circulated for review via email and sign off at subsequent FGB.</p>	JL & SS Clerk

Meeting concluded: 9.40pm

Date of next meeting: 22nd January 2020 at 8am.

Summary of action points:

Action point	Responsibility
Organise H&S walk	JL
Circulate paper and agenda for 4 Dec FGB	Clerk
Raise party wall agreements with LA	SS
Review SFVS	GS
Review Lettings policy	JL and SS
Circulate Staff Capability, Pay and H&S policies for review	Clerk