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

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Minutes of School Development & Pupils Committee meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at 6pm at the school

**Present:** Kirsty MacEachen (KM)  
Antony Cook (AC) (Chair)  
Ruth Whymark (RW)  
Lynne Woolley (LW)  
Fern Carter (FC)  
Emma Tuck (ET) by phone

**In Attendance:** Tom Charlton (TC)  
Daisy Dempster (DD)  
Mary Wakefield (MW)  
Jan Liebmann (JL)  
Anna Mantle (Clerk)

**Absent:** Simon Williams (SW)  
Anke Monestel (AM)

Meeting started at 6.07pm.

Item	Action
<b>1. <u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> Apologies received and accepted from Simon Williams and Anke Monestel. Fern Carter was late and had notified the meeting of her late arrival in advance. She was not present at the start of the meeting.	
<b>2. <u>Governors' Declaration of Interests</u></b> No direct or indirect pecuniary interests were declared.	
<b>3. <u>Wellbeing Strategic Team feedback</u></b> The meeting started with agenda item point 4. Mary Wakefield (MW), currently a Reception teacher at the Vineyard, introduced herself. She is part of the Wellbeing Strategic Team, as well as PSHE lead, and prior to teaching she completed a Masters in Organisational Psychology and Wellbeing. She explained the process undertaken to design and send out the wellbeing survey to all staff at the beginning of October. Out of 70 staff, there had been 45 respondents – 19 of which are teachers, 21 teaching support assistants and 4 administrative or SMSAs. They plan to repeat the survey again later in the year and hope to encourage more respondents to take part.  MW took the governors through the presentation that had been circulated for review ahead of the meeting. Focusing first on the positive statements,	

governors commented that it seemed the results showed that there is a culture of respect for each other's talents and an open atmosphere of support. MW also drew governors' attention to the results demonstrating that over 90% of respondents stated they were satisfied in their roles.

Moving on to the areas for development, governors asked about resilience, in the context of 32% of respondents disagreeing/strongly disagreeing with the statement, "I feel I have a healthy work/life balance" and 64% agreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement "It is difficult to detach myself from my job". Governors did not find the numbers surprising, taking into account the statistics that 1 in 4 people suffer mental health issues; **they asked for information about what the school could do to provide support and guidance?**

MW explained three relevant models based on the understanding that detachment is crucial to recovery. There are a number of coping strategies that can be learned from these models:

- Activities in leisure time should be sought that draw on completely different skills and cognitive requirements to those undertaken at work, in order to give the body and mind time to recharge and recover.
- Stress happens when resources (mental, physical, emotional) are depleted. Leisure time is needed to replenish these resources – it is important that this down time happens at weekends and in evenings, rather than waiting for the long holidays – it needs to be more immediate).
- Psychological detachment is only possible when the individual feels in control. Therefore, leisure activities where the individual can learn a skill and demonstrate mastery are good in professions where there is at times little autonomy (e.g. the school day is timetabled and prescribed).

MW set out her intention to organise a staff meeting to discuss coping strategies and approaches to aid detachment and recovery.

**Governors commented that it is important for the staff to learn and appreciate wellbeing and also to pass this on to the children in school, considering the epidemic in mental health issues in society today.**

It was noted that the new homework policy encourages children to undertake different activities and to engage with topics in a different way. This approach was informed by research around the effect of homework on wellbeing.

**Governors asked how the survey results should inform decisions made at a strategic level.** They were interested to know how the school organisation could help make improvements. They wanted to find out more about the non-essential elements of the role that could be alleviated to reduce workload.

RW explained that there is no previous baseline to compare against. Following one-to-one meetings with all staff members during her first year at the school, she had introduced a number of changes to improve staff communications and the flow of information amongst staff to assist with transparency and allow people to feel more in control. She also explained that she organised cover for all staff to take a personal day, as well as ensuring that family commitments and emergencies are accommodated.

**Governors asked whether the school tracks sick days, as an indicator of wellbeing.** RW confirmed that the school is now tracking sick days and leave of absence on Integris, compared to using a spreadsheet previously. The use of different systems makes it difficult to identify trends. However, it seems that over the last 3 years absence has decreased. She explained that she would have expected more staff absence last year due to stress and mental illness following the serious incident at the school. This was not the case. She felt it was an indication that the level of psychological support made available at the

time was right. However, she indicated that she was not complacent and that this would need longer term tracking, in order to check for a delayed impact.

RW also explained that she was mindful of the pressures of austerity on staff. She commented that the impact of having fewer people to do the same jobs in school needed careful monitoring, with an emphasis on efficiency. She explained a number of measures in place to encourage collaboration and re-organise workload:

- PPA time has been revised so that year groups plan together at the same time
- Roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined, so that there is less role ambiguity
- Changing the format of the parent consultations

**Governors asked about the next steps for the Wellbeing Team.** They were interested to know whether the data could be scrutinised to understand the breakdown of the responses indicating stress or lack of confidence.

AC offered MW some assistance in analysing the data, from his corporate experience conducting similar surveys.

**Governors asked whether staff track their actual worked hours.** They commented that this could help prompt self-awareness of how much they are working and on which activities. They also commented that sharing details about the workload requirements of the staff with parents could help to alleviate some pressure.

AC has a template spreadsheet to be used for tracking time. He will share it with RW.

RW commented that the parent engagement day at the start of the year had been useful in demonstrating to parents the level of interaction and engagement that staff have on a daily basis.

Governors had no further questions. They thanked MW for her presentation.

6.50pm Fern Carter arrives.

**4. Review and evaluate performance, including SEND and PPG groups at EYFS, Phonics, KS1, LKS2 and UKS2**

Governors started by clarifying the different achievement and progress levels used in the reports from the Directors of Learning:

- EYFS – Daisy Dempster (DD)
- KS1 – Jan Liebmann (JL)
- LKS2 – Tom Charlton (TC)
- UKS2 – Emma Tuck (by phone) (ET)

The reports circulated to governors ahead of the meeting had been reviewed and discussed at the SIP visit earlier in the month.

**Governors were keen to emphasise their interest in the progress and attainment of children in receipt of PPG, since the results demonstrate that they do not perform as well as others, and this is a cause for concern.**

DD explained that in the Early Years setting, identifying children eligible for the PPG is difficult. Currently there are no PPG children in this year's cohort. She explained the ways in which the school communicates with parents to encourage them to self-declare. There is little motivation to declare, since universal free school meals are available until the end of KS1.

RW explained the school's approach to supporting PPG children is based on best practice research on what has the most impact:

- Mentoring – staff volunteer to mentor PPG children across the school
- Teacher focus – all staff are aware of which children are in receipt of PPG within their class
- Teacher accountability – staff are tasked with addressing the needs of the PPG children in their class as part of their professional performance objectives
- SLT focus – Directors of Learning discuss PPG children's progress at phase meetings

RW also explained that they cross-reference with Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings. She drew governors' attention to detail in her Head Teacher's Report presented at FGB which details information about TAC meetings and includes a breakdown including numbers of PPG and previously Looked After Children.

Governors were grateful for the focus on PPG. The meeting then moved onto a discussion of the performance data for each key stage.

### **EYFS**

DD provided an overview of the results. She said that results in 17/18 had been good. 4% not meeting expected standard in reading was the key focus for 18/19. There is a particular focus on creating more reading and writing opportunities for boys.

#### **Governors asked how this was being achieved.**

DD explained that they were implementing ideas shared on a recent course to make books available everywhere. They are changing their reading corners to make them more open and accessible and focusing on daily shared reading together, as well as modelling book-reading. In order to develop writing skills, they have recently attended a course on helicopter stories and intend to introduce this approach designed to engage children in writing and developing their own narratives in January.

DD also commented that the increased space now available means that there is a much more creative and engaging learning environment.

DD outlined her intention to engage parents more. She plans to send home phonics tasks (similar to the maths tasks sent home at the moment) and to hold a talk for parents about supporting their child with phonics.

RW explained that DD is a specialist in phonics delivery and has been chosen to work across the Borough, helping to upskill the team. She is keen for the school to take advantage of these networking and professional learning opportunities.

### **KS1**

JL provided an overview of the 17/18 results. The data is good. It matched the previous year and matches, or is better than, Borough results. She commented that the current Y2 cohort is very different and that last year's data is therefore not necessarily useful in informing what needs to be done differently this year. They are working on the early identification of skills gaps and were using a variety of interventions to address these gaps:

- Booster groups
- Freeing up teacher time for targeted intervention by employing a School's Direct student who will take on more teaching responsibilities as the year progresses
- Early communications with targeted parents, providing tailored home support packages

JL outlined that most of the extra support is focused on writing and reading. Maths seems strong.

#### **Governors asked the extent to which reading and writing progress and performance is affected by EAL.**

JL explained that the percentage of EAL children in this Y2 cohort is no different from previous years, however a larger percentage of the EAL children live in

homes where neither parent speaks English. There are also substantially more children with speech and language SEND needs.

**Governors asked whether the school provided a buddy system for parents from similar backgrounds.**

RW confirmed they did.

**Governors asked about whether comparing Vineyard averages with the Borough at KS1 was misleading, since it is widely reported that EAL children's progress and attainment may be delayed and not catch up with age related expectations until the age of 11.**

There followed a discussion about the acquisition of language and the importance of encouraging mastery of language in the mother tongue to allow children the grammatical basis to transfer to the learning of English at school. RW also explained that they used Fisher Family Trust data as well as Borough averages when analysing their performance since it takes into account context.

7.25pm Mary Wakefield leaves the meeting.

**5. Review and evaluate performance, including SEND and PPG groups at EYFS, Phonics, KS1, LKS2 and UKS2 – continued**

**LKS2**

TC talked the governors through an overview of the performance data available for LKS2. He explained that there were positive attainment results last year, however progress was lower than expected, considering the gains made in attainment. He had carried out some detailed analysis and concluded that in Y4 there had been a slow down in writing and maths progress compared to Y3. SEND children had made a lot of progress. However, for children who had covered all the curriculum by the end of Y4, they were encouraged to go deeper rather than further with progress measures capped at 100.

TC stated that this had prompted him to review how work is tracked into Y3 and beyond following the intensive assessment objectives and focus at the end of Y2.

**Governors asked how targets are set in Y3, Y4 and Y5 when there are not official assessments.**

TC explained that they set aspirational targets based on the top 5% of schools in the Fisher Family Trust data. They do not have individual targets for each child. They set headline targets to aim towards in each discipline.

ET stated that she felt they had a large piece of work to do so that teachers understand what children achieved at KS1. This had started to be discussed in progress meetings. It was acknowledged that finding the data in Target Tracker can be difficult and tracking takes a lot of time.

**Governors asked whether Ofsted would expect individual targets for each child.**

It was explained that teachers do as much as they can for all children in their class. Based on the tracking and progress meetings they do highlight children who are not making expected progress and intervene.

RW explained to governors her approach to setting high aspirational targets for children.

**Governors asked whether the children were involved in this process.**

RW explained that they were not.

TC went on to talk governors through the specific actions that are being taken to address attainment and progress gaps at in LKS2:

- Y3 team are reviewing writing planning
- Y4 focusing on writing opportunities in non core subjects and have introduced Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time (DIRT) when corrections from previous work are collated into whole class feedback (which also assists in reducing limited impact marking workload)
- Y4 also focusing on grammar and had introduced “space retrieval practice” where a concept is taught and then re-visited after a period of time and then revised again at a later stage. (TC explained that he felt this approach would help in Maths as well, since the scheme they follow focuses concentrated periods on a topic, but does not have time for revision built into the scheme of work.)

**Governors commented that this approach to shorter learning topics with time for revision later was being mirrored in A-Level and further education as well. It is part of a trend in changing learning patterns in society.**

TC finished by explaining to governors that PPG and SEND children were kept front of mind in all planning, by ensuring that they are identified by the initials on all planning documents.

### **UKS2**

ET started by reminding governors that in comparison to the performance data that was last presented at the 27 September 2018 meeting, this data now excludes discounted pupils. She also reminded governors that it is important to bear in mind that the current Y6 cohort is very different, and also drew their attention to the fact that a few individuals currently working at greater depth in Y6 will be leaving before the end of the year.

She stated that their aspirational targets are high, particularly taking into account the results from recent baseline assessments. Y5 and Y6 were working closely together to discuss targets and optimise the curriculum. For example, boys’ writing has been identified as a gap, therefore they reorganised the curriculum and focused on teaching WW2 at the start of the year to encourage boys’ engagement and develop writing skills. She commented that they were seeing positive results from having done this.

ET also explained the additional resources that have been made available in Y6 to pinpoint and address needs, reduce class sizes, and teach small groups or 1-to-1.

She also outlined to governors that this is the first year that multiple children will not be sitting the end of year assessment. There are several in the year group with EHCPs who will not reach the expected standard due to cognitive delay and other health issues. They will not be entered in the assessment, but will not be discounted from the data. RW emphasised that The Vineyard is an inclusive school with the highest number of EHCPs compared to other schools in the local cluster.

Governors acknowledged this. They reflected on whether parents of children in other year groups were aware of the situation and discussed how to communicate this to them.

**Governors had no further questions about the reports. They expressed their satisfaction with the process that had been undertaken to set the targets for 18/19 and were confident they are aspirational and challenging. Governors approved the targets set.**

They thanked the Directors of Learning for their presentations and hard work.

7.55pm DD, JL, TC leave the meeting.

6.	<p><b><u>Minutes from last meeting (27 September 2018)</u></b>  All matters arising had been dealt with. The only outstanding item is reporting back from the parent survey. This will be included in the FGB agenda for 13 December 2018.  <b>The minutes of 27 September 2018 meeting were signed off by governors as a true and accurate record.</b></p>	
7.	<p><b><u>Admissions Arrangements</u></b>  These were circulated ahead of the meeting for review. Governors had made themselves aware of the content. The detail is set out by AfC.  <b>Governors formally approved the Admissions Arrangements.</b></p>	

Meeting concluded 8.05pm.

**Date of next meeting: Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 6pm**

**Summary of action points:**

Action point	Responsibility
Send time tracking spreadsheet template to MW	AC
Provide extra assistance with data analysis	AC