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The Vineyard School Governing Board

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Minutes of Full Governing Board meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017 at 6pm at the school

**Present:** Anke Monestel (AM)  
Antony Cook (AC)  
Christine Gooch (CG)  
Emma Tuck (ET)  
Graham Stewart (GS)  
Melanie Bywell (MB)  
Rufus Cook (RC)  
Ruth Whymark (Head Teacher)

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

**Absent:** Ian Boulton (IB)  
James Lane (JL)  
Robert Stanton (RS)  
Simon Williams (SW)  
Stuart Nevill (SN)

Meeting started at 6.05pm (Antony Cook had notified the Chair he was running late)

Item	Action
1. <b><u>Welcome new members</u></b> Roundtable introductions and welcome of new Head Teacher and Clerk	
2. <b><u>Confirmation of Chair and Vice-Chair</u></b> The constitution and terms of reference for the Vineyard Governing Board state that the positions of Chair and Vice Chair will be held for a term of three years. Ahead of the meeting all Governors were asked to confirm they were happy for Christine Gooch (Chair) (in post since May 2015) and Graham Stewart (Vice Chair) (in post since September 2016) to remain in post for the next academic year, or to raise any objections.  <b>10 responses received from Governors; all positive confirmations, no objections raised.</b>  <b>Decision ratified to keep Christine Gooch and Graham Stewart in positions of Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, for the upcoming academic year.</b>	
3. <b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> Received and accepted from Ian Boulton, James Lane, Robert Stanton, Simon Williams, Stuart Nevill	
4. <b><u>Declaration of Interests</u></b> No declarations of interest and signed declarations of interest forms received from	Clerk to follow up with absentees

<p>all in attendance. Additional sheet acknowledging and reaffirming Governors' adherence to the Vineyard School Governor Code of Conduct circulated and signed by all in attendance.</p>	<p>and send summary to school office to be published on website</p>
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6.12pm Antony Cook arrives

<p><b>5. <u>Revisions to Constitution and Scheme of Delegation</u></b> Board of Governors reviewed the proposed changes to the Constitution designed to ensure that their focus is on strategic issues and not operational detail.</p> <p>The number of committees has been streamlined for this academic year into two – “Development &amp; Pupils” and “Resources” – the constitution has been amended to reflect this and <b>Governors agreed</b> that the Resources Committee should revisit its Terms of Reference at the meeting at the end of the academic year and redraft as appropriate in light of feedback on effectiveness and efficiency this year.</p> <p>Governors discussed inviting non-Governors to join the Resources committee as appropriate (e.g. School Business Manager (SBM) and Caretaker) to ensure effective and informed decisions can be made. Attendance will be dependent on agenda and agreed by the Chair of the committee on a meeting by meeting basis. It is anticipated that the SBM will attend all the Resource Committee meetings.</p> <p><b>Governors agreed the proposed changes to the Terms of Constitution and proposed Scheme of Delegation.</b></p>	<p>CG to make minor adjustments to the Constitution and Scheme of Delegation and re-issue final version via email</p>
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<p><b>6. <u>Committee membership and named Governors</u></b> Last year's focus of the Governing Board was very much on the hiring of a new Head Teacher. With a new Head Teacher in place, <b>Governors agreed</b> that now is the time to refocus for strategic efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>Decision made to keep group large because individual governors are all skills rich but time poor. There is a requirement to distribute leadership responsibilities more equally. New proposed roles and responsibilities aim to focus on improved knowledge of school life and maximise governor impact. Also important to start succession planning for new Chair, since current Chair announced her intention to step down at the end of the academic year.</p> <p><b>Governors agreed Committee Membership and Lead Roles as set out in attached paper.</b></p> <p>Governors requested involvement in the early stages of the Annual Development Plan (ADP) in order to understand the key strategic focus and align visits and their school involvement to those areas.</p> <p>The Head Teacher outlined her vision for the development of ADP; how she intends to draw up a three year planning cycle and then focus in on year one. She welcomed early governor involvement and outlined her strategic approach to changing senior leadership meeting structures to include cross-school involvement and named lead governors, where possible.</p> <p><b>Governors agreed</b> the removal of two named roles: Governors' Tea Parties and Family Mentors. These roles to be undertaken by members of the school senior leadership team.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Tea Parties - The Head Teacher outlined her plans to start weekly tea parties with the headteacher. Governors will be invited to attend and should try to attend at least once per year.</li> <li>b) Family Mentors – Office staff to manage the assignment of family mentors.</li> </ol>	
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7.	<p><b><u>Chair's report</u></b> The Chair elaborated on the points set out in her report circulated ahead of the meeting.</p> <p><b>Annual Schedule of Works</b> She explained the focus of the proposed Annual Schedule of Works. This is a work in progress and designed as a dynamic tool to facilitate planning, ensure statutory requirements are met and decisions are made in a timely fashion. <b>Governors agreed</b> that the document provided a good foundation to ensure meetings were focused and strategic.</p> <p>Committee Chairs confirmed their intention to feed into the Annual Schedule of Works. All Committee Chairs to attend a planning meeting with the Head Teacher to agree forecasting and planning, and feedback to the Chair of Governors.</p> <p><b>Skills Audit</b> It was noted that less than 50% of the Governing Board completed the skills audit at the end of the last academic year. In order to improve the effectiveness of the skills audit in future, it was agreed that a more bespoke set of questions be devised for the end of this academic year.</p> <p>The skills audit did identify a lack of experience in SEN. Governors agreed to fill currently vacant co-opted governor position with an individual with an interest in SEN. They discussed what background this individual might have, and agreed to explore community connections with people with multi-agency experience.</p> <p>Risk management skills were also identified as an area that could be strengthened in the skills audit. <b>Governors decided</b> that SEN skills are more of a priority for this next appointment.</p>	<p>Clerk to ensure central document is reviewed and kept up to date</p> <p>CG</p> <p>Recruitment deadline December 2017</p>
8.	<p><b><u>Head Teacher's report</u></b> Feedback provided on the Professional Learning Day held at the start of term. Governors were appraised of the progress of developing vision and values, based on the input from the Professional Learning Day and the Head Teacher set out her approach to developing these values further through parent and pupil focus groups, facilitated by the senior leadership team. She emphasised the importance of cross-school community buy-in to the process.</p> <p>Governors expressed positive feedback from their involvement in the Professional Learning Day and felt it really helped to improve their understanding of the dynamics of school life. They also commented that the Head Teacher's visibility around school had been noted and appreciated by parents and pupils alike.</p> <p>The Head Teacher was asked about her initial impression of The Vineyard and how that matched her expectations. She responded that she felt, on the whole, that the impression she had gathered during the rigorous interview period was proving to be accurate. The school is inclusive and has a strong community, however there are elements on which to improve, including ensuring all voices are heard to improve the sense of belonging, and also environmental, premises improvements that could be made as part of a process of continual improvement.</p>	
9.	<p><b><u>School Visits Policy</u></b> Governors reviewed the policy document circulated ahead of the meeting. They questioned what support the school can access from the Local Authority and whether staff were confident in that process. Richard Rosewell (Deputy Head Teacher) confirmed that he had recently attended educational visits training.</p> <p>Lead governor for Health &amp; Safety to audit the implementation of the school visit policy. <i>Post meeting note from CG - place on the agenda for the next resources committee to agree and timetable a governor visit.</i></p> <p><b>Governors discussed</b> approach to dealing with terrorism risk and agreed that the terrorist threat has to be considered at the time on a case by case basis.</p>	<p>Clerk /JL</p>

	<p>The Head Teacher outlined her experience building a bank of risk assessment templates for a variety of different scenarios, so that the staff have access to best practice and can select an appropriate response. <b>Governors agreed</b> that the policy proposed would help to mitigate risk, ensure a sensible approach is taken and give staff confidence to undertake educational visits.</p> <p><b>Governors questioned</b> whether the school's existing level of insurance provided by the Local Authority covers all the visits proposed for this year. They were informed that the school had appropriate levels of insurance.</p> <p><b>Governors agreed to ratify the policy and to review it every 3 years, unless significant change was required in the interim.</b></p> <p>Concern was raised that the Educational Visits policy had not been on the list of policies to review. They identified a requirement to draw up a list of statutory and important but non-statutory policies, along with a timeline for review. Responsibility for this was delegated to committee chairs.</p>	<p>Deadline – 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting this term</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><b>Out of Hours (OOH) Update</b></p> <p>The Governors were provided with an update from a recent meeting on the provision of on site OOH care between lead Governors and the Head Teacher.</p> <p>Governors raised concern about potential perceived conflicts of interest for parent governors involved in the decisions surrounding out of hours provision.</p> <p>The Governors were reassured that the potential for any bias is mitigated by the rigorous impact assessment being carried out to take into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Current providers</li> <li>b) Parent and children wellbeing</li> <li>c) Teachers and learning</li> <li>d) School staff</li> <li>e) School infrastructure</li> </ul> <p>The Governing Body will be required to sign off on the level of impact identified in the impact assessment and the full report will be available to review by all areas of the school community.</p> <p>Working party includes representatives from all areas of school community and will produce tender specifications before Autumn half term.</p> <p>The working detail of providing out of hours provision will form part of the Development &amp; Pupils committee.</p> <p><b>Governors acknowledged potential for conflict of interest, agreed that the measures undertaken so far remove opportunity for bias, however will remain mindful of the potential perceived conflict as the process progresses and will constantly review parent governor involvement.</b></p>	<p>Ensure OOH is on D&amp;P agenda</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><b>Future meetings</b></p> <p>The Resources Committee planned for 19 October 2017 has to be rearranged due to absence of Head Teacher and other Governors.</p> <p>Dates of other meetings agreed as set out in the circulated papers.</p> <p>Governors requested to notify the Clerk now if there are other potential clashes and to provide as much advance notice as possible regarding inability to attend future meetings.</p>	<p>Clerk to reorganise</p>

12.	<p><b><u>Minutes of last meeting</u></b>  Governors received an update from RR on the only outstanding matter arising from the 22 June 2017 FGB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanding Parent Mail to include the parent app – this has been implemented and is working.</li> </ul> <p>Governors reported that there are other functions within the app that could be used to improve efficiency and exploit the app's full potential</p> <p><b>Governors agreed that the minutes of the last meeting (22 June 2017) were a true and accurate record.</b></p>	AM to send RR summary email
13.	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Document sharing</b> – discussed using Google share as central point for document updates and review. Agreed to review Google vs LGFL portal and to take guidance from Governor Support regarding legal data sharing implications.</li> </ul>	Clerk to review and liaise with school IT.

7.45pm Meeting concluded.

**Date of next meeting: Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017, 6pm.**

**Summary of action points:**

Action point	Responsibility
Return Declaration of Interests for this academic year and reaffirmation of code of practise	Clerk to follow up
Complete updates to Constitution and Scheme of Delegation and circulate by email	CG
Manage central filing of Annual Schedule of Works document	Clerk
Review and update list of policies, including review period	All Chairs
Set dates for chairs meetings	RW/CG
Reorganise 19 October D&P Committee meeting	Clerk
Send summary email of extra ParentMail functionality to RR	AM
Review document sharing options	Clerk
Include Governor visit to audit school visit policy on the agenda of the next Resources committee	Clerk/JL
Ensure OOH update on the D&P committee schedule	Clerk/Chair of Committee
Draw up a list of statutory and important, non statutory policies for review, along with timeline	Chairs of Committees
Revise skills audit for end of academic year	CG