



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

Minutes of Full Governing Board meeting held on 17th June 2020 via video conference

Governors Present: Ruth Whymark (RW) Head Teacher
Graham Stewart (GS) Chair
Fern Carter (FC)
Firas Ali (FA)
Amy Salem (AS)
Anke Monesetel (AM)
Chloe Garth (CG)
Melanie Bywell (MB)
Simon Williams (SW)
Tara Lawson (TL)
Antony Cook (AC)
Lynne Woolley (LW)
Kirsty MacEachen (KM)

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

Absent: James Lane (JL)

Meeting started at 6.12pm.

Item	Action
1. <u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies received and accepted from James Lane.	
2. <u>Governors' Declaration of Interests</u> No direct or indirect pecuniary interests were declared.	
3. <u>Membership of Governing Board</u> No current vacancies, although Amy Salem will be leaving the school at the end of term, therefore there will be a staff governor vacancy from September 2020. Governors thanked Amy for her considerable contribution to the school and the governing board and wished her well for her future career progression.	
4. <u>Minutes from 1st April FGB and 20 May Extraordinary FGB</u>	

<p>Governors had received and reviewed minutes in advance of the meeting. No outstanding matters arising that had not been covered by agenda items. Governors agreed that both sets of minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting. Electronic copies to be published on the school website. Hard copies to be signed at first appropriate time and filed at school.</p>	Clerk
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<p>5. Chair's Actions GS confirmed that no emergency actions had been taken. Governors had reviewed and signed off the phased re-opening of school risk assessment at the extraordinary FGB on 15 May, and had oversight and input into the communications that had been sent to parents regarding the phased re-opening. Subsequently, following the change to government guidelines indicating that schools could admit more pupils if they were able, RW had informed GS (Chair) and AC (Vice Chair) that the school would make arrangements to welcome Y5 back to school. This was an operational decision, with no change to the risk assessments signed off by governors, which needed expedient action in order to communicate to parents and make provision for their return to school. Y5 due to return in similar cocoon arrangements to the rest of the school from Monday 22 June. The letter communicating this to parents had been circulated to governors when it was sent out to the parent community.</p>	
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<p>6. Head Teacher's Report RW presented her report to governors. Presentation to be circulated after the meeting. The % returning to school had increased from below 50% indicating that their child would be returning to school, to an attendance rate of up to 60%.</p>	
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6.20pm KM joins the meeting.

<p>6. Head Teacher's Report continued RW provided governors with an overview of the implementation of the risk assessment and the measures in place to facilitate the return to school of YR, Y1, Y6 and (starting Monday 22 June) Y5. She reported that all was going well. AS commented that children had seemed rather shell shocked in the first few days, but they were settling in well and that she felt Y6 had really benefited from the return to school. RR added that parents had commented how well organised the arrangements are and that feedback had been positive.</p> <p>RW took governors through attendance and engagement figures for each year group. She had reviewed the same figures with the School Improvement Partner as well. RW indicated that the school has had a high level of engagement from pupils in home learning and that the staff have pro actively engaged with all pupils, as well as actively monitoring pupils where there are concerns or where they had not been accessing the learning. Compared with the national figures reported in the press which state that nearly 50% of pupils have engaged with less than an hour of learning a day, RW stated that she could confidently say that children at The Vineyard were, overall, doing better than this average and that the SIP reported the school's level of engagement was at the top level for the borough of Richmond.</p> <p>Governors asked how the school defined "low engagement" as set out on the slides. RW informed them that this was derived from a number of data points, including a lack of productive work being uploaded onto the Class Dojo, a lack of interaction with apps such as Times Table Rockstars, Spelling Shed etc and participation feedback from calls home.</p> <p>Governors asked what plans there were to support low or non-engagers. RW explained that where there were higher figures for low engagement this related to individual children with difficult home circumstances. She said that they had recovery plans in place to assist them. She explained that teachers</p>	
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would need to be trained to diagnostically assess children's levels in class to flex lesson content to target gaps.

RW then talked governors through a set of scenarios and how the school would deal with them for a return in September. This included:

1. Normal return to school with no social distancing required. Scenario planning outlined the actions required to assess the children and slim down the curriculum to fill core gaps in English, Maths and Science and unpick any misconceptions from learning at home.
2. Cocoon of 30 with social distancing requirements. Scenario addressed the lack of PPA time and potentially shortening the school day to allow for planning and the provision of home learning for children who are forced to shield at home.
3. 1 metre social distancing, cocoons of 15. Scenario included teaching in 2 week cycles and addressed the possibility of managing formal assessment at home to facilitate targeted lesson planning. Teacher would teach both cocoons.
4. 2m distancing in place – requirement to split classes into smaller groups and would result in less attendance at school and more reliance on home learning.
5. Severe spike in virus and lockdown implemented.

RW commented that the school had learned a lot about what makes home learning interactive and engaging. If home learning is still required, they would look at more synchronistic live teaching and encourage dialogue with individual students and groups.

Governors asked why scenario 4 called for reduced cocoons of 10. RW indicated that at the moment classes were mostly being held outside, however during the winter months this would not be possible.

Governors asked whether all year groups would return to school.

RW said they would in all scenarios except for 4 and 5. She indicated that she was hopeful that scenario 2 would be possible in September.

Governors asked whether the school had considered creative approaches to repurposing other areas/buildings to accommodate classes.

RW said that they were considering use of the hall to deliver classes to a whole year group, however there are considerable logistical and safeguarding challenges to using off-site buildings to accommodate classes and marquees on the lawn were not a suitable solution for the colder months.

There was a discussion about whether it was possible to gather data on progress now in order to inform planning for September. RW said she had considered some options, but on balance it is best to wait until children return to school. AC suggested that some of the information about progress and engagement be shared to assuage parental anxiety. RW reassured governors that in her experience children's learning progress is not linear and that children can make exponential progress to catch up. She is not overly concerned about progress in The Vineyard context. There was a discussion about sharing information about pedagogy and the science of learning with parents in order to reassure them.

Staffing

RW updated governors on the situation with staff shielding or on the critical/vulnerable list. She also went through the new appointments to be made to Core Leadership Team, TLRs and NQTs/Schools Direct appointments.

Governors asked about the school's approach to career development since all new Director of Learning positions are to be filled by external candidates. RW explained that there were no internal applicants at this stage.

<p>Previously most appointments were made internal – she felt this was a natural part of the phase of development the team are at.</p> <p>Governors asked whether any of the scenarios outlined earlier were constrained by staffing numbers. RW indicated that in scenario 2 there is a knock-on effect on PPA provision which would need addressing.</p>	
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7.30pm Simon Williams leaves the meeting.

<p>6. <u>Head Teacher's Report continued.</u> Governors asked whether, assuming the government directed all children to return to school, there would no longer be an obligation to provide virtual learning for those who do not return to school. RW said that children have a legal right to schooling and she needs to cater for children who are unable to access education. She said that the government had extended the Oak National Academy, however children also need to be able to talk to the teacher and also consider the emotional welfare of the children.</p> <p>Governors wanted to acknowledge the amount of extra work and strain that RW and the rest of the team were under and asked about staff welfare and wellbeing. RW appreciated the support. She indicated that this was a very challenging time and the sense of responsibility to get it right in the absence of guidance and lack of evidence weighed heavily on her and the SLT. She thanked them for their support.</p>	
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7.45pm Kirsty MacEachen leaves the meeting.

<p>6. <u>Head Teacher's Report continued.</u> Ahead of the meeting RW had circulated a paper on Rapid Evidence Assessment regarding online learning practices. Governors commented that the report highlights that teacher feedback is important. They indicated that there has been limited back and forth between pupil and teacher in some year groups. RW explained that they were looking to develop the online learning offering and the reports circulated were an example of the research they were consulting.</p>	
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<p>7. <u>2019-20 Financial Monitoring Report</u> The 2019-20 FMR had been scrutinised in detail at the latest Resources Committee (minutes were circulated with papers) and circulated in advance to the FGB ahead of the meeting. GS explained that the outcome of 2019-20, taking into account commitments that have not been processed yet, will be a surplus of £60K. He thanked the School Business Manager (Svetlana Sanders) in her absence for a well managed financial year. Governors had no further questions.</p>	
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<p>8. <u>2020-21 Budget</u> The budget had been scrutinised in detail at the latest Resources Committee (minutes circulated with papers for this meeting) and was circulated to all governors ahead of this meeting. GS indicated that this was the healthiest the budget had looked for a while. The budget document also included projected Covid-19 related expenditure. Governors unanimously agreed the budget.</p>	
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<p>9. <u>Annual governance statement</u> GS to prepare and circulate for review after this meeting.</p>	
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Meeting concluded at 7.55pm.

Date of next meeting: To be communicated later.

Summary of action points:

Action point	Responsibility
File documents electronically and in hard copy when possible.	Clerk