



The Orchard School Governing Board

Bridge Road, East Molesey, KT8 9HT

Minutes of a meeting of the full governing board held on
Thursday 19th January 2023 at 6pm.

Governors Present: Mark Waters (MW) (Chair)
Sally Cary (SC) – Head Teacher
Joe Elliott (JE)
Sarah Adams (SA)
Toby Stevenson (TS)
Katie Donaldson (KD)
Kate Mole (KM)
Nina Vlahos (NV)
Marcel Norval (MN)
Damian Norris (DN) via Teams

In Attendance: Anna Mantle (Clerk)

Apologies Received: Victoria Campbell (VC)

Meeting started at 6.05pm.

		ACTION
1	<p><u>Board business</u> Apologies received and accepted from Victoria Campbell. Damian Norris joined the meeting via Teams. He confirmed that he was in a confidential setting.</p> <p>Kate Mole was running late. She joined the meeting at 6.25pm.</p> <p>The meeting was quorate throughout.</p>	
2	<p><u>Declaration of Interest</u> No declarations of interest with reference to agenda items were declared.</p>	
3	<p><u>Constitution</u></p> <p><u>Appointment of co-opted governor</u> Governors welcomed Marcel Norval to the board. They unanimously agreed to appoint him as a co-opted governor. He brings marketing, teaching and SENCO experience to the board. Start date: 19 January 2023 Term of office: 4 years End of term of office: 18 January 2027</p> <p><u>Appointment of Foundation governor</u> SC confirmed that she had received confirmation from the Voice Education Trust of Toby Stevenson's re-appointment as Foundation Governor. His current term of office is due to end 30 April. Re-appointment date: 1 May 2023 Term of office: 4 years End of term of office: 30 April 2027</p>	

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	<p><u>Succession planning</u> MW updated governors that he had approached someone who might be interested in meeting the team and taking on the role of Chair in September, if approved by the rest of the governing body. They have experience on multiple boards and knowledge of the local area and schools. Next stage is for them to attend upcoming FGBs as an observer.</p> <p><u>Associate Members</u> During the process of recruiting to fill the co-opted vacancy, two other very strong, skilled candidates came forward. Having reviewed their skills, the governing board discussed and agreed to offer both individuals the opportunity to join as Associate Members, in order to retain their skills, with a view to full appointment to the board when a position becomes available. MW to approach both individuals to find out whether they are interested.</p> <p><u>LA Governor</u> Damian Norris announced his intention to step down as a governor due to other commitments at the end of the academic year.</p>	
4	<p><u>Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising</u></p> <p>Governors unanimously agreed that the minutes from the last meeting (17th November 2022) were a true and accurate record. Hard copy signed and filed at school.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the action points. Governors who have not updated their DBS requested to take immediate action. All other outstanding actions had been completed. No other matters arising.</p>	TS, NV, KD, DN
5	<p><u>Chair's Actions</u> MW confirmed that he had not undertaken any emergency actions on behalf of the board since the last meeting.</p>	

6.25pm KM joins the meeting

6	<p><u>Head Teacher's Report</u> SC's report had been circulated for review ahead of the meeting.</p> <p>SC went through the report and highlighted areas for governors to note, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions (covered in item 8) • Attendance (covered in item 7) • Safeguarding (covered in item 13) <p><u>SEN/D</u> SC drew governors' attention to the information in her report. She informed them that staff were doing all they could to proactively address children's needs. She reported that the school are still waiting for the Educational Psychologist to come in and assess a child, having submitted the paperwork before July. There was a discussion about whether it was possible to access a private assessment, since the absence of the report delays access to support which is having a detrimental effect on the children involved. However, MN and SC reported that Surrey prefer their own assessors to be involved and private assessment reports are often rejected.</p> <p><u>Assessment data updates</u> The Autumn data capture at the end of the term shows results comparable to last year and progress is on a par with, or improved, since 2021-2.</p> <p>Governors asked JE whether he was noticing a move away from the impact of the pandemic since there is less of a gap now in Y2. They asked how the cohorts compare. JE said that the children's level of independence has been affected slightly. However, he added that the school had not been as badly affected as other schools.</p>	
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	<p>Family Support and ELSA support The Home School Link Worker (HSLW) continues to support children with various needs and the ELSAs continue to meet lots of children. Referrals to the ELSA are made through the parent or the teacher.</p> <p>There was a comment that the Parenting Puzzle courses run by the HSLW might consider a different timeslot because timing during the day is inaccessible to working parents.</p> <p>Staff training Subject leader development continues (as recommended by Ofsted) and at regular staff meetings, subject leaders are taking the lead this term. All staff have been observed. Two members of staff continue training with NEHS maths hub, other members of staff are undertaking or finishing NPQ training. Headteacher and SBM also receiving support and training in their first year in post. Efforts have been made to reduce training costs where possible accepting free training and leveraging links with local teaching school hubs and partnership school deep dives. Governors asked about how spending on training correlates with past years. SC said they are within budget at the moment, however that does not take into account SC and SBM increased training costs this year.</p> <p>Behaviour Governors asked about the bullying incident reported. SC reported that this was an incident involving friendship issues, which had escalated to a dispute between parents and had been investigated.</p> <p>Governors asked about the two children on reduced timetables. SC confirmed that this had been agreed through Team Around the Family meetings and was all agreed with Surrey. No C-SPA referral has been made. There are no safeguarding issues.</p> <p>Safeguarding Governors asked about the process to access C-SPA. SC explained that there were four levels of threshold:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Level 1 – Universal: no concerns. Education and health all fine. 2. Level 2 – Early Help: intervention requested from HSLW, ELSA, doctor and other professionals. 3. Level 3 – Targeted help: more concerns cause protection support lead to work with the child 4. Level 4 – Specialist: serious concerns cause for a C-SPA referral. <p>CPOMS is used to report all incidents. All DSLs are alerted. The team meets weekly where discussions are minuted. There is no single point for decision-making. All DSLs are aware of incidents, however action is taken immediately where necessary without waiting to consult the rest of the team.</p>	
7	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Attendance is at 95.6% (national average 92.2%)</p> <p>Some children are dipping below acceptable levels of absence and these children are monitored closely. There is one child whose persistent absence is a concern and action has been taken to invite them to join Breakfast Club to improve attendance.</p>	
8	<p>Admissions</p> <p>Admissions numbers for next year differ slightly to the number published in the HT report. As at 17 January, 211 applications have been made for the 23/24 reception intake. 82 of those are first preference.</p> <p>Local heads report that intake numbers are low across the area this year. Forecast numbers had been circulated with papers for the meeting.</p>	

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	<p>Governors asked about the situation at the moment. SC confirmed that there is a waiting list for Reception, however they are not full in years 1 and 2.</p> <p>Governors asked why the school was one above PAN in YR this year. SC explained that one Reception child is attached to the Centre, but also included in YR numbers.</p> <p>Governors also asked about deferrals. SC said that one parent had been in touch with regards deferring a school place due to developmental delay. The school are waiting for the child's EHCP to be finalised to determine whether The Orchard would be a suitable setting but are in support of the deferral in principle.</p> <p>Governors asked whether SC was provided with any information on likely SEND needs. SC said that she had already had parents in touch about support and the SENCO and Assistant Head also visit nurseries to monitor need, as well as reviewing EHCPS when they come through.</p> <p>Governors asked about the centre allocation. SC explained that there are two places at the centre for YR children and Surrey SEND are responsible for allocating the places.</p> <p>SC informed governors that they had received a request for a place for a refugee child for Y2, which has been agreed.</p> <p>Governors asked whether staff had been provided with additional training to provide the correct support for the child. SC said that training would be provided according to the level of need of the child.</p>	
9	<p>Finance The FMR was circulated just ahead of the meeting. Funds are tight at the moment. A review is underway of current practices to ensure that the budget-process is up to date.</p> <p><u>Update on submission of budget 23-24</u> The small deficit budget forecast for 23-24 was submitted within the deadline. No feedback has been received. It is estimated that the government change to funding could result in an increase of up to £35K. This is being checked.</p> <p>Governors asked whether that included the extra funding for energy. SC confirmed that it did.</p> <p>SC informed governors that work is being done to reduce the deficit. She said that local heads all reported similar situations. She said that there had been fantastic support from the PTA and that they had suggested setting up Amazon wishlists which parents have been happy to support.</p> <p>There was a discussion about curriculum resources. SC confirmed that they had reviewed the curriculum support subscriptions that the school pays for, particularly if they do not align closely with the curriculum. KM to talk to SC about the possibility of accessing maths resources.</p> <p><u>Buybacks</u> Governors received information about the buybacks purchased for 2023-4. No further questions.</p> <p><u>SFVS</u> The SBM and SC have started a draft of the SFVS which now needs checking by governors.</p> <p><u>DFE financial benchmarking data was circulated with the papers for the meeting.</u></p>	

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	<p>There had been one referral to the LADO last term. A risk assessment has been completed and there is no reason for concern. Governors asked about the welfare of the staff member. SC said that there was lots of support available and daily check-ins were made.</p> <p>Other items covered in the HT report.</p>	
14	<p><u>Governor monitoring visits</u></p> <p>Governors to visit on 8th March to meet subject leads. KM, MN and possibly SA and KD to join. SC to circulate possible questions in advance.</p> <p>21st February 1.15pm to 3pm – Foundation focused learning walk.</p>	KM, MN, SA?, KD?
15	<p><u>Policies</u></p> <p>SC had reviewed all the policies in advance of the meeting before circulating to governors.</p> <p>Sign off required for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging and Remissions – Toby Stevenson • Sex and relationships education – Mark Waters – reviewed and signed off. • Admissions – the consultation on wording ended this week. No questions were raised. Changes made when referring to looked after and post-looked after children: LAC/PLAC to CLA/PCLA • E-Safety – Kate Mole – reviewed and signed off. • Exclusions - DN <p>Reviewed in advance of the meeting by SC and the following governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND – Nina Vlahos • Accessibility Plan – Joe Elliott – reviewed and signed off • Governors' Allowances – Toby Stevenson • Equality Information – Joe Elliott – reviewed and signed off • Collective worship – Kate Donaldson • RE policy – Katie Donaldson 	
16	<p><u>Training</u></p> <p>Training schedule for Spring term circulated with these minutes.</p>	
17	<p><u>Date of next meeting</u></p> <p>23rd March 2023 – at 6pm</p>	
	<p><u>Part Two</u></p> <p>Confidential minutes taken and filed separately.</p>	

Meeting closed at 9pm

Professional Negligence Statement: Advice given by governors at The Orchard School is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity.

Confidentiality Statement: Governors should respect the confidence of those items of business which the Governing Body decides and not disclose what individual governors have said or how they have voted within a meeting.

Signed:

Dated:

Name: Chair of FGB



Summary of Action Points

	Agenda Item	Action	Who	When	STATUS
29 September 2022 FGB					
1	2	Declaration of Interests to be completed by absent governors	KM, KD and TS	ASAP	COMPLETED
2	3	Confirm Pupil Premium lead governor at the next meeting	TS	November meeting	COMPLETED
3	3	Review cluster groupings for Foundation Subjects	JE	Ahead of November meeting	COMPLETED
4	3	Add Foundation Subject lead governor roles to November meeting agenda	Clerk	November meeting	COMPLETED
5	4	Nominate TS and MW as Foundation Governors at the next Voice Education Trust meeting	SC	Next Trust meeting	
6	4	Add succession planning to the next meeting agenda	Clerk	Nov meeting	COMPLETED
7	7	Code of Conduct to be signed by absent governors.	KM, KD and TS	At next meeting	COMPLETED
8	8	Appointment of external advisor for HT appraisal to be minuted at the next meeting	Chair	November meeting	COMPLETED
9	12	Governors to review and submit questions about the SIP to MW in advance of next meeting	All	6 Nov	COMPLETED
10	14	Review all academisation agenda items and consider joining the working party. Group to be set up at next meeting	MW	November meeting	COMPLETED
11	15	Complete Safer Recruitment training	SA	ASAP	COMPLETED
12	15	Confirm having read KCSIE 2022 via email to the Clerk	All	ASAP	COMPLETED
13	18	Suggest dates for Foundation Subject visits before the end of the Autumn term.	SC	At November meeting	COMPLETED
17th November 2022					
14	2	Update register of interests on the website	Clerk	ASAP	COMPLETED
15	3	Make contact with prospective new governors	MW	ASAP	COMPLETED
16	4	Circulate dates for learning walk	SC	ASAP	COMPLETED
17	4	Governors who have not yet done so to renew their DBS	All	ASAP	ONGOING
18	5	Gather succession planning feedback	KD	ASAP	COMPLETED
19th January 2023					
19	9	Review SFVS and present to FGB at March meeting	TS	At March meeting	
20	11	Circulate review of Trust's obligations	MW	ASAP	
21	11	Present research findings at next FGB	KD, KM, SA	At March meeting	