



The Orchard School Governing Board

Bridge Road, East Molesey, KT8 9HT

Minutes of a meeting of the full governing board held on
Thursday 17th November 2022 at 6pm at school

With added minutes from a Teams call on 29th November 2022 at 6.45pm. Details of attendance on call in notes against agenda items 7 and 9.

Governors Present: Mark Waters (MW) (Chair)
Sally Cary (SC) – Head Teacher
Joe Elliott (JE)
Victoria Campbell (VC)
Sarah Adams (SA)
Toby Stevenson (TS)
Katie Donaldson (KD)
Kate Mole (KM)

In Attendance: Anna Mantle (Clerk)

Apologies Received: Nina Vlahos (NV)
Damian Norris (DN)

Meeting started at 6.10pm.

		ACTION
1	<p><u>Board business</u> Apologies received and accepted from Nina Vlahos and Damian Norris.</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> <p>KM, TS and KD completed the Register of Interests and signed the Code of Conduct. Action: Register of Interests to be updated on the website.</p>	Clerk
3	<p><u>Constitution</u></p> <p><u>One co-opted vacancy</u> An advert has been placed on Inspiring Governance and also sent to Governors for Schools. Two applications have been received. MW to make contact with both candidates to explain the role in more detail and pursue the applications further.</p> <p>Offices due to expire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before the next meeting – none • Before the end of the academic year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mark Waters (Foundation) 24 March 2023 ○ Toby Stevenson (Foundation) 30 April 2023 	MW



	<p>Mark Waters' term of office renewed at the last Voice Education Trust meeting – 18th October 2022.</p> <p>Renewal of Toby Stevenson's term of office to be proposed at the next Voice Education Trust meeting.</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 (29th September 2022) were a true and accurate record. Hard copy signed and filed at school.</p> <p>Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation subject nominated governors. JE confirmed that cluster teams of foundation subject leaders had been formed, matching strengths and weaknesses together to establish groups who would work together on developing subject lead capabilities and curriculum. A schedule of meetings will be shared with governors and responsibility for joining the groups to provide governor oversight will be allocated. • Pupil Premium oversight – Toby Stevenson confirmed that he will take on this governor responsibility. • HT appraisal panel – Jenell Chetty appointed as external advisor. Governors unanimously agreed the appointment. • Working group to research and pursue the academisation agenda – Kate Mole, Katie Donaldson and Sarah Adams to form the working group and report back to the governing body on progress. • SC to circulate possible dates for learning walk focussed on technical skills retrieval. • All governors who have not yet done so, to renew their DBS. 	SC All
5	<p><u>Succession planning</u></p> <p>There was a long discussion about succession planning. MW had previously announced his intention to step down as Chair at the end of the academic year. There is no-one within the current membership who has the time capacity to take on the Chair's role.</p> <p>It was agreed that action should be taken now to start the process of recruiting someone onto the board with the intention of them becoming Chair at the end of the academic year. Governors were agreed that it is important to take the time to find someone aligned with the school's values and in tune with the school community.</p> <p>Governors will draw up a list of requirements and all governors to consider individuals within their network to whom the board could make a proactive approach. It was also agreed that governors' roles and responsibilities will be re-visited. KD to lead.</p>	KD.
6	<p><u>Chair's Actions</u></p> <p>MW confirmed that he had not undertaken any emergency actions on behalf of the board since the last meeting.</p>	
7	<p><u>Head Teacher's Report</u></p> <p>Circulated in advance of the meeting were the SIP with notes on progress to date, as well as responses to questions received in advance, and the Head Teacher's written report.</p> <p>Target 1: To identify key knowledge, skills and vocabulary taught across the curriculum and build in opportunities for recall and retrieval Governors asked about the development of the curriculum for foundation subjects and how the national curriculum was implemented. SC informed governors that the national curriculum forms that basis for each subject area and teachers return to it to ensure that core learning is developmental and progressive.</p> <p>Governors asked about the desired effect of the audit of the curriculum. SC explained that the purpose was to ensure they were imparting "sticky knowledge" to ensure that learning progresses into long term memory and helps the children to make</p>	



<p>links and transfer skills from one subject area to another. This improves working memory, strengthens long term memory and reduces cognitive load.</p> <p>Target 2: To develop and refine a structured approach to the teaching of spelling and ensure children use them in daily writing in order to raise spelling ability across the school. Governors asked about the evidence based pedagogical approach that was going to be used to improve spelling outcomes. SC explained that the focus is on a language rich curriculum. Lessons start with an overview of key vocabulary, along with word mats to assist with access. Children are expected to spell words correctly. Spelling is taught through phonics and Y2 spelling words move on to focus on common exception words. Children are also taught specific focus words for particular topics and to use words relevant across the curriculum (e.g. evaluate, compare etc.)</p> <p>Target 3: To develop an online safety curriculum that is taught discreetly in computing lessons so that children can identify what they need to do to stay safe online. SC explained that in line with the acquisition of new iPads, funded by the PTA, there are plans to launch an initiative to help educate parents. She said that she was exploring doing something jointly with St Lawrence School next term. There are also resources that could be shared.</p> <p>There was a feeling among governors that parents would welcome information on how to manage online safety.</p> <p>Target 4: To ensure high attendance rates for pupils identified as persistent absentees Governors asked about attendance and for details/trends. SC updated governors on how the school rewards attendance (on a class basis, with individual reports on attendance published each term). Currently 25 children have attendance below 90%. The Inclusion Officer has reviewed the situation recently and has one child under monitoring due to concerns. SC also updated governors that there are two vulnerable children whose presence in school she monitors closely.</p> <p>Target 5: To continue to build emotional literacy and resilience in our pupils and to support their positive mental health Governors asked what is concerning children at the moment. SC reported that children are picking up on all the topical news themes that they hear about at home (war in Ukraine, increasing costs) and share these with each other. She explained the role of the Fantastic FRED scheme to support children’s mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Target 6: To plan and implement activities to achieve Healthy Schools Status Governors requested the opportunity to participate in the Healthy Schools Award. SC thanked them. The lead for the project is going to be on maternity leave, so this project will likely be on hold for a while. She said that she would keep governors in the loop.</p> <p>Target 8: To improve the effectiveness of our curriculum provision through the development of Subject Leaders and their monitoring, evaluating and ability to lead and manage the performance of others Governors asked how subject leaders are enabled to develop others to teach their subject well, building on the effective approaches to staff development learned through the maths hub work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Elliott – NPQLTD (Leading Teacher Development) – gave excellent CPD session on recall and retrieval techniques • Staff have done staff questionnaires to gauge confidence and areas of need in a variety of subjects • Year leader monitoring – to establish strengths and areas of need • Observations across year groups • Network Meetings and partnership with VET • Subject reports • Clear action plans 	
---	--

Advice given by Governors at this school is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time given in staff meetings to share teaching skills • Music curriculum for non-specialists • Plan – Engage – Sustain – Embed – Model • Co-planning is carried out in year groups • Peer observation is planned. <p>JE commented that everyone is passionate about their subject and all are keen to try new things.</p> <p>SC added that in the Spring term they will form teams of 3 teachers, where 2 will observe while one teaches and then switch over. This will be an opportunity for feedback and to try out new approaches.</p> <p>SC also provided (in her written responses) details of collaborations with other local schools.</p> <p>Target 9: To develop a whole school approach to SEND provision using the Provision Map tool, in order to map and manage provision effectively and efficiently across the school</p> <p>Governors asked about provision mapping for SEND.</p> <p>SC explained that they have a new online tool where all documents associated with one child and their EHCP or special needs can be uploaded. It generates a one page profile, as well as containing relevant details, targets, strategies and key staff working with the child. Elements of it can be accessed by parents as well.</p> <p><u>Head Teacher report</u> Governors commented that they liked the format.</p> <p>They commented that the 2022 outcomes were excellent.</p> <p>SC informed governors that the Analyse School Performance Data was still not available, however she had shared the IDSR and attainment summary reports in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><u>Admissions 2023</u> SC updated governors that 120+ prospective parents had attended the school for visits to date. She said she had two more visits planned before the 15 January 2023 deadline.</p> <p><u>Behaviour</u> SC updated governors there had been two half day exclusions this term, relating to the same child. The parents are supportive of the measures.</p>	
8	<p><u>Admissions</u></p> <p>It was discussed that there is a requirement to change the school admissions policy with regards the “nearest school” criterion. SC investigated further and provided an update with regards the situation at the extra online meeting called on 29th November 2022.</p> <p><i>Teams call held 29th November at 6.45pm with Sally Cary, Mark Waters, Sarah Adams, Victoria Campbell, Katie Donaldson and Toby Stevenson present (Anna Mantle in attendance). The meeting was quorate. SC updated governors that “nearest school” has been removed from the admissions criteria by the majority of Surrey schools. She had been advised by Surrey School Admissions that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The local authority no longer has rules on ‘Nearest school’ – they have removed it.</i> • <i>With the inclusion of nearest school our catchment has undefinable boundaries and could be confusing to parents – this may leave us open to defending decisions should an adjudicator become involved in decision making.</i> • <i>By removing ‘nearest school’ it wouldn’t alter the pattern of admission.</i> 	



	<p>Governors agreed to remove the “nearest school” criterion. Consultation to be submitted by the end of the week to allow six weeks’ consultation before 15 January 2023.</p>	
9	<p>Finance The October FMR was circulated in advance along with forecast energy spend projections.</p> <p>SC informed governors that the budget is stretched thin. Energy costs are concerning, the supply budget is already overspent, and they have looked at curriculum resource costs that can be reduced.</p>	
10	<p>Budget 2023-24 The draft budget for next year in its first iteration was shared with governors at the meeting. Katie Carter (School Business Manager) is receiving support from the Local Authority to put the budget together since this is her first year undertaking this process.</p> <p>There was a discussion about staffing and the costs associated. It was also discussed whether training could be carried out in-house to reduce costs.</p> <p>Governors also discussed whether lettings could be optimised and income maximised. However, space is limited on site.</p> <p>SC informed governors that she was acutely aware of the strains on the budget and looking to negotiate good deals, explore different approaches and resource requirements in different ways.</p> <p>A Teams call was arranged on 29th November to review the final draft and sign off.</p> <p><i>Teams call meeting held 29th November at 6.45pm with Sally Cary, Mark Waters, Sarah Adams, Victoria Campbell, Katie Donaldson and Toby Stevenson in attendance. The meeting was quorate throughout.</i></p> <p><i>MW had shared the final draft budget and Katie Carter’s (School Business Manager) notes via email the day before.</i></p> <p><i>SC explained that they were being supported by an experienced business manager from Strictly Education and she was confident that the budget they were proposing would be accepted. It is projecting £16K deficit in Year 1. However additional funding for schools has recently been announced, although exact details have not been confirmed and are not in the budget as it stands. A carbon neutral plant is also being fitted at school which should result in a significant reduction in gas costs. The energy budget has been reduced by £10K to account for this, however the supplier is confident that this is a very conservative reduction and that it should be more substantial, although they are not committing to a number at this stage.</i></p> <p><i>There was a discussion among governors about changes in staffing structure which may have to be considered, depending on the level of extra funding available next year.</i></p> <p><i>There was also a discussion about the projected situation in years 2 and 3 where the deficit increases. SC informed governors that all the Heads she had spoken to are struggling with the same challenges.</i></p> <p>Governors agreed the draft budget, acknowledging the deficit of £16K.</p> <p><i>Governors thanked SC and Katie Carter for their hard work.</i></p>	
11	<p>School Fund Governors received the audited accounts for the School Fund, year ending 31 August 2022.</p> <p>No further questions.</p>	



12	Data No further information. Covered under Head Teacher's report.	
13	Safeguarding Minor updates have been made to the safeguarding action plan. A copy of the report was circulated ahead of the meeting. MW had conducted a review of the SCR on a recent visit to school (11 November). All was in order and up to date.	
14	Pupil Premium Strategy Governors had received the pupil premium strategy ahead of the meeting. No further questions.	
15	Partnerships <u>Academisation:</u> Working party to lead research into possibilities. <u>Voice Education Trust:</u> The recent AGM raised some debate questioning the future of the Trust. MW commented that the Trust is sustainable if the Head Teachers are behind it. There is a Foundation Governors meeting scheduled for 17 th January. Further updates will be provided after that.	
16	Governor Monitoring Visits MW undertook a Health & Safety walk around site with Katie Carter on Friday 11 th November. He raised that he had no concerns, but would like to introduce a traffic light system to flag minor issues for review. He reiterated that the site is well maintained and monitored.	
17	Policies Reviewed in advance of the meeting by SC and the following governors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND – Nina Vlahos • Accessibility Plan – Joe Elliott • Governors' Allowances – Toby Stevenson • Equality Information – Joe Elliott • Collective worship – Kate Donaldson • RE policy – Katie Donaldson Equality objectives and plan	
18	Training Safer Recruitment Training undertaken online by Sarah Adams	
19	Date of next meeting 19 th January at 6pm	

Meeting closed at 8pm

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	
15	3	Make contact with prospective new governors	MW	ASAP	
16	4	Circulate dates for learning walk	SC	ASAP	
17	4	Governors who have not yet done so to renew their DBS	All	ASAP	
18	5	Gather succession planning feedback	KD	ASAP	