



The Vineyard School Governing Body

Minutes of the Full Governing Body held on 19 March 2024 at 6 pm

Governors present:

#	Antony Cook, Chair	AC			Frances Bracegirdle, Headteacher	FB
	Firas Ali	FA		#	Fliss Buckles	BK
	Lizzie Lee	LL		#	James Lane	JL
	Kirsty MacEachen, Vice-Chair	KM		#	Alice McArdle	AM
	Nicola Rossington	NR			Philippe Tapernoux	PT
	Tom Way	TW				

denotes absent

In attendance:

	Liz Annesley, Clerk	LA			Amy Reilly, Associate Governor	AR
	Svetlana Koksharova, SBM	SK			Zahra Alomani, Observer	ZA

Item		Action
1	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <p>Everyone was welcomed to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Fliss Buckles, Antony Cook, James Lane and Alice McArdle.</p> <p>In the absence of the Chair, Kirsty MacEachen the Vice-Chair led the meeting. She apologised that she would need to leave the meeting at 7:30 pm.</p> <p>Zahra Alomani, an observer and governor to be appointed was welcomed to the meeting. Svetlana Koksharova, the School Business Manager, attended the first part of the meeting. The meeting was quorate throughout.</p>	
2	<p>Declaration of Interests</p> <p>There were no interests declared in relation to the set agenda.</p>	
3	<p>Budget assumptions</p> <p>PT, the finance link governor, presented the main proposed budget findings. The draft budget for 2024-25 shows a shortfall of £247k which will mean the school goes into deficit in early 2025-26. This deficit is driven by a number of factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Pupil numbers b) Catering costs c) Increase in staff costs d) SRP <p>a) Forecast pupil numbers for September do not currently suggest 3 full classes. This is a problem for schools across London and is driven by falling birth rates. This is expensive for the school as funding for the following year is driven by the number of pupils in the school on the October</p>	



	<p>census day. Incomplete classes still need to be led by a teacher and the school cannot put more than 30 children in a class.</p> <p>b) The London mayor’s free school meals initiative for KS2 pupils is not adequately funded and the school used to receive more money from parents paying for these meals. In addition, the catering company has put up its prices. This all means that money that should be spent on education is being spent to provide meals for children. The amounts to be paid for the KS1 universal free school meals programme have not yet been quantified. All schools are in the same position and some schools are asking families to contribute to the cost of school meals.</p> <p>Q: Could we ask our families to contribute? We are not sure whether our families would willingly contribute to school meals.</p> <p>Q: Could we use parent volunteers to reduce the lunchtime staffing cost? No, lunchtime work is intensive and not appropriate for volunteers. We did try using volunteers before but found the volunteers were following their own agenda.</p> <p>c) Staffing costs have increased significantly over the past couple of years. The teacher pay award of 6.5% was only part met by the government (3%) and schools were left to fund the balance. We do not yet know what proportion of the teachers pay award this year will be funded. There has also been a 5% increase in the employers’ contributions to teachers’ pensions which we expect to be funded but do not yet know how this funding will be calculated. Support staff pay increases have not been funded so the school needs to meet all these increase in costs itself.</p> <p>d) The payments for the SRP are based on a strict minimum staffing model. However, the funding rates to cover staffing costs were set in 2019 and have not been revised upwards despite the significant increase in staffing costs since then. This means that the SRP is a cost to the school budget.</p> <p>There are a number of uncertainties in the budget which may lead to some improvement in the final budget but it will still be negative. The view of the Resources Committee was that given all the uncertainties, it was too soon to spend time fine-tuning the budget or to start preparing plans which might put the quality of education at risk.</p> <p>Q: How much income can we generate? Shouldn’t this be used for enhancing our facilities/offer rather than supplementing government funding? The Resources Committee has asked the school to do a more detailed study on income generation to quantify the potential amount we could raise. Ideally we would want this money used to enhance our offer but if government funding is inadequate, it will have to be used to support the basics. It should be noted that increasing lettings income also comes with an increase in costs as the school needs to pay for increased caretaker and cleaning hours.</p>	
4	<p>Draft budget for 2024-25 and next 2 years</p> <p>Q: What is the risk of our submitting a budget to AfC that goes into deficit in Year 2? There is little risk of being asked for further action at the moment because AfC has not even asked schools which are submitting a deficit budget in Year 1 to prepare a deficit recovery plan yet. We have a little more time to prepare our longer term plans. There are many local schools which are in a worse position than The Vineyard.</p> <p>Q: Can we submit a narrative with our budget figures? No, there is no space for a narrative.</p> <p>The governors agreed to approve the draft budget for 2024-25 and next 2 years and to ask SK to send it to AfC. The governors thanked SK for all her hard work in preparing the budget.</p>	SK



5	<p>SFVS statement The SFVS statement was approved and should be submitted to AfC. This had already been studied within the Resources Committee.</p>	SK
6	<p>Section 2 minutes SK left the meeting.</p>	
7	<p>Headteacher's report</p> <p><u>SEND</u> There had been a recent SEND review which will be covered more fully in the SD&P Committee.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u></p> <p>Q: What caused the 0.5 day suspension? There are 2 children who are taking up a significant amount of SLT time where the school is not the right place for them; the suspension relates to one of these children.</p> <p>Q: Is there anything that Governors can do to support the school on this? Not really, the school is in dialogue with AfC.</p> <p><u>SDP</u> The school had shared the current progress within the SDP. Any discussion will be taken in the SD&P committee.</p> <p><u>Pupil demographics</u> The school had shared the current pupil demographics.</p> <p>Q: Do we know why children are transferring to other local schools? This is usually a matter of convenience when families get a place at a school closer to their home.</p> <p>Q: Why is dyslexia not listed on the list of SEND? This is a general list of SEND conditions which are categorised, not one generated by the school. The school always employs dyslexic-friendly approaches to teaching.</p> <p><u>Staff well-being survey</u> The results had been shared prior to the meeting. Less than 50% of staff had completed the survey. Although the survey indicates high levels of stress amongst staff, this has not been reflected in the staff appraisals which are currently ongoing.</p>	
8	<p>SIP report This had been previously circulated.</p> <p>Q: How do you share the school's behaviour plans with parents? The school has held a workshop on the school's approach to behaviour management for families.</p>	
9	<p>Governor effectiveness survey summary This will be taken to the SD&P committee and discussed more fully there as the potential changes to how we monitor the curriculum affects those governors the most.</p>	
10	<p>Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising The minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 December 2023 were agreed and signed by the acting Chair. Matters arising not covered in the minutes are covered in the table below.</p>	



11	<p>Report from SD&P committee Governors had previously read the draft minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2023. There were no questions.</p>	
12	<p>Report from Resources committee Governors had previously read the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2024 and the draft minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2024. There were no further questions following the detailed discussion of the budget above.</p> <p>KM left the meeting. FA took the Chair.</p>	
13	<p>Governor business</p> <p>a) <u>Term dates</u> The term dates for 2024-25 have been amended slightly. The school can no longer afford to offer staff a well-being day of their choice. However this is the benefit that staff most appreciated and so this has been replaced by a well-being day for all staff. The number of days that pupils are taught remains unchanged at 190 days.</p> <p>Q: Would staff prefer this day to be tied to a half-term or school holiday? A staff survey had been held and the date selected by the majority.</p> <p>The revised term dates for 2024-25 were agreed.</p> <p>b) <u>Governor website information</u> The governor profiles were agreed. Governors were encouraged to include a photo and should send this to the clerk. This will be put on the website as soon as possible.</p> <p>c) <u>School name</u> On changing the Instrument of Governance it was noticed that the school was still known as The Vineyard Primary School in Richmond borough whereas elsewhere it is referred to as The Vineyard School. This has now been corrected and the Instrument of Governance refers to The Vineyard school.</p>	All, Clerk
14	<p>Governor training</p> <p>a) A report highlighting all the training undertaken by governors this Spring term had been circulated. Governors were urged to check that the record was correct and to let the clerk know of any errors.</p> <p>b) The training schedule for the rest of the academic year 2023-24 had been circulated and governors encouraged to book on courses. It was noted that AfC advises governors to attend at least 3 courses per year.</p>	All All
15	<p>Policies</p> <p>a) <u>Accessibility plan</u> This had been reviewed following the introduction of the SRP. The plan was agreed.</p> <p>b) <u>Behaviour Policy</u> This had been reviewed following the introduction of the SRP. This policy was agreed.</p> <p>c) <u>Staff Grievance Policy</u> The governors agreed to adopt the latest policy from AfC as they would use AfC HR advice if such a situation arose.</p> <p>d) <u>Staff Disciplinary Policy</u> The governors agreed to adopt the latest policy from AfC as they would use AfC HR advice in such a situation.</p>	



	<p>Q: Could we add a flowchart as an appendix to make the timescales clearer? This is a good idea; we will see if we have the time to add this.</p> <p>e) <u>Exclusion guidance from AfC</u> The governors had previously adopted this guidance. It was noted that the model letters to parents have been updated to reflect changes in government policy.</p>	Clerk
16	<p>Governor appointments/resignations Zahra Alomani introduced herself to the governors, having previously met with some of them. Zahra has worked in a secondary school as an English teacher for a number of years. She is currently studying for a Master’s degree in Education Policy and is interested in working on the School Development and Pupils Committee. The governors agreed unanimously to elect Zahra.</p> <p>Term of office: 4 years Date of appointment: 19 March 2024 Governor category: Co-opted</p>	
17	<p>AOB Section 2.</p> <p>The meeting ended at 7:55 pm.</p>	
	<p>Papers considered at meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Draft 3 Yr Budget assumptions 2024 4 3 Yr Draft budget plan template 2024-25 5 SFVS statement 2024 6 Policy options 7a March 2024 Headteacher’s report to governors 7b SDP 2023-25 7c Pupil Demographics 7d Staff well-being survey Spring 2024 8 Autumn SIP report 9 Governor effectiveness survey Mar 2024 10 2301205 FGB Draft Minutes 5 Dec 23 11 231219 SD&P Draft Minutes 19 Dec 23 12a 240124 Resources Minutes Section 1 24 Jan 24 12b 240124 Resources Minutes Confidential Section 2 24 Jan 24 12c 240306 Resources Draft Minutes Section 1 6 Mar 24 12d 240306 Resources Draft Minutes Confidential Section 2 6 Mar 24 13a Term dates for 2024-25 13b Governor profiles 13c Instrument of Governance 14a Governor training record Spring 2024 14b AfC School Governance CPD Schedule for 2023-24 15a Accessibility Plan 15b Behaviour Policy 15c Staff grievance policy 15d Staff disciplinary policy 	
<p>PROPOSED MEETING DATES:</p> <p>2024 26 March SD&P</p>		



21 May SD&P
 12 June Resources
 25 June FGB
 16 July SD&P

Please note that all FGB and SD&P meetings are held at school on a Tuesday at 6:00 pm.
 Resources meetings are held at school on a Wednesday at 7:30 am.

TRAINING AND INFORMATION LINKS:

AfC: Training [Achieving for Children \(afcservices.org.uk\)](https://afcservices.org.uk)

NGA: Training Follow NGA General information link below and click on 'Learning Link' top right hand corner

NGA: General information [For Schools & Trusts | National Governance Association \(nga.org.uk\)](https://nga.org.uk)

Governorhub: General information [Sign into GovernorHub](https://governorhub.com)

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS				
Item No.	Actions from meeting on 19 March 2024	Who	When	Status
4	Send draft budget to AfC	SK	28/3/24	
5	Send SFVS to AfC	SK	31/3/24	
13	Send photos to Clerk and upload governor profiles onto website	All, Clerk	1/5/24	
14	Check training record and book courses	All	Ongoing	
15	Add flowchart to Staff disciplinary policy	Clerk	21/5/24	
SUMMARY OF ACTIONS				
Item No.	Actions from meeting on 5 December 2023	Who	When	Status
5	Send any other Ofsted questions to the clerk	All	21/12/23	Completed
6	Set up curriculum monitoring visits	All	31/3/24	Completed
12	Check training record and book courses	All		Completed
13	Send short biography to clerk	All	21/12/23	Completed
13	Ask Governor Support steps to change school name	Clerk	6/3/24	Completed
14	Add Issue of Penalty notice to Attendance Policy and put on website	AM	15/1/24	Completed
SUMMARY OF ACTIONS				
Item No.	Actions from meeting on 27 June 2023	Who	When	Status
5	Draw up plan of available building space	JL	Summer 2024	
5	Develop longer-term strategy for building development, use and funding	JL	Summer 2024	