

The Swanage School  
**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE**  
 Wednesday 8 March 2017, 5.30pm

Present: Carl Styants (Chair), Geoff Atkinson, Mark Hatto, Tristram Hobson (Headteacher), Stephen Parker, Catherine Starmer-Howes  
 In attendance: Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Katy Kerr (Business Manager)

Item		Action	Lead	Date
STF 2.1	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were received from William Knight.			
STF 2.2	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> There were no new declarations of interest or conflict with any agenda item.			
STF 2.3	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2016 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed.			
STF 2.4	<b>Matters Arising</b>  <u>STF 3.8 Physical Restraint (Policy)</u> It was confirmed that a paragraph on reasonable use of force had been inserted into the Behaviour & Exclusion Policy. The Staff Code of Conduct and/or Staff Handbook is still to be updated with a cross reference to this policy, but this was in hand.	Update Code of Conduct / Handbook	KK/Clerk	Mar '17
STF 2.5	<b>Headteacher's Staffing Report</b> TH invited questions on his written report, and highlighted the following:  1) <u>Starters &amp; leavers</u> Appointments had been made for additional posts of Science Teacher (commencing September 2017) and DT Technician (commenced November 2016). Both were internal candidates. Two staff had resigned since the last report; one had left teaching, the other would be leaving at the end of the academic year for promotion elsewhere.			

	<p>2) <u>Recruitment</u> In addition to the posts above, the post of Music Teacher had been advertised but had not led to appointment. Options were currently being considered and included re-advertising or moving from Music GCSE to a Performing Arts GCSE, given that this would play to the strengths of current staff and the current student cohort. In either case, the school would ensure that there is a music teacher for the current Year 10 students throughout their Music GCSE.</p> <p>3) <u>Grievance &amp; discipline</u> There were no active grievance or discipline cases to report.</p> <p>4) <u>Performance management</u> All staff had been appraised and all of those eligible for performance-related pay progression had progressed to the next point on their pay scale.</p> <p>5) <u>Staff absence</u> Staff attendance was currently at 95.6% and compared to national averages this was considered very acceptable, particularly when taking into account that the average had been significantly skewed downwards by two long-term absences (23 days and 9 days).</p> <p>Noting the huge success of the recent Rock of Ages show at the Mowlem Theatre, the committee wished to place on record their recognition of, and thanks for, the significant commitment of time and energy given by staff for the staging of the performance.</p>	Thank staff on behalf of committee	Chair	Mar '17
STF 2.6	<p><b>Staff Turnover</b> The committee received a confidential report on staff recruitment and turnover. This provided the duration of employment and reason for leaving for all staff members who had left the employment of the school since it opened, along with a summary of overall headcount during each year of this period. The report also summarised the outcome of a recent review of the recruitment process. The committee discussed the report, in particular noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that over the three-year period covering the academic years 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16, the staff headcount had risen from a total of 27 staff to 47 staff as the school had grown. Of these, the number of teaching staff had risen from 11 to 22, learning support staff from 3 to 10 and support staff from 13 to 15. At full capacity approximately 4 or 5 additional teaching staff would be required and so the growth was not yet complete. It was recognised that the perception</li> </ul>			

among parents and the local community that there has been a lot of new staff is in large part due to this expansion rather than existing staff leaving.

- high staff turnover had affected the 2014/15 academic year however, with 9 teachers (from 14 posts), 2 learning support staff (from 7 posts) and 4 support staff (from 10 posts) leaving. The particular pressures of this year were acknowledged and may have contributed to some attrition, but it was also noted that this number included one retiree, three staff who emigrated and one who reached the end of a fixed term contract. By contrast, only 6 teachers (from 22 posts), 2 learning support staff (from 10 posts) and no support staff had left during 2015/16.
- staff turnover of some degree must be expected where there are few internal promotion opportunities, a function of the school being small and also reflecting success in recruiting able, ambitious people.
- the human-scale relationship between staff and students at the school and the high likelihood of a student being taught by all, or nearly all, of the teachers, mean that a staff member leaving is far more noticeable to all students (and thereby to their parents) than it would be in a large school, potentially contributing to a perception of high turnover.
- in terms of benchmarking against other schools, KK noted that published national information on average school level turnover was difficult to find. Data published in 2010 suggested that annual turnover for teachers at academies was 17.2% for full-time teachers and 30.5% for part-time teachers. The 2015/16 percentage of 27% of all teachers at the school was therefore not wildly out of line.

TH outlined the changes that have been made to the recruitment process for teaching staff following a review by the Senior Leadership Team. Interview questions had been changed to be more deeply probing in areas of importance to the values and teaching methods of the school. A team exercise with the head of department had been added, with a view to assessing the ability of the candidate to be reflective in professional practice and effective in working with others. These changes had been made with the aim of recruiting only those who have the skills and reflective practices needed to prosper at the school given the high standards expected, and to be a successful part of the teaching team by sharing an understanding and belief in its ethos, teaching practices and continual improvement through reflective processes. He noted that in recent interviews these changes had already proved informative. The

	<p>committee heard that staff induction is held over four days (two in September and two in January) and that TH felt the leadership team were effective in their training relating to expectations, value and vision.</p> <p>Recognising the steadier leaver rate in 2015/16 and taking into account the progression, family or relocation reasons that many staff have for leaving, coupled with the improvements to the recruitment process, the committee concluded that there was no cause to be overly concerned with staff turnover at the present time.</p>			
STF 2.7	<p><b>School Development Plan</b> The committee has responsibility for oversight of only one action on the School Development Plan for 2016/17, that of leadership development for school leaders. TH outlined the progress in hand, noting that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the three members of the Senior Leadership Team were each undertaking development activities, with the Business Manager undertaking a Postgraduate Diploma in Charity Accounting, the Deputy Headteacher leading on the teaching school bid and the Headteacher hoping to qualify as a National Leader in Education as part of that bid.</li> <li>- an external coach had, to date, worked with one of the four Curriculum Area Leaders (CALs). The CALs had taken on responsibilities that, in larger schools, would be consistent with, for example, the role of an Assistant Headteacher, for example in agreeing the curriculum model, which were seen to be core to their leadership development. If the school gained Teaching School status, the CALs would have the opportunity to qualify as Specialist Leaders in Education (SLE's) to provide advice and coaching externally.</li> <li>- the Heads of House had taken proactive "ownership" of their roles, seen to be key to their development. They were gaining 1-to-1 coaching from an external coach and a group coaching session is planned.</li> </ul>			
STF 2.8	<p><b>Non-teaching Staff Pay-Scale</b> KK reported that the proposed pay-scale for non-teaching staff had been seen and agreed from a financial perspective by the Finance &amp; Premises Committee and had been referred to the Staffing Committee for consideration. The pay-scale was intended to bring an equivalent structure to non-teaching staff as there is for teaching staff, creating order to a system that had unfolded over time in an ad-hoc fashion. The proposals covered a salary scale from the level of apprentice upwards through the</p>			

	<p>age brackets below the current minimum wage, and then up in scales beyond this level. Going forward, staff would be recruited either on a range or to a scale. There was no anticipated change to the salary level paid for the various roles, which were broadly in line with local government salaries.</p> <p><b>APPROVED the proposed pay-scale for non-teaching staff.</b></p>	Implement	KK	Jul '17
STF 2.9	<p><b>Risk Register</b> The committee considered the risks relating to staffing issues, as identified on the risk register.</p> <p><b>Agreed there were no changes needed to the likelihood and impact of the various risks, or their weighted risk scores, but an update to the wording was agreed for the following:</b></p> <p>Risk “<i>staff matter not referred to HR professional, may lead to tribunals</i>” with control procedure of “<i>HR advice sought as appropriate on all non routine issues</i>” changed to:</p> <p>Risk “<i>staff matters no dealt with effectively</i>” with a control procedure of “<i>ensure policies are fit for purpose and followed. HR advice sought as appropriate.</i>”</p>	Update register	KK	Mar '17
STF 2.10	<p><b>Policies</b> <b>APPROVED minor amendments to the Staff Induction &amp; Training Policy.</b></p>	Update	Clerk	Mar '17
STF 2.11	<p><b>Any Other Business</b> None.</p>			
STF 2.12	<p><b>Confidentiality</b> It was agreed the report on staff turnover was highly confidential, but could be minuted without needing to refer to the detail or individual staff members.</p>			
	<p><b>Next Meeting</b> Wednesday 21 June 2017, 5.30pm.</p>			
	<p>The meeting closed at 6.50pm</p>			