THE SWANAGE SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

17 March 2015, 6.30pm

Present: Paul Angel (Chair), Geoff Atkinson, Nick Brady, Lisa Gray, Tristram Hobson (Headteacher), William Knight, John Lejeune, Helen O'Connor, Amanda Rowley, Lorna Russ, Al Stephens, Isobel Tooley.

In attendance: Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Katy Kerr (Business Manager), Jenny Maraspin (Deputy Headteacher).

Item		Action	Lead	Date
F5.1	**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Apologies were received and accepted from Vikki Edwards, Steve Parker and John Palmer-Snellin. Carl Styants was not present.			
F5.2	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** There were no declarations of new business interest or potential conflict of interest arising from any agenda item.			
F5.3	**GOVERNING BODY CONSTITUTION** 1. <u>Staff Governor vacancy</u> The Staff Governor vacancy would be re-advertised as no expressions of interest had been received to date.			
	2. <u>Sub-committee membership</u> PA reported that John Palmer-Snellin had joined the Staffing Committee. Lorna Russ, the new Parent Governor, will shadow upcoming meetings.			
	3. <u>Associate Governors</u> PA reported that he had received confirmation from Collette Drayson and Steve Tooley that they would be willing to continue as Associate Governors for their particular roles, and had spoken to Jo Tatchell regarding the non-continuance of her previous Associate role.			
	4. <u>Link Governor for E-safety</u> **APPROVED the recommendation from the Student Committee that there be a link governor for e-safety, separate to the SEN & safeguarding link governor role, and APPOINTED Nick Brady to this position.**			

F5.4	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING			
	The minutes of the meeting of the Full Governing Body held on 4 February 2015 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed.			
	WK raised a previously unreported error in the minutes for the meeting of 4 November 2014, in relation to item 2.10 on agreeing the limits of financial delegation. The minute should have read (changes in italics):			
	WK read out the current financial limits of delegation: The Business Manager can *authorise expenditure* up to £2,000 The Headteacher *can authorise expenditure* up to £10,000. The Finance and Premises committee *can authorise expenditure* up to £100,000. The Full Governing Body *authorises expenditure* over £100,000. The Headteacher can approve budget *virements of up to £10,000*; anything higher had to have *Finance & Premises Committee* approval.			
F5.5	MATTERS ARISING & ACTIONS			
	F4.3.vi Governor Induction Induction of the new parent governor is ongoing, and other recently appointed governors will also be invited to planned induction meetings. Dorset County Council (DCC) training for new governors was recommended for those who have not yet attended.			
	F4.7 Admission Arrangements The agreed amendments for 2015/16 had been made and published on the website. Consideration of proposals for 2017/18 and beyond would be carried forward.	Carry forward.	Clerk	June 2015
	F4.8 Year 7 Catch-up Funding Information has been published on the website.			
	F4.10.b (ii) SEN Information Report Has been published on the website.			
	F4.10.b (iii) SEND Policy As agreed, the re-drafted SEND policy, tabled but not considered at the last meeting, had been published on the website pending approval at the current meeting (see Agenda Item 5.8.2).			

	F4.10.b (iv) <u>Students with Medical Conditions Policy</u> This would be published along with other policies after being updated to a common house-style.			
	F4.12 <u>Governor Training - Preparing for Ofsted</u> The training notes from DCC's "Preparing for Ofsted" course had been circulated to all governors.			
F5.6	**SCHEME OF DELEGATION** 1. <u>Staffing Committee</u> Considered proposals put forward by the Staffing Committee for changes to it's terms of reference in the Scheme of Delegation. The key change proposed was that the governing body be responsible for the appointment and dismissal of the entire Senior Leadership Team of Headteacher (HT), Deputy Headteacher (DHT) and Business Manager, whereas previously responsibility had been only for the HT and DHT.			
	APPROVED the recommended changes to the terms of reference of the Staffing Committee.			
	2. <u>Governor Panels</u> PA explained that whilst four governor panels are provided for in the existing Scheme of Delegation, only one, "Exclusions Panel" had been written up. These terms had been re-drafted, in line with the Behaviour, Attendance & Exclusions Policy, and terms had been drafted for the Student Admissions Panel, Staff Grievance & Dismissal Appeal Panel and Complaints Panel.			
	APPROVED the proposed terms of reference for governor panels.	Update SoD	Clerk	27.03.15
	[Isobel Tooley joined the meeting]			
F5.7	**HEADTEACHER'S REPORT** TH had circulated his report, on which governors sought further information on a number of issues:			
	1. <u>Blooms Taxonomy</u> An explanation of Blooms Taxonomy was requested and TH outlined the theory of a hierarchy of thinking skills and explained how staff can use this as the basis for deeper level questioning in relation to students' work.			

	2. Recruitment Interviews had taken place for teaching posts in Design Technology, Humanities, Physical Education, Music, Modern Foreign Languages and Science. TH reported that the candidates had been of excellent calibre and that he was delighted by the appointments made. WK added that every candidate he had seen had been genuinely enthusiastic about the School, whilst GA and IT noted that the high number and quality of applications was very encouraging.			
	TH formally thanked WK and GA for their help with the interview process.			
	Governors asked TH to record thanks to the student panel who took part.	Thanks to student panel.	TH	27.03.15
	3. Attendance Governors questioned whether attendance remained problematic. TH confirmed that it was and that it is a key concern, being the only core priority not being met. Examples of the work being done to tackle it is contained in the HT report. TH noted that success in the case of one persistent refuser, who had now returned to school, would have a positive impact on attendance rates.			
	4. Monitoring of Teaching & Learning TH reported that he and the DHT were aware that the frequency of monitoring class teaching fluctuated dependent on the time they had available and so whilst "classroom walks" took place, there were times when this was not as frequent as they would like.			
	5. Student Behaviour Governors asked whether tackling previously reported student behaviour issues was having an impact. TH, JM and LG all reported that a new set of standards devised by staff and which all staff should now adhere to, had helped raise expectations and had resulted in, for example, calmer transitions between lessons and calmer entry into classrooms. Interventions had been put in place for students who were known for being ring-leaders of poor behaviour and it is thought this has led to some improvements in their behaviour and a ripple-down effect to their peers. They also reported that the majority of students have engaged with the literacy strategy put into place at the start of term, which has led to an increased pride in their work and more autonomous attitudes towards their own learning.			
	6. Literacy Interventions In response to a question from a governor on how the literacy interventions will be assessed, JM explained that each intervention has a progress assessment built in. For example, a dictation test given at the start of the process could be taken again at the end.			

	7. Mathematics Interventions A governor asked about interventions in mathematics and concerns were raised that the sole focus currently appeared to be on literacy instead of a parallel approach for maths and literacy together. TH confirmed that maths interventions were ongoing but had taken a back-seat to literacy in the last term due to the high level of concern over literacy levels in particular. Maths interventions would be given higher focus in the coming half-term, both in terms of boosting the lower levels and stretching the more able students.			
	8. School Council Governors asked TH to pass on their congratulations to the School Council on their achievement of a "Highly Commended" in the Speaker's School Council Award.	Congratulations to School Council	TH	27.03.15
F5.8	**POLICIES** 1. E-safety Policy [taken after the discussion on mobile phones at Item 5.9] **APPROVED the E-safety Policy, subject to amendments** to take account of: a) making more explicit the ability to confiscate phones and look at content on phones b) under the section on actions/sanctions for staff in relation to e-safety issues, removing the empty column on suspension given the view that the column on disciplinary action covers this.	Update & publish	TH	27.03.15
	2. SEND Policy **APPROVED the SEND Policy.**	Publish	PA	27.03.15
F5.9	**MOBILE PHONE USE** TH explained that his purpose in putting forward a discussion paper on mobile phone use was to gather the views of stakeholders - governors, parents and students (via the Student Council) - prior to making a final decision on what use of mobile phones, if any, should be permitted during the school day. Staff had reported routinely having to deal with minor issues relating to mobile phone use during class time, there are concerns over safeguarding due to the ability for students to access the internet via the 3G network, outside the School's filters, and the safeguarding team were spending too much time dealing with issues of minor cyber bullying, use of "Snapchat" and so on. Some positive uses of mobile phones were highlighted, such as using them to photograph the board to aid learning.			

	During a long debate and an individual summing up around the table, consensus was reached that a ban on allowing mobile phones into lessons would be desirable. However there were differing views on their use outside of lessons, with strength of opinion expressed on both sides. Some governors felt that permitting phones is desirable as a means of teaching students to use them responsibly in a relatively safe environment, some supported introducing an element of earned privilege or a sliding scale of permitted use depending on year group, whilst others would prefer to see phones kept in lockers for the duration of the school day.			
	Governors accepted TH's view that the decision is an operational one, and were supportive of the idea of a "re-launch" in relation to mobile phone use with a clear policy, tougher controls and a process for applying sanctions.			
	AR asked whether parents would be given an opportunity to attend an e-safety course. TH replied that he would like make attending such a course a mandatory condition of the child being able to bring their mobile phone to school.			
	[Helen O'Connor left the meeting at 8pm].			
F5.10	**SCHOOL DATES 2015/16** School dates had not yet been finalised for approval and so this item will be carried forward. Terms dates would be based on those of DCC.	Carry forward	Clerk	13.05.15
	TH reported that the Purbeck Education Partnership had agreed 2 November 2015 as an INSET day and the Senior Leadership Team were considering whether to dovetail with this for the convenience of parents despite it not being an ideal day for the School.			
	It was suggested by a governor that INSET days on a Monday or Friday, before or after a holiday, and in line with other local schools where siblings might be based, were the least awkward for parents. Whilst acknowledged, TH did note that mid-week days can prove better for staff engagement with training.			
F5.11	**GOVERNOR SELF-ASSESSMENT** 1. <u>Twenty Questions Self-evaluation Tool for Governing Bodies</u> GA introduced the Governor Self-evaluation Tool, explaining the colour coded system of reporting governor responses to the self-assessment questions, where green indicated that they believed the criteria for the question had been met, amber for "partly met" and red for "not met".			

	Of the twenty questions in the exercise, two had an overall grading of red (criteria not met) and were the focus of discussion at the present meeting. These were:			
	Q.17 - in relation to whether the governing body carries out a regular 360 degree review of the chair's performance and have identified an appropriate tool for doing so. **AGREED that PA would look at a tool recommended by the National Governor's Association.**	Research and implement.	PA GA	13.05.15
	Q.18 - in relation to whether the governing body engages in good succession planning, with potential leaders identified and encouraged to undertake training. **AGREED that as a starting point current Committee Chairs could make suggestions as to who might have the skill-set to replace them and speak to these governors.**	Follow-up	PA WK GA HOC	13.05.15
	2. <u>Skills Audit</u> Nine governors had completed the Skills Audit provided by the National Governors Association. GA noted that marks tended to be higher for professional-type skills, but overall it was difficult to pull consistent themes from the responses with no easy way to summarise the results.			
	AGREED GA would look more closely at the scores on the weaker end and see whether it might be possible to address any weaknesses in experience with in-house training from other governors or colleagues at the School.	Follow up	GA	
	It was noted that if an area is identified where the governing body has fewer skills this may not matter at present, but could be a means of identifying what skills the governing body should look for in future governor elections.			
F5.12	**REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES** Received the minutes from the Committees as follows, on which there were no questions: 1. The Staffing Committee, 25 February 2015 2. The Student Committee, 5 March 2015 3. The Finance & Premises Committee, 10 March 2015			
F5.13	**LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS** 1. <u>SEN & Safeguarding Link</u> AS reported that she had undertaken a further SEN training course.			

	2. Parent Link JLJ noted that he would provide a report when all the Authentic Assessment evenings had taken place. TH thanked him for his help at these evenings.			
	3. Pupil Premium Link IT reported that she had a meeting scheduled with the KK on Pupil Premium and also that she is following up with TH and JM questions arising from the statistics on student progress presented at the last meeting of the Student Committee.			
	4. Health & Safety (H&S) Link AR had presented a report to the Finance & Premises Committee on 10 March 2015. She had undertaken governor H&S training and conducted an annual H&S Inspection at the School.			
F5.14	**GOVERNOR MONITORING, DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING** 1. Governor visits to School GA reported that during recruitment week he had taken the opportunity to look around the School with TH during teaching. He had visited ten different classes, all of which gave an overall impression that was extremely positive. The impression from the visit largely matched the vision for the School during it's set-up as well as the impression that had been gained in governor's meetings, particularly in relation to the positive aspects. On the negative side, GA noted that litter appeared to be an issue and more students had been sitting in the office having been disciplined that he might have envisaged.			
	[Isobel Tooley and Lisa Gray left the meeting at 8.30pm]			
	With regard to future visits, PA suggested that governors let TH know when they are free. TH noted that he believes governor input to the School is extremely good.			
	2. Feedback from Training Courses None, other than SEN training and H&S training as mentioned above.			
	3. Current Training Needs NB noted that he will look into training with the South West Grid for Learning in relation to e-safety. LR will look to attend new governor training.			
F5.15	**ANY OTHER BUSINESS** None			

F5.16	**CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS** None			
F5.17	**CLERK'S REPORT** The Clerk reported that she had attended Clerk's training and a Clerk's Briefing run by DCC.			
	The Clerk made governors aware that signed minutes, agendas and papers for each meeting are filed in the Business Manager's office, along with a printed copy of key documents that will comprise the new governor's induction pack. House-styling of policies is underway and when completed a full set will be published on the website.			
	Date of next meetings: Student Committee - 29 April 2015 Finance & Premises Committee - 6 May 2015 Full Board of Governors - 13 May 2015 Staffing Committee - 10 June 2015			
	The meeting closed at 8.40pm.			