

The Swanage School
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
Held on Wednesday 3 June 2020, 5.30pm

Present (via remote access): Tim Marcus (Chair), Paul Angel, Peter Collins, Alex Duke, William Knight, Jenny Maraspin (Headteacher), Vanessa Millman, Nicola Newman, Amanda Rowley, Jessica Starmer, Al Stephens, Carl Styants, Nicky Taylor, Isobel Tooley
In attendance (via remote access): Anna Carvisiglia (Business Manager), Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Kay Lawton (Acting Deputy Headteacher)

Item		Action	Lead	By
	The meeting was held via remote access due to the school closure as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. During the meeting Paul Angel and Vanessa Millman experienced some problems with connectivity although were able to be present for the majority of the discussion.			
FGB 9.1	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received and accepted from Helen O'Connor. Vanessa Millman and Nicola Newman would be late joining the meeting and Anna Carvisiglia would leave the meeting at 6.45pm.			
FGB 9.2	Declarations of Interest There were no new declarations of interest. Kay Lawton (Acting Deputy Headteacher), Alex Duke (Staff Governor) and Nicky Taylor (Staff Governor) would be conflicted for agenda item FGB 9.16 in relation to recruitment of a permanent Deputy Headteacher.			
FGB 9.3	Minutes of the Last Meeting The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2020 were confirmed as an accurate record. The minutes will be signed at a later date.			
FGB 9.4	Matters Arising & Actions The Clerk raised one matter arising which had not been notified on the agenda. This was to inform the Board that subsequent to agreement of term dates and inset days for 2020-21, one inset day had changed from April to June 2021, having been incorrectly notified to the Board. All other matters arising and actions were covered elsewhere on the agenda.			

FGB 9.5	<p>Governing Board Constitution</p> <p>1. <u>Committee Membership</u> RE-APPOINTED Nicky Taylor as a member of the Student Committee and of the Community & Engagement Committee.</p> <p>2. <u>Link Governor Roles</u> RE-APPOINTED Nicky Taylor as the link governor for pupil premium.</p> <p>AGREED to defer the appointment of a parent link governor until a new parent-elected governor is in post, however both Paul Angel and Carl Styants were willing to be called upon to fulfil elements of this role on an ad-hoc basis.</p>			
FGB 9.6	<p>Chair's Report The Chair reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No further correspondence had been received in relation to the potential legal action previously notified to the Board. - The Headteacher had consulted with him regarding her decision not to open the school for key worker children and vulnerable children over the half-term break, and that they had been keeping in touch on a regular basis during the school closure. 			
FGB 9.7	<p>Headteacher's Report [NN joined the meeting.]</p> <p>A written report had been circulated, along with a safeguarding report. In highlighting key items, JM reported:</p> <p><u>Exclusions:</u> There were two permanent exclusions to report. One had followed a failed managed move to another school and a recent serious incident (the managed move having been arranged to avoid an earlier permanent exclusion); the other had occurred shortly before lockdown but governor review of the exclusion had been delayed in keeping with government guidelines when the school closed. Current guidance for holding of governor review panels would be checked.</p>	Check latest guidance	Clerk	Immediate

Virtual school: Research was ongoing in relation to how best to support students back into learning and emotionally when school reopens. At present, government guidance had not been issued in relation to expected school arrangements from September and beyond, nor in relation to GCSEs in 2021 (the current Year 10 cohort). Staff were starting to make plans for likely scenarios.

In response to questions from governors, JM/KL reported:

- Key stage 3 students (Years 7-9) are generally engaging well with online learning, but a large proportion of the Year 10 cohort are poorly motivated and lack engagement. The loss of curriculum hours, coupled with loss of motivation and confidence, was therefore a serious concern for this group.

To date, confirmation had been received that 37 Year 10 students will attend under the new arrangements for face-to-face contact for this group from 15 June 2020, in line with government guidance.

- In general, the students who are engaging best are those who are most able academically leading to concerns over a widening gap between able and less-able students; this was particularly worrying for Year 10, but also for Year 9.

School Council and student leadership: The School Council launch had gone well, with 10 strong applicants, all of whom had been appointed. Other student leadership opportunities would shortly be recruited.

Year 11: The majority of “next steps” reviews had been completed, although in some cases further information is awaited. There is confidence that every student has, or will have, a placement that suits them. GCSE results (which this year are being given by teachers) were being moderated. Guidance from exam boards had been sought where needed and data from the Fischer Family Trust (FFT Aspire) had been used as a reference point.

Transition: Arrangements for the students starting in September were going well. Just over 70 students are currently confirmed. Letters and information had been mailed and a website page created. New house teams and activities were being set up to take place online and it was likely that a transition day would be held in September. Fortnightly updates to new parents are planned.

In response to a question from a governor, JM agreed that thought would need to be given to changing vertical tutor groups from September to facilitate keeping student “bubbles” small, as per current government guidelines on social distancing and managing Covid-19 risks.

	<p><u>Staffing update:</u> JM reported that Curriculum Area Leaders are regularly checking-in with their teams and staff wellbeing generally appeared to be good. There had been no teacher resignations by the required deadline (for leaving at the end of term). The Heads of House and a humanities teacher had moved from fixed term contracts to permanent, the Forest School Leader’s contract had been extended by one term, and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator’s contract had increased from 0.9 to full time for additional teaching hours. An information technology (IT) apprentice was being recruited, as was an apprentice teaching assistant (TA).</p> <p>In response to questions, JM reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TA support would not be one-to-one but continue to be small group based, for example by running interventions in the Hub and providing support to dyslexic students and those using Lexia software. Student progress is tracked and students are offered further cycles of intervention if needed. - Heads of House had been appointed on fixed term contracts during the period of uncertainty regarding the structure of the leadership team, following the retirement of the former headteacher, and to allow the new headteacher the possibility of restructuring should they wish to. It was now possible to reinstate these as permanent positions, which had no financial impact but provided staff with certainty. <p><u>Safeguarding:</u> a separate report had been circulated detailing current measures being taken to ensure all students are safeguarded, on which there were no questions.</p> <p><u>Curriculum:</u> The Year 9 curriculum will be adapted to enable students to build a portfolio of skills relating to employability, examples of which were given in the report. In addition, the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum would now be delivered in discrete lessons rather than in tutor time. This had been achieved through the dropping of “drama to support the English curriculum”.</p> <p><u>Management Information System:</u> The transition from Progresso to Arbor was going well. Data was being uploaded to the new system and webinar training being undertaken by the Data Manager.</p> <p>[VM left the meeting]</p>			
FGB 9.8	<p>Covid-19: School Re-opening</p> <p>A plan for re-opening to some students (Year 10) from 15th June 2020 in line with government guidance had been circulated, along with a draft risk assessment. Governors had also been referred to the relevant guidance from the Department for Education and the National Governors’ Association.</p>			

JM reported that parents of 37 Year 10 students had confirmed their child would attend, 7 would not and 8 were undecided or had not yet replied.

Having considered the plan and draft risk assessment, governors noted their support for Year 10 students returning, particularly given concerns over widening polarity, and of the proposed arrangements. The key elements of the initial arrangements were summarised by JM as follows:

- Students will be split into three groups, of no more than 15 students in each group, one of which will comprise students who require a greater level of support. The higher support group will attend two mornings per week, and the other two groups one morning per week, with sessions running Monday to Thursday. Support calls from the leadership team will be made on Friday.
- Sessions will initially be divided into half an hour each of maths, English, physics, chemistry and biology. In addition there would be half an hour devoted to wellbeing each day. By limiting sessions to core subjects initially, it is hoped not to overwhelm students, with other subjects being introduced in due course. Teachers will provide short instruction teaching, but primarily use the sessions to cover problems, help students understand the work they've been set during lock-down and re-motivate them for remote learning which remains the predominant means of education for the time being.
- Protocols adopted for key worker children and vulnerable students are being adapted to accommodate more students, for example with allocated toilets and desks and use of multiple entrances to mitigate the risks of contact.
- Appropriate cleaning and hand-washing protocols will be in place.
- The school will remain open for key worker and vulnerable children also, but the groups will be kept completely separate, with use of different areas, staggered break times, and different entrances.

It was noted that the Atrium, where sessions for Year 10 students will be held, has plenty of space to be able to meet the guidelines. Sessions for the key worker and vulnerable children will take place in the i-desk area.

Governors asked about protection for staff and it was noted that wearing masks or face shields is not recommended for teachers, but that social distancing would be strictly followed in school and the rota carefully considered. JM observed, however, that whilst the school can control distancing and cleaning protocols within school and would reiterate key messages to students, she was aware that students are not all observing guidelines out of school.

	<p>In response to questions, JM confirmed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At present there is no firm information from the government on extending Year 10 teaching into the summer holidays, which had been subject to rumours nationally. Several governors voiced that there should be no expectation that staff will work during the summer holiday, and that staff will need and deserve their break. The Board recorded thanks to the leadership team and to all staff for their excellent work and dedication during the lock-down period and asked JM to pass on appreciation. - Whilst the wider staff body had not been consulted prior to drawing up the plan, it had been discussed with the Curriculum Area Leaders who were in regular contact with their teams. A caveat regarding any concerns over working on the school site would be included in communication with staff. - Since being circulated, the plan had been changed to allow students to wear their own clothes and to not bring in bags, in accordance with latest guidance. - Year 10 students would be unlikely to need access to computers or laptops whilst at school. <p>[AC left the meeting].</p>			
FGB 9.9	<p>Buy Your Own Devices Scheme [This item was taken after item FGB 9.6]</p> <p>AC and JM sought governors' views on introducing a "buy-your-own-device" scheme to facilitate all students having a device (laptop) at home through a leasing scheme with the option for parents to own the device at the end of the lease. Such a scheme could be managed either through the school taking out the leases, or by parents leasing directly from the provider. Suitable schemes were being researched.</p> <p>For clarification, it was noted that school laptops have been sent out to students without access to a computer at home, to access online learning during the school closure, but that these devices will be needed back in school when reopen.</p> <p>Governors asked for clarification on whether all students will be expected to have a laptop going forward, and how this fits into educational provision. In response, JM noted that when reopen the School will continue to use the Teams platform and other online tools and that the current situation had shown the benefits of IT access at home for developing digital skills. Whilst acknowledging that low income families struggle financially, JM expressed that having computer access at home could now be considered essential for learning and to</p>			

	<p>equip students for the modern world, and that not having access tends to further disadvantage already disadvantaged students. She also noted that if the School held the leases it could reconfigure the laptops to strip out social media and limit access to Microsoft Teams and a limited range of websites.</p> <p>[Vanessa Millman re-joined the meeting.]</p> <p>Governors were in broadly in favour of further research and for a paper to be presented to the next meeting of the Board, noting that consideration needed to be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how many parents would be willing to enter into a leasing agreement and how those with low credit scores or in financial difficulties would cope; - whether the scheme should favour those families known to be disadvantaged (for example, through pupil premium funding) or run equally for all regardless of personal family circumstances; - families on low incomes but who do not qualify for free school meals or the pupil premium and who therefore may feel disadvantaged in comparison to others who may benefit from financial support; - whether there should be an expectation that all students have access to technology at home, or to their own device, given that some parents may feel this is not right for their child and who wish to manage their child's time online; - reservations regarding the School taking on financial risk if it chose to enter into the leasing arrangement itself, especially given that many parents could make individual arrangements or afford a direct lease arrangement. 	Paper for next FGB	JM	Jul '20
FGB 9.10	<p>SEN Annual Report A presentation from the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator had been circulated, on which there were no questions.</p>			
FGB 9.11	<p>Careers Annual Report A report from the Careers Lead had been circulated. Governors noted the positive evaluation of the School's provision against the benchmarks in the government's strategy for careers in schools (Gatsby Benchmarks).</p>			
FGB 9.12	<p>Apprenticeships Update The latest Sutton Trust Report had been circulated. AD reported that the coronavirus pandemic had led to a dramatic reduction in apprenticeships nationwide and the likelihood of employers recruiting the same number</p>			

	<p>of apprentices had dropped. However, he noted that as the government is heavily invested in apprenticeships, it is likely that a renewed strategic approach to post-16 provision will be developed, which might include incentives for offering apprenticeships. For the time-being, the School's plan to become an apprenticeship provider was a lower priority than it had been.</p> <p>A governor noted that the School is planning to recruit two apprentices and that this would give valuable insight from the employer's perspective.</p>			
FGB 9.13	<p>Committee Reports</p> <p>Minutes from the following meetings had been circulated and the committee chairs drew the Board's attention to the main points of discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Student Committee (13 May and 21 May 2020)</u> IT reported that the Student Committee had discussed at some length a proposal to introduce Media GCSE to the curriculum. The outcome had been to defer a decision until such time as more research and other alternatives could be fully explored, and in recognition that other priorities will need to take precedence during the Autumn Term when school reopens. 2. <u>Finance & Premises Committee (20 May 2020)</u> A copy of the Business Manager's Report including the budget out-turn for 2019-20 and the draft 3-year budget for 2020-23 had been circulated. WK noted that the draft budget should not require significant changes before being approved, and the forecast surpluses for the current and next financial year were commendable. He thanked JM and AC for their careful budgeting. 			
FGB 9.14	<p>Link Governor Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Safeguarding</u> Referring to the safeguarding report which had been presented under the Headteacher's Report, AS confirmed she was satisfied that the School is adhering to all the current guidelines. 2. <u>Careers</u> NN noted that there are rumours of possible extra funding in relation to helping schools meet Gatsby Benchmark 8 on providing personal guidance to students. At present this was the benchmark the School was unable to meet due to lack of funding for provision of 1-to-1 guidance. 			

FGB 9.15	<p>Skills Audit</p> <p>The Clerk had circulated a short paper summarising the key outcomes from the governor skills audit. This noted the wide breadth and depth of skills and experience among the members of the governing body. As identified in previous skills audits, legal skills was an area where additional expertise might be useful, and this could continue to be promoted when recruiting governors.</p> <p>As the audit appeared to show that committee chairs rated themselves more highly in respect of knowledge of the educational context, the Clerk suggested that succession planning and knowledge transfer could be given more thought. It was agreed this should be a standing item for the full board or each committee at the beginning of each year, with a view to considering committee vice-chairs who shadow or are mentored, or other ways governors could up-skill each other.</p>			
FGB 9.16	<p>Senior Leadership Team [KL, NT and AD left the meeting due to a conflict with this item].</p> <p>1. <u>Deputy Headteacher recruitment</u> CS confirmed that the Deputy Headteacher job description had been updated. Arrangements for interviews were still to be determined.</p> <p>AGREED that the interview panel would be CS (Chair of Staffing Committee), TM (Chair of Governors) and JM (Headteacher). Should TM not be available, another member of the Staffing Committee would be asked to step in.</p> <p>2. <u>Project roles: plans and job specifications</u> Specifications for stand-alone project roles which would attract a Teaching & Learning Responsibility Payment (TLR) had not yet been completed and would be considered at the next meeting of the Board. JM reported that she was likely to propose a role in relation to overseeing attendance and another related to health & safety, both priority areas in light of the pandemic. A governor asked if these roles would have to be undertaken by a teacher, and JM observed that the attendance brief in particular would not.</p> <p>A governor asked whether there was a pedagogical learning opportunity arising from the school closure and different forms of teaching and learning that had been developed, noting that an online strategy may be needed into and beyond the Autumn Term. JM agreed and noted that the crisis had led to teaching and learning evolving in ways that had already been under discussion, with a focus on student-led learning, and</p>	Role proposals	JM	Jul '20

	that the pedagogical changes that might arise could have a significant impact. She would consider whether this should be a specified project role.			
FGB 9.17	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Chair reported that Nicola Newman had indicated she will not re-stand as a member of the board and thanked her for her valuable input and support. NN noted that she will stay a member of Education Swanage and would continue to support the school if she could, however other commitments prevented her continuing as a governor beyond the end of her current term.</p>			
FGB 9.18	<p>Confidentiality</p> <p>One issue raised under the Headteacher’s report would require confidential minutes.</p>			
FGB 9.19	<p>Next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on 8 July 2020 and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair’s Report - Headteacher’s Report - 3-year budget approval - Delegated financial authorities - School Evaluation Form and draft School Development Plan - Agree election process for Chair and Vice-Chair 2020/21 - Agree committee structure for 2020/21 			
	The meeting closed at 7.05pm			