

**Thomas Hardy School – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018**  
**Meeting of the Governing Body**

**Present:** Garry Batt (Chair), Mike Foley (Headteacher), Tim Gallego, David Grassby, Martin Baker, Lynne Cove, Rachel Turberville-Smith (Parent Governor), Mike Faulkner (Support Staff Governor), Tom Hardinge (Teaching Staff Governor)

**In attendance:** Jon Dean (Assistant Head), Natasha Bousfield (Deputy Head), Iain Cornell (Deputy Head), Linda Morrison (Assistant Head),

**Apologies:** Simon Conibear, Hugh Griffiths, Helen Arthy (Parent Governor), Tony Foot. All apologies accepted.

**Clerk:** Vicky Smyth

Item	Minutes	Action
<b>17/124</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest:</b> None	
<b>17/125</b> <b>17/125.1</b>	<p><b>Learning and Community</b></p> <p><b>Complex Communications Needs Base (CCN) SEN – Mel Orchard</b></p> <p>Mr Foley introduced Ms Orchard to Governors. Ms Orchard explained that the Complex Communications Needs Base has a 9 place capacity and that there are 5 pupils in the base this year and that 4 pupils would be joining next year. A further 3 prospective pupils meet the criteria and are on the waiting list for the base, with the school presently being pushed to accept 10 children in the unit. Ms Orchard advised Governors that students coming into the base are presenting with high anxiety. It is a slow process to prepare them to attend a large portion of mainstream lessons and some students have had bad experiences before coming to Thomas Hardy. Ms Orchard opined that 'through provision' should ease this issue. Students require an individual package and present with varying needs which is different to the previous SPLN Base as the pupils could be worked with as a group but this is not possible now. Staff have received additional training in preparation and this has been positive; two staff have undertaken post graduate qualifications in Autism, one of which has been funded through the school and one has been funded by the Local Authority (LA). Further training will be rolled out to teaching staff next year. Mr Foley highlighted that attendance has been difficult. Ms Orchard explained that the main problem has been attendance. Anxieties are so high that they can't learn, as they need to be 'brought down' first. Parents can also be anxious about their students attending due to previous bad experiences and the knock on impact this has at home, so sometimes they can cause attendance issues rather than the child themselves. Progress can be made with these young people but it is very, very slow. Ms Orchard explained the process of children being offered a place in the base. She noted the teething problems respecting receiving paperwork in time to read and discuss in-house, before the panel meeting, as well as the LA taking some young people to panel that school deemed extremely inappropriate and have had to refuse. In addition, the base is still getting paperwork for students the LA want to transfer into year 11, which is not long enough for the school to work with them. Ms Orchard considered the possible discord between the school believing that the outcome of the base was for the students to achieve qualifications and move onto the next step, whereas the outcome from the LA perspective seems to be more about attending and being in school so that they may join a college later on. She opined that this is an important difference. Mr Baker enquired as to the source of the high level of anxiety. Ms Orchard explained that it was different with each individual, for example, a student could be anxious about literally everything and overthink things such</p>	

as worrying about being late, walking across the playground or getting asked a question they can't answer. Mr Baker asked if this was a diagnosed condition and Ms Orchard explained that it may not be. Mr Baker asked whether health are involved. Ms Orchard explained that health is involved but that they are very busy and their waiting lists are very long. Mr Foley advised Governors that the children in the base all have Education Health Care Plans. Ms Orchard agreed and added that they try to ensure health are written into these. She added that the pupils don't just suffer from school based anxiety, it affects every aspect of their lives. Ms Turberville-Smith asked whether the school works with any other health professionals other than CAMHS. Ms Orchard confirmed that the school works with multiple health professionals but that there is a gap in the system for adolescents. Governors asked what happened to the pupils in the base after year 11. Mr Foley asserted that progression routes are important for the school. He continued that the contract is renewed on an annual basis but has to be something that both sides are happy with and the school also need to be making progress with the pupils. Mr Baker asked whether the school has contacted the clinical commissioning group. Mr Foley confirmed that it hadn't. Mr Baker asserted that these children clearly have a health need and that the CCG needs to be made aware of this need and it needs to be brought to their attention. Mr Baker proposed that an invite is extended to the CCG to visit the school to see what is happening here as perhaps the message is not getting through. Governors were in agreement.

MF

17/125.2

**Careers – Jon Dean**

Mr Dean advised Governors that new statutory guidance on careers had been released in Jan 18 and distributed a hard copy to Governors. He informed Governors that the provider access policy had been completed and put on school website. He went on to discuss the GATSBY Benchmarks – 8 elements of a careers programmes that have been found through national and international research most effective in providing a quality careers education from years 8-13. He advised Governors that schools expected to fully meet all these benchmarks by 2020. Mr Dean confirmed that the school already had a careers leader and that the school already fully met most of the benchmarks and partially met the rest. He highlighted that the school had achieved the Investors in Careers award and that the school has an advisor which he meets regularly. Mr Dean noted that Dorset was bidding to become a careers hub and that the school was part of this bid. He asserted that Governors need to be aware that the school is working towards these benchmarks and that there must be a Governor linked to careers. He asked that Governors contact him to find out more. Mr Dean also asked Governors to consider how the school could meet the logistical challenge of providing experience of work for all lower school students and to share with him any of their business links that may want to be involved in school. Finally, he advised Governors of some of the projects the school was involved in with regards to careers, for example, adopt a school programme with the Duchy and the school's links with Atlas. He opined that the rebuild may provide opportunities for site visits. Mr Batt asked whether Mr Dean meets with local organisations such as the chamber of commerce. Mr Dean confirmed that he did and that Atlas sponsor pupils to be involved in the young chamber of commerce. Ms Turberville-Smith asked whether there are links with the public sector. Mr Dean confirmed that he did but his main concern was moving the links in a different direction, for example, encouraging businesses to offer visits to young people rather than just coming into the school. Mr Dean expressed some of the difficulties for employers in offering work experience placements. Mr Baker noted that the Careers guidance talks about provision from Year 8. Mrs Bousfield informed Governors that Mr Dean is the link with the middle schools and that the school has advised middle schools to start talking about careers with year 7 also, as the

GOVs

	guidance technically applies from age 11. She confirmed that there is now a careers programme in year 8.	
<b>17/126</b>	<b>Minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018</b> were approved and signed. They were unanimously agreed and approved as an accurate record of that meeting.	
<b>17/127</b>	<b>Redundancies</b> Governors discussed the Business Case that had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Issues such as the reform of SEN provision, reduction in SEN funding and the school's present in-year deficit were considered. Governors asked questions respecting the number of redundancies expected, whether other redundancies were likely and additional detail with regards to the duties undertaken by this group of staff. Possible threats to the school as a result of the changes were also raised by Governors. Mr Foley and Ms Orchard responded to each question. Governors reiterated their hope to have managed reductions in funding without staff cuts but understood the difficulties the school faced. Governors approved the Business Case and subsequent invocation of the redundancy procedure. Jon Dean and Mel Orchard left the meeting	
<b>17/128</b> <b>17/128.1</b>  <b>17/128.2</b> <b>17/128.3</b>  <b>17/128.4</b>	<b>Finance and Resources</b> Ms McKie advised Governors that there would be new reports for the next meeting due to the new Finance system. She asserted that the main point on this budget is the difference on the staffing salaries in each category and explained that there had been such a big difference because each member of staff was at least a % or more wrong. She confirmed that this is now all correct. Capital Bids – Will be covered in the Headteacher's Report. Lettings – Mrs McKie had circulated a report prior to the meeting. She clarified that the pitches in the report referred to grass pitches as the synthetic pitches are the LA's and managed by 1610. Mr Baker asked whether invoices for lettings were being paid on time. Mrs McKie agreed to bring a review of debtors to the next meeting and explained that there had been a backlog due to staffing changes in the finance department. Mr Batt asked whether the relationship with 1610 was still working. Ms McKie admitted that there had been some issues due to the differing lettings rates but that they are paying. Ms Turberville-Smith sought clarification over differences between the two rates and the VAT. Mrs McKie explained that there will be an increase for some of the groups but that there will be distinctions. Mr Faulkner asked if there was anyway the management costs could be streamlined. Ms McKie noted that it takes significant time to liaise with groups and the rate variances have been causing problems here. She added that a review of overtime costs would take place, however, there are HR considerations that need to be taken into account before any changes are made. This will come back to SLT as part of the budget setting process and there must be transparency. Mr Baker enquired as to whether the overheads, wear and tear etc was being factored in. Mrs McKie confirmed that a discussion needed to take place as there are differences in where the income is apportioned. For example, the income from theatre lettings goes back to the performing arts department who use it to cover wear and tear among other things, whereas the sports facilities lettings money does not go to PE. Mr Baker highlighted that he wants to ensure the school is not subsidising facility hirers. Mr Batt agreed that he would like the lettings to be making money for the school. Mrs McKie stated that she was hopeful for the future once Governors approved the new lettings fees. Governors unanimously agreed the new lettings fees. GDPR – Mrs McKie advised Governors that this was still a work in progress and that she was trying to allay insecurities and ensure practices in school are being changed.	JM/VS

<b>17/128.5</b>	Staffing – Next agenda	
<b>17/129</b>	<b>Headteacher’s Report</b>	
<b>17/129.1</b>	Mr Gallego congratulated Mr Foley on the school’s recent sporting achievements and left the meeting	
<b>17/129.2</b>	Staffing - Mr Foley drew Governors attention to list of staff leaving and the list of staff joining and highlighted the continuation of the ‘natural wastage’ programme.	
<b>17/129.3</b>	Capital Bids - Governors were informed of the good news respecting the success of the dining hall bid and opined that it would open up further opportunities for lettings. Mrs Cheney displayed a copy of the plans for the new dining hall. Building works start on the 18 <sup>th</sup> June 2018. Governors were advised that the school will have to pay for everything that isn’t part of the build e.g tables, chairs etc so these are being costed out. Ms Cheney confirmed that she had also spoken to the parent focus group and parents seem keen to be able to contribute, so the school will be arranging to have the facility for donations. Mr Foley noted the need to manage the disruption to the school. Ms Cheney highlighted that the new equipment and facility would be more efficient and more environmentally friendly also. The kitchen should be open for September but there will be nowhere for the children to eat. The SMT may need to think about how the theatre is used for the next few months. Mr Foley advised Governors that lots of work and meeting attendance was ongoing and that the project should be completed by 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2019. Mrs McKie also informed Governors of the forthcoming lab refurbishment which will be to a very high specification with a grant of £50k	
<b>17/129.4</b>	Ofsted Inspection Dashboard – Mrs Morrison circulated a copy of the report and advised Governors that she would arrange access for them via Mrs Smyth. She highlighted to Governors that the areas to investigate are still positive and Mrs Morrison explained each point. She explained that there were no figures for progress compared to national for disadvantaged students as they do not provide that data any more so the data in the report compares disadvantaged students to non-disadvantaged students nationally. Languages are still an issue and the school is offering more options as they are finding that students really don’t want to study languages. Mrs Morrison considered the students that are taking subjects that do not fit the progress 8 criteria and whether this was wrong. She went on to express her view that it is not wrong if it meets their needs as she has assessed their progress and they are doing well. She asked whether the school wants to be a school that makes children do subjects purely to give it a better progress 8 score. Governors agreed that they did not want this for the school or its students. Mrs Morrison opined that staff could look at increasing the numbers that take English, however, most of these students go on to further education as they have achieved what they needed to in order to get a place. Mr Grassby expressed his concern respecting Modern Foreign Languages. Mr Foley explained that the department was working incredibly hard, are very self-critical and that the reformed GCSE is a very tough qualification. Mrs Morrison added that in most other schools it is an option and the students do it because they want to and because they are good at it. Mr Hardinge opined that it was difficult only having 3 years to prepare students for the GCSE as secondary schools would have 5 years from year 7. Mrs Morrison agreed that it would make a big difference if the middle schools taught a second language but they do not have the resources.	LM/VS
<b>17/129.5</b>	Exclusions - To be discussed in greater depth at next meeting. Mr Foley opined that the County was potentially not aware of the full, long-term impact of their funding changes with regards to the learning centre provision. He confirmed that the Councillor that is the portfolio holder will be invited to attend a meeting with Directors and Members of the MAT.	

<b>17/130</b>	<b>Policies</b>	
<b>17/130.1</b>	The Child Protection and Behaviour policies were unanimously approved and signed.	
<b>17/130.2</b>	All policies due or late for review have been send to the staff member responsible and policies that require Governing Body sign off will be presented at the next meeting	VS/NB
<b>17/131</b>	<b>Any other business</b> <b>Date of Next Meeting</b> Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	

### Action Log

Person	Action	Timing	Outcome/Update
Mike Foley	Invite CCG into school to discuss health needs of pupils	ASAP	
Jan McKie	Review of debtors to be discussed at next meeting	11/07/18	
Linda Morrison/Vicky Smyth	Provide access to Governors to the Inspection Dashboard	ASAP	Complete
Vicky Smyth	Add Exclusions and Debtors to next agenda	11/07/18	Complete
Vicky Smyth/Natasha Bousfield	Policies to be ready for review prior to next meeting	11/07/18	Partially Complete

