

**The Conference Room/Teams, Thomas Hardye School – 15th July 2020 – 4.30pm
Meeting of the Thomas Hardye School Governing Body**

Present: Mike Foley (Headteacher), Garry Batt (Chair), Mike Faulkner (Staff Governor), Hugh Griffiths, Tom Hardinge (Staff Governor), David Grassby

In attendance: Vicky Smyth (Clerk), Jan McKie (Finance Director), Tim Ennion (Assistant Headteacher), Iain Cornell (Deputy Headteacher)

Apologies (Item 1): Tim Gallego (Abroad for work), Helen Arthy (Unforeseen circumstance), Rachel Turberville-Smith (Work due to date change), Simon (Prior commitment) – all accepted

Late Arrivals/Early Leavers: N/A

Item	Minutes	Action
19/217	Declaration of Business Interests (Item 2): None	
19/218	Minutes of the meeting 13th May 20 (Item 3.1): were approved and signed as an accurate record Matters arising (Item 3.2): Mr Faulkner requested that the minutes be corrected by Mrs Smyth to show his attendance at the last meeting. <i>Unanimously agreed.</i>	VS
19/219 19/219.1	Finance and Operations Update (Item 4) Budget Monitoring (Item 4.1): Mrs McKie referred Governors to the Finance pack of information circulated in advance of the meeting. Governors were informed that the change of their meeting date had resulted in Directors having to approve the MAT budget without receiving recommendations from THS Governors respecting their school budget. It is Directors responsibility to approve and ensure the return of the MAT budget to the ESFA. Governors were directed to the income line and Mrs McKie highlighted that the schools trading income streams have been severely impacted by the COVID pandemic. The positive is that the school had made 80% of its forecasted income for these streams by March. The loss equates to £66k but this would have been much worse had the school not over performed early. The school has saved £86k on staffing as a result of greater than normal turnover throughout the year. Non-educational spend has increased, this is a mixture of reasons including staff settlements and COVID measures. The actual in-year deficit is -£175k as opposed to the -£140k predicted. It is still lower than the -£205k worst case scenario. Fees for trips have been refunded to parents. Q: Mr Foley enquired as to the current status of exam fee payments. Mrs McKie stated that she would need to check this with the Finance Team. She confirmed that she hadn't assumed savings in this area in documents but hoped that there would be. Mrs McKie referred Governors to the cashflow document that was accurate to 31 st May. There is £485k in the current account, £471k in the investment portfolio and £100k in the 32-day savings account.	
19/219.2	Aged debtor report (Item 4.2) – Mrs McKie confirmed that the largest outstanding invoice is attributed to the Thomas Hardye Foundation but COVID had delayed the transfer of money and acquisition of the appropriate signatures. The cheque should be received after this meeting.	
19/219.3	Internal Audit Report (Item 4.3) – Mrs McKie confirmed that this will take place next term.	

Signature:



Date: 16/09/20

1

**The Conference Room/Teams, Thomas Hardy School – 15th July 2020 – 4.30pm
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19/219.4	<p>Budget 20/21 (Item 4.4) – Mrs McKie confirmed that the school will be receiving a more generous income from the government which allows the school some flexibility. £194k will be taken from the carry forward surplus, but a £203k surplus is forecast to be added to the carry forward fund at the end of 20/21. The window bid had been unsuccessful but it is believed there will be one more opportunity to resubmit and it is hoped that the greater importance on ventilation caused by COVID may increase the bids priority. £100k has been allocated towards the cost of this. Mr Foley advised Governors that there has been a build-up of small scale capital projects, for example, the lowering of the ceiling in the food technology areas, that the school can now address. The school can now spend a little and staff are being asked to submit bids for projects to the value of £5k. Departments have been told for years that the school cannot afford to fund certain projects and they will really appreciate being able to bid for these funds. Mrs McKie added that it is important to remember that the school had not been storing money for the sake of it but to have enough to cover its liabilities should something go wrong. Mrs McKie explained that work on the following 2 years budgets was still in its infancy and will be completed next term. All schools in the Trust will receive a skeleton report for them to complete.</p> <p>Mrs McKie explained to Governors that all schools except THS have paid the full 5% levy contribution. The sharing of staffing has meant it has not been practical for THS to pay the full contribution thus far but it will do from September. This is a 5% per pupil amount from the lower school CAG plus another per pupil amount from the Sixth Form to cover apprenticeships fund costs. Out of the 5% contribution, £65 per pupil is ringfenced to central staffing costs and 5% is put into a contingency fund. The remaining funds pay for like for like services and contracts. The Key Performance Indicators were discussed and Mrs McKie referred to the staff cost to income ratio which currently stands at 81%. This is higher than the recommended and indicates an unsustainable staffing structure in the long term. However, some prior knowledge factors mean that the school is aware and managing the situation. The store for equipment for students with physical disabilities and the lift repairs have been mostly funded by the Local Authority. The fire precaution works are not quite complete; there is a small amount still to expend and snagging works to be finished.</p> <p><i>Q: Mr Batt requested the Clerk minute his thanks on behalf of Governors to Mrs McKie, Mr Foley and the SLT for their immense amount of work over recent years to bring the budget under control.</i></p> <p><i>Governors accepted the 20/21 budget</i></p>
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Signature:



Date: 16/09/20

2

**The Conference Room/Teams, Thomas Hardy School – 15th July 2020 – 4.30pm
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19/220	Headteacher Report (Item 5)
19/220.1	<p>Numbers on roll – There will be 469 pupils starting in year 9 with appeals still pending against a Published Admissions Number of 450. Governors commented on the meetings with Ed Denham in previous years respecting forward planning and his assurances that there would not be a problem with pupil numbers in 20/21 and beyond.</p>
19/220.2	<p>Staffing – Mr Nicholls will be Acting Assistant Headteacher responsible for Sixth Form from September with roles much clearer in this area. A Guidance Leader support will also be added to the Sixth Form and a Senior Guidance Leader role has been created. Education for Everyone staffing has been made stronger. Mr Dean will be moving to the Safeguarding role and relinquishing the Careers role as this has now grown too big. A MAT appointment will be made to deliver Careers education across MAT schools.</p> <p>Q: Mr Batt commented on the impending retirement of Mrs Chittenden and stated that she has been a truly loyal servant of the school. Words are insufficient to express the enormous thanks of Governors to Mrs Chittenden for not just a career but a life devoted to the school with 35 years service. Mr Cornell advised Governors that SLT are pleased with recruitment and very happy with the team next year.</p> <p>Q: Mr Batt noted that there are more staff joining than leaving for the first time in several years. Mr Cornell agreed.</p>
19/220.3	<p>Lockdown – The support provided to vulnerable pupils by Mrs Chittenden and her team has been exceptional.</p>
19/220.4	<p>Setting Work – Mr Cornell explained that this had been tricky with complaints of too much or too little common. Most feedback had been that the level of work set had been about right and SLT had accepted it was impossible to please everyone. He opined that the school has done a good job and staff have risen to the challenge.</p> <p>Q: Mr Batt noted that the school, its staff and Governors had had to learn along the way with some fantastic and not so fantastic outcomes. There were many points to be carried forward to the new year.</p> <p>Dr Ennion referred to the previous meeting and the acknowledgment of a massive digital divide among students and the consideration the school is giving to dealing with that moving forward. It is for this reason that the online learning provision has been pitched to allow as wide access as possible. A strategy for September has been developed should there be more disruption and Teams is a key platform. Mr Cornell confirmed that the school was unable to operate normally and children and have and will get a different experience. The CPD for staff throughout this time has been amazing and he opined that not many schools would have been able to offer this. He added that staff are operating MSTeams usefully. Dr Ennion highlighted that half of the technology being relied on now was not in school until lockdown. The IT Support team have done a phenomenal job and totally transformed the services on offer with so many new structures and systems in place. Mr Cornell advised Governors that he had spoken to other schools and few were in THS's position. He stated that staff had tried to reflect regularly upon practice and feedback and to continuously improve. The consolidation weeks had been most appreciated.</p> <p>Q: Mr Batt acknowledged that the school cannot respond to every criticism as some will naturally conflict with each other. Dr Ennion explained that SLT had requested feedback and had received and responded to a huge amount of</p>

Signature: 

Date: 16/09/20 3

**The Conference Room/Teams, Thomas Hardy School – 15th July 2020 – 4.30pm
Meeting of the Thomas Hardy School Governing Body**

	<p>correspondence. He opined that it is critical to listen and to adapt to satisfy the needs of most, but agreed that it is impossible to satisfy all. <i>Q: Mr Grassby enquired as to what those on the 'right side' of the digital divide would have access to.</i> Dr Ennion stated own laptop, high speed internet and printer. <i>Q: Mr Grassby asked if many were just using their phones.</i> Dr Ennion confirmed that most will only have mobile devices and that households with laptops may have to share with other family members including parents working from home. This is why the school's online provision may look basic; this is to make it accessible on as many different formats as possible. Mr Cornell referred to live lessons and commented that some schools do not run any. Some had expressed views that the school was not doing enough in this regard, however, research had shown that this can widen the divide between the haves and have nots.</p>	
<p>19/220.5</p>	<p>Return of Staff and Students – Mr Cornell informed Governors that the school had done really well and that fewer pupils had returned in other schools that he had spoken to. The school has welcomed back students slower than they would have liked due to the guidance. Year 9 attendance is higher than any other school in Dorset and the model has worked well. There has been positive feedback and attendance is high for Years 10 and 12 also. Sue Brazier is offering extended settling sessions for incoming EfoE students. Incoming Year 8's and Year 12's are also being invited to transition events. <i>Q: Mr Grassby enquired as to attendance at Primary and Middle Schools.</i> Mr Cornell explained that the Government guidance is so restrictive it is harder to get other year groups into school outside of those specified.</p>	
<p>19/220.6</p>	<p>Communication – SLT agreed that contact should be made at least once a week so there is not too much pressure on either staff or students. Staff and Parents had greatly appreciated Mr Foley's updates and feedback had been extremely positive regarding communication.</p>	
<p>19/220.7</p>	<p>Standards – Mr Cornell informed Governors that a lot of time had been spent generating and ranking pupil assessment grades and thanked Ms Morrison for her work double checking every result for every pupil in each subject. Sincere thanks were also expressed to Ms Boyles for coming in and submitting all the grades by the deadline.</p>	
<p>19/220.8</p>	<p>Reviews – There is a very small list of Year 10's that have not engaged with distance learning adequately.</p>	
<p>19/220.9</p>	<p>Pupil Premium – The school had acted to bridge the digital divide rather than wait for the government laptops which are only just arriving and are insufficient in number. The food voucher scheme in place of free school meals was not successful and the school is positive it chose to offer food hampers instead. The collection and/or delivery of these hampers has allowed staff to have weekly contact with some of their most vulnerable families and build relationships with many that they might otherwise not have had. <i>Governors agreed that a letter of thanks to all staff should be circulated prior to the end of term. Mr Batt will write and Mrs Smyth will circulate.</i></p>	<p>GB/VS</p>

Signature: 

Date: 16/09/20 4

**The Conference Room/Teams, Thomas Hardye School – 15th July 2020 – 4.30pm
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<p>19/221</p>	<p>School Improvement Plan/SIP (Item 6) Mr Hardinge referred to the SIP. He informed Governors that the structure and look has not changed much in comparison to previous years. The timeline of staff involvement has changed and has been brought forward. The current SIP and School Evaluation Form (SEF) have been reviewed this term both at whole school level and in departments. He referred to the table which details the situation in April. This review was used to inform SIP targets for the next 3 years as some targets are things that cannot be solved within a single year. He directed Governors to 1.3 Developing strategies to enhance independent learning and commented that this had really come to fore during lockdown and hoped that this would help to streamline provision should the school have to revert to online learning at any point during the next academic year. Mr Hardinge confirmed that the CPD groups will be linked with the SIP priorities. Some targets from the previous year will roll over into 20/21 as they haven't been achieved. <i>Mr Hardinge asked Governors to review the SIP and forward questions, comments and feedback directly to him.</i> Other activity included meeting with library staff to discuss how they can help develop independent learning and spending some time in September confirming departments contributions to the whole school agenda. This will translate to the individual department plans rather than being disconnected. The final SIP presentation will be made in October. He cautioned that Teacher's may have results from this year that are unusual. Mr Foley opined that the process is greatly improved from previous years in terms of staff involvement. <i>Q: Mr Batt commented that it is more inclusive.</i></p>	<p>GOVS</p>
<p>19/222 19/222.1 19/222.2 19/222.3 19/222.4</p>	<p>Governing Body Self-Review Terms of Reference (item 7.1) – Approved Link Governor Roles (Item 7.2) – Mrs Smyth raised Governor numbers and the urgent need for recruitment in order to fill the Link Governor roles. She noted that Governor recruitment had been unsuccessful so far and suggested other methods and sought ideas from Governors. Mr Batt and Mr Foley confirmed that this is high priority and they are actively meeting with prospective new Governors for September. Review of Link Roles deferred to Autumn term. <i>Mrs Smyth to add to agenda.</i> Performance (Item 7.3) – Mrs Smyth thanked those Governors that had completed their SWOT analysis and reminded those that had not of its location on the Governance Portal. <i>She asked that these be returned as soon as possible</i> Meeting Dates 20/21 (Item 7.4) – Mrs Smyth explained that due to the change of meeting date, Directors had already approved the meeting dates for next year. <i>Governors were satisfied with the approved dates.</i></p>	<p>VS GOVS</p>
<p>19/223</p>	<p>Policies (Item 8) <i>Governors unanimously approved the policies.</i></p>	
<p>19/224 19/224.1</p>	<p>Correspondence (Item 9) Black Lives Matter (Item 9.1) – Mr Foley informed Governors of a letter received with 826 signatures plus receipt of more than 600 individually written letters respecting the Black Lives Matter Movement. He had written an open letter in response which had been shared as part of a recent MAT update. Mr Foley confirmed he had also met with a small group of students to discuss in</p>	

Signature:



Date: 16/09/20

5

**The Conference Room/Teams, Thomas Hardy School – 15th July 2020 – 4.30pm
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	<p>more detail, 4 of whom are BAME plus the main instigator of the campaign. Curriculum leaders had also joined the meeting as its theme was to discuss how it could be made more inclusive with the constraints of the national curriculum but developed into a discussion about BAME pupils' experiences in school. It had been enlightening, for example, the school was very good at addressing and dealing with racist incidents but not so good at supporting the victims. The attendees were keen to talk to DASP Heads also, so Mr Foley will arrange for them to speak at the next meeting to discuss what can be done earlier in the pyramid. Overall it was a very positive meeting. He suggested that two of the pupils be invited to speak at an LGB meeting next year.</p> <p><i>Q: Mr Batt opined that it was very good to hear from the students directly, particularly about such an important issue. It is also pleasing to see the school's young people engaging with serious issues meaningfully.</i></p> <p><i>Mrs Smyth and Mr Foley to arrange attendance at a future LGB meeting.</i></p> <p>Education Provision (Item 9.2) – Mrs Smyth referred to a letter from a parent specifically requesting that the issue of education provision be set before the LGB. Mr Foley confirmed that the parent had complained that the level of work set was not enough and that live learning was not being utilised enough. Mr Foley advised that he had written a long reply to the parent, and the parent had been kind enough to respond positively, despite not 100% agreeing with the school. He informed Governors that Dr Ennion had been amazing at replying to every single feedback and correspondence on this issue and that 90% had been positive and approximately 10% critical of the school's approach. Of this, roughly 5% took issue with the amount of work set, saying that it was too little or that there were not enough live lessons. The other 5% felt that the school did not understand their child's needs and were setting too much work, raising mental health concerns. There was similar conflict on the exams issue with some parents feeling that exams such as mocks should be held and others requesting that they are not. Other issues raised during this time included the use of zoom and the absence of leaving events which Mr Foley attributed to a lack of understanding. He added that he could also read countless examples of the most amazing correspondence the school has ever had from pupils, parents and staff. The situation has been very complex to deal with and the staff team have been unbelievable.</p>	MF/VS
<p>19/225</p>	<p>Training Feedback (Item 10) None. Mrs Smyth informed Governors of the forthcoming changes to the LA Governors Services provision and how this will affect them.</p>	
<p>19/226 19/226.1 19/226.2 19/226.3</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Governor Recruitment – Governors discussed whether positive discrimination in terms of gender and ethnicity be considered to ensure the board is as balanced and inclusive as possible.</p> <p>Food Hampers – Mr Foley assured Governors that provision will be made throughout the summer. He thanked Ms Cheney, Ms Weir and Ms Thompson for their excellent efforts here.</p> <p>Thanks – <i>Mr Batt thanked Mrs Smyth, Mr Foley, SLT and the whole of the school staff for their fantastic work throughout this most difficult term. He also thanked fellow Governors for their support, attendance and contributions and wished everyone a restful summer.</i></p>	

Signature: 

Date: 16/09/20 6

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Action Log

Person	Action	Timing	Outcome/Update
Vicky Smyth	19/218 (Item 3.2): Update minutes to show Mr Faulkner's attendance at the last meeting	ASAP	Complete
Garry Batt/Vicky Smyth	19/220.9 (Item 5): Write and circulate a letter of thanks to all staff	17/07/20	Complete
Governors	19/221 (Item 6): Mr Hardinge asked Governors to review the SIP and forward questions, comments and feedback directly to him	ASAP	Complete
Vicky Smyth	19/222.1 (Item 7.1) Add Review Link Governor Roles to Autumn term agenda	Autumn 20	Complete
Governors	19/222.3 (Item 7.3): Return SWOT analysis to Mrs Smyth	ASAP	Partially Complete
Mike Foley/Vicky Smyth	19/224.1 (Item 9.1): Arrange for 2 pupils to attend a Governors meeting to discuss BLM and BAME pupil experiences of THS	Autumn 20	Ongoing

Signature:



Date: 16/09/20

7