

**The Forum Centre
LOCAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – FULL BOARD**

Minutes of the meeting

Wednesday 02 October 2024

Present:

Kim Rickford, Headteacher, The Forum Centre	<i>Staff Representative</i>
Guy Godmon, The Forum Centre	<i>Staff Representative</i>
Mark Lawson, Locality Lead, East	<i>Community Member/ Chair/SG</i>
Phil Gavin, Christchurch LC	<i>Community Member/H&S</i>
Laura Howieson, Wimborne Academy Trust	<i>Community Member/Vice Chair</i>
Thyrza Pickering, Education Challenge Lead	<i>Local Authority/Wellbeing</i>
Niall Clinton, The Blandford School	<i>Community Member</i>
Claire Lock, Ferndown Upper	<i>Community Member</i>
Rachel Stevens, Purbeck	<i>Community Member</i>
Alison Walter, Parent	<i>Parent governor</i>
Sue Gilani, DSL, TFC	<i>Guest</i>
Sandra de Montagnac	<i>Clerk to the Committee</i>

1.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Kieren Hasler, Lytchett Minster School <i>Community Member/Chair of Finance</i></p>
	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting:</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 08 May 2024 were circulated, and members were asked to review and send any amendments to Sandra. No detailed review of the minutes was carried out in this meeting.</p>
3.	<p>Matters arising:</p> <p>Resignations:</p> <p>Mark Willis has resigned from the committee due to a new role and recommended Kim Ashby as a potential replacement, though she needs more information about the time and commitment, the clerk will arrange a meeting with the chair and KR.</p> <p>Mark Lawson is stepping down due to a promotion in Dorset, requiring him to reduce his commitments. He suggested a phased handover, possibly through a co-chair arrangement to allow for a smoother transition.</p> <p>KR will approach key people about joining the board. Clerk to keep governors informed of any new proposals.</p>

4.	<p>Action Log:</p> <p>Actions from the meeting in January were carried out and approved by the board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Action: The governor with responsibility for H&S will meet with JR regarding the new site on 14th October 2024 <p>The H&S governors had a planned meeting with Jess Roebuck, but due to the busy end of the term, they had to delay it, a provisional date has been set for the 14th of October.</p>
5.	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <p>Members were asked to review whether the 'Instrument of Government', the current board structure is sufficient, governors were invited to comment.</p> <p>Standing Orders and Terms of Reference: These are the guidelines for how the committee operates, and they were sent out for review.</p> <p>Register of Business Interests and data information: Members were reminded to fill out and submit any changes.</p> <p>Governor's Code of Conduct: all governors required to review and sign and return to the clerk, a separate email will be sent to governors to action this.</p>
6.	<p>Presentation of HT report:</p> <p>Pupils on roll: there are currently 65 pupils on roll at TFC with new referrals coming in on a weekly basis.</p> <p>Attendance:</p> <p>Attention was drawn to unauthorised absences among vulnerable groups such as children in care where there was a 5% drop in the CiC attendance figures last term, two specific cases were discussed.</p> <p>One child was absent due to absconding from his placement and another child in a residential placement refused to return after a home visit, which again led to unauthorised absences.</p> <p>One of the targets from the last Ofsted inspection was around attendance. KR stated that she has collected data from previous census to compare figures with national and local trends and was pleased to report that TFC compared very favourably.</p> <p>KR felt that one of the key factors in this is that TFC takes a relational and therapeutic approach and building a sense of belonging. This has helped improve attendance over time and attendance is significantly higher than at the point of referral. Governors were keen to see comparisons at future meetings.</p> <p>KR has had discussions with Kerry Smith around authorised and unauthorised absences related to mental health and how best to support these pupils.</p> <p>Suspensions:</p> <p>KR reported on suspensions. Our overall rate for the year is very low in comparison to similar local and national provisions. Suspensions at TFC are used only when all options have been</p>

exhausted and the safety of the child or others is at significant risk. KR went on to describe specific reasons for individual suspensions.

CiC Progress and Academic data:

KR summarised the progress for the CiC pupils. The year 11 pupils were successful in positive transitions to college and apprenticeships. One child remains on TFC roll and is working between TFC and The Orchard sites.

EHCP:

An anonymous list of pupils with EHCPs was shared with governors to indicate current numbers; KR explained that this list is subject to fluctuation due to the fluidity of the cohort on roll. The SENDCo is presenting later on in the meeting.

Centre news:

Starters from September:

Three mentors and three TAs were appointed during the summer term.

Staff leavers:

One teacher left to take up a role abroad. We have identified a new maths lead from our existing staff. One unqualified teacher is beginning his teacher training for maths.

Staff training:

A number of staff have completed their Designated Safeguarding Lead training (DSLs) because both sites required adequate safeguarding representation.

First Aid Training: Similarly, the number of First Aiders trained reflects the need to provide first aid coverage across both locations.

Student Achievements:

GCSE results were above the national average and other similar local schools, this is a positive result, demonstrating consistency in performance.

GCSE exam data – KR has extracted data for the full time students, this was omitted from the report and will be re-circulated to the governors. KR is hoping that the introduction of medical students on a full teaching package will further improve results. However, they were not included in the total data as their prior access was limited to just English and Maths.

Re-integrations:

There were challenges related to moving some of the students into special schools, particularly around inconsistent start dates (e.g., a student starting in November rather than September). This issue might have impacted their transitions and learning continuity.

Inventory purchases: details included in the HT report, the biggest one to note is IT equipment; chrome books for pupils, laptops, interactive white boards and TVs for the classrooms.

	<p>A new server has been installed at TFC, but it's causing disruptions across both sites. All the traffic for both sites is routed through the new server, which has led to connectivity issues.</p> <p>There have been significant Wi-Fi access issues, the Wi-Fi team is scheduled to return on Friday to address these ongoing issues.</p> <p>One governor queried if the financial processes for the new server were completed correctly, with proper quotes and cost analysis done?</p> <p>KR ensured the governors of transparency and accountability and stated that the processes have been carried out correctly.</p>
7.	<p>Review progress of Centre Improvement Plan priorities:</p> <p>KR stated that she has extracted all the priorities, and marked the progress:</p> <p>Red; indicates tasks not yet started, which is normal for this time of year. Amber indicates tasks that are in progress, with substantial work already done. Most of the tasks are still in the red, but that's expected at this point in the year. Kim has prepared an update for governors to show how last year's targets were achieved. Hard copies are available for review.</p> <p>Kim stated that our ECL, Ros, has previously visited to review reading and maths, and will now return to assess SEND offer and PSHE across the school. Ros is going to ask two governors to support through the process and in preparation for future inspection.</p> <p>This provides a clear picture of how the Centre is progressing with its improvement plan, focusing on red areas that still need attention, upcoming external reviews, and ongoing preparations for potential oversight.</p> <p>KR stated that governors will be involved in new appointments and overseeing the staffing structure at 'The Woodland' site.</p> <p>One governor queried why there has been more delays on the completion of the site?</p> <p>KR explained that there are various issues related to the project's timeline, particularly planning around the MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) which needed to go through council approval for additional funding and the Forest School, with concerns around fire pits and tool security. The lead architect and the rest of the team are working hard to resolve issues quickly, but delays due to planning permission and council negotiations have slowed progress.</p>
8.	<p>Finance update:</p> <p>KR stated that we are chasing several pots of money from the LA to cover the cost of the additional after school provision, where staff were working overtime. The payments for the spring and summer terms were delayed but have now been received.</p>

	<p>The LA have agreed to cover the costs of The Orchard refurbishment but this money is still outstanding. Currently the costs for works have totalled around £15,000. Some invoices, like those for the alarm and camera systems, have been absorbed by 'Property Services'.</p> <p>The funding model for students remains the same, and staffing has increased; two externally funded Learning Reintegration Mentors are in place to explore local community resources so TFC can build its own, quality assured AP register supported by TFC staff. Several resources have been identified and are now up and running successfully. This reduces the need for externally run AP that some pupils have been accessing each week and instead provides a balanced curriculum of academic and vocational subjects, monitored closely by our highly qualified staff.</p> <p>One governor queried the costs of the AP? KR stated that for this academic year the costs of DTS, Rylands Farm and Horserenity totalled £80k.</p> <p>One governor queried how much involvement the mainstream schools would have to ensure that their pupils are receiving high standards of AP and appropriately safeguarded? KR explained that the processes to ensure quality, safeguarding and value for money are undertaken by the Deputy Headteacher and regular checks are conducted to monitor practises and ensure that the correct safeguarding and health and safety policies are in place and adhered to. These monitoring visits are shared with the other LCs to ensure a balanced picture with several people quality assuring the AP.</p> <p>KR stated that a site manager has been appointed and safer recruitment checks are underway. Once they are in situ it is will be feasible for them to manage both TFC and The Orchard sites.</p>
9.	<p>Curriculum:</p> <p>The curriculum update includes a few key additions, Vocational courses have been introduced, including mechanics, equine studies, and IT web design. The school will also begin offering the Duke of Edinburgh (DOE) Award program, which integrates well into the existing curriculum. One of the Behaviour Mentors has previous experience and has recently liaised with Christchurch LC who are now running the DOE course successfully. PE and outdoor activities remain important, especially for younger students, with a focus on daily physical activity.</p> <p>The school is re-evaluating examination boards for GCSEs, particularly in subjects like science, where they are trialling BTEC science for students who were found to struggle with the trilogy sciences. Functional skills in maths and English have moved online, reflecting broader shifts towards digital exams.</p> <p>Arts Award remains the most successful subject in terms of students achieving level 2 qualifications. PE and geography have lower participation, with fluctuating interest from year to year. The school adapts its offerings based on student interest, including enrichment</p>

	<p>activities like gym workouts, swimming, and boxing. Courses like Arts Award and Food Tech are popular due to their hands-on nature.</p>
10.	<p>Safeguarding update/Careers update:</p> <p>Annual safeguarding training has been conducted, including updates for all staff. Prevent training is planned in Autumn1. Agency staff have also received guidance on appropriate safeguarding procedures with children. New staff have been informed of our Child Protection/Safeguarding policy and procedures.</p> <p>Policy Updates:</p> <p>The child protection and safeguarding policy, as well as the staff code of conduct, have been revised. Staff have been reminded about the importance of not using phones to avoid any accusations of misconduct.</p> <p>Best efforts are being made to ensure adequate senior staff coverage for safeguarding at both sites. Staff are also being reminded of proper reporting procedures.</p> <p>Overall, while there have been some challenges and adjustments with the split site, the safeguarding processes are being maintained.</p> <p>Careers:</p> <p>SG is working hard to build employer engagement for TFC's Careers Program, and has lined up multiple industry contacts, which should provide a wide range of options for students, including mechanics, construction, hospitality, and apprenticeships. The partnerships with local businesses seem promising, especially since they have a history of collaboration.</p> <p>Jess Allen as the new one-to-one careers advisor from the Education Development Trust; she has made very positive connections with the students so far.</p> <p>Joanne Small from Ask Apprenticeships, is coming in to the Centre to spend time with the students. The sessions are well organised, especially with the key workers setting up logins in advance. This should maximise the time students spend actually learning how to use the website and explore apprenticeship opportunities.</p> <p>One governor queried the impact of losing a CSW has been on TFC? SG stated she has looked at the Dorset Careers Hub toolkit and they provide all the forms that you would send out to parents and she is also in communication with a company called 'Changing Education' to explore what they can offer in terms of a data base of work placements and the costs involved. Last year SG found suitable work placements, based on the student's interests and with the support from keyworkers and TAs, she registered students herself and followed-up with a visit to carry out the statutory safety checks and further visits once the student had started their placement. One governor expressed concerns over the time-consuming nature of organising placements.</p>

	<p>One governor queried if anyone was booked in to the careers event in Wimborne, SG confirmed that she is attending and that she is supported by the 'Dorset Careers Hub' and meeting others outside of TFC.</p>
11.	<p>Satellite Site update</p> <p>This discussion clarified the relationship between the Forum Centre and the Orchard, emphasising that the Orchard is a satellite of the Forum Centre, not a separate school. There has been some confusion, with people mistakenly requesting placements at the Orchard. The leadership is keen on making it clear to governors, staff, schools, and the local authority that all students are considered part of the Forum Centre, regardless of which site they attend.</p> <p>Steps have been taken to ensure consistency between the two sites, including maintaining the same displays, policies, and staff rotation across locations. While there is a slight variation in curriculum focus (behaviour lessons at The Forum and social skills at The Orchard site), both locations share resources and staff. Leaders have been actively involved in managing both sites and making sure staff from both locations interact regularly.</p>
12.	<p>SEND update:</p> <p>JC presented a summary of recent updates related to student profiles and placement issues, full details were included in a 'Power Point' pack shared with governors.</p> <p>JC stated that there is still a shift toward students with more complex needs. When students come through medical panels or are categorised as having Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, further assessment often reveals additional, more complex conditions like undiagnosed neurodiversity, making it harder to provide the appropriate support.</p> <p>Once these additional needs are identified, the current provisions become less suitable, creating a challenge in delivering the right level of support.</p> <p>There are delays in placing students in appropriate specialist settings, with some placements taking years to resolve. Due to the complexities of the current student profiles, TFC is not able to support as many students as it potentially could. JC has spoken with the 'ECL' and there is a 'Team Around the School' meeting planned to discuss these issues.</p> <p>There's a concern that if more students with ASC traits are identified, about one-third of the cohort will have ASC as their primary need. JC explained that the current KS4 model mirrors that of a mainstream setting and the frequent transitions between teachers and subjects can be difficult for students with a strong ASC profile to manage.</p> <p>One governor queried the price for a place at TFC and are we receiving the additional funding that mainstream schools are getting to support more complex cases?</p>

	<p>KR explained in brief how LC funding works, however, the top-up amount depends on the student's referral route. Where there is an identified SEND need and TFC cannot meet need and no special school is available, additional top-up funding may be requested.</p> <p>One governor urged to explore if TFC can get the offer that is being made to mainstream schools. JC explained that the issue is with the type of provision required, not the individual student.</p> <p>JC talked about the training and resources in place to support students.</p> <p>Specialist teachers are working on capturing student voices, particularly from those with ASC, to create a more supportive and progressive learning environment for students with similar profiles.</p> <p>The referral process is under review, especially cases coming through the medical panel where the needs might not be medical. This is being addressed in panel meetings.</p>
12.	<p>Policies for review:</p> <p>The following policies were shared with the governors;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Code of conduct • Lockdown Procedure • Managing Allegations • Complaints • Whistleblowing • Child Protection and Safeguarding <p>The Lockdown Policy has been updated to include The Orchard. There are some issues due to the fact that there is only one area that is out of line of sight, this is outside the Primary class.</p> <p>One governor queried when the last 'Lockdown' procedure was carried out? KR confirmed that the last practise took place last year and went very well, another will be carried out before half term on both sites.</p> <p>The Child Protection and Safeguarding policy has been updated to include recent statutory changes.</p> <p>Other policies were reviewed last year and no changes required. Governors were requested to review all the policies and feedback any comments in two weeks' time.</p> <p>One governor asked if the new guidance on attendance has been implemented into the school policy? KR confirmed that this has been actioned and letters sent out to parents regarding attendance concerns have been amended to reflect the changes.</p>

16.	Date of next meetings: Full Board: Wednesday 29th January 2025 Finance/H&S Committee: Wed 26th February 2025 T&L/Safeguarding Committee: Wednesday 19th march 2025
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