



## Vine South Essex Hub Board

St Margaret's CE Academy, Orsett CE Primary School & Bulphan CE Academy

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING OF THE  
VINE SOUTH ESSEX HUB BOARD  
HELD ON TUESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 9.35 AM  
AT ST MARGARET'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY, BOWERS GIFFORD**

<p>✓ indicates attendance</p>	<p>Ms Emma Wigmore, Executive Headteacher (EW) ✓ Mr Mike Simmonds, Chair (MS) ✓ Ms Laurie Eve (LE) Ms Gill Holmes (GH) ✓ Rev David Ibiayo (Rev DI) ✓ Ms Charlotte Little (CL) ✓ Ms Joyce Sweeney (JS) ✓ Ms Lorraine Robinson (LR) ✓ Ms Lynn Bennett (LB)</p>	<p>In Attendance: Mr John Crane, CEO Vine Trust (JC) Ms Sally Finch, Head of School, Bulphan (SF) ✓ Ms Shelley Jones, Headteacher, Orsett (SJ) ✓ Ms Gemma Smith, Head of School, St Margaret's (GS) ✓</p>
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	Agenda Item	Minutes
1	<b>Welcome and Opening Prayer</b>	The Chair welcomed everyone to the Meeting. Rev David opened the meeting with a prayer and reading from the bible.
2	<b>Apologies for absence</b>	No apologies received for any absence. The Chair shared that LB, who was a member of the Orsett Governing Body and then joined the SE Hub board member has now resigned. Thanks, were expressed as she steps down from her post due to work commitments. SJ agreed that Orsett would give Lynn flowers and a card to say thank you.
3	<b>Members to note any conflict of interest in the agenda or any declaration of business interests</b>  <b>Members to declare any gifts / hospitality and where applicable complete the relevant form</b>	There were no declarations of business interests or conflict of interests appertaining to any item on the agenda.  Members had not received any gifts or hospitality since the last Meeting.  <b>ACTION</b> : LR, LE to send their declaration of interests forms to the Chair and also sign the Code of Conduct as they had not been in attendance in the September meeting.
4	<b>Minutes from the last Meeting</b>	The Minutes, and the Confidential Minutes, of the Meeting held on 25 September 2018 were reviewed, agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record of the Meeting.
5	<b>Matters Arising not on the Agenda</b>	The Report on Actions from the last meeting are contained in a separate document and accepted.)  SF asked for new photos for the governor ID badges which would be taken after the meeting.

<p>6</p>	<p><b>10 mins Development Exercise</b></p>	<p>The Trust asks that each board completes a 10 min development exercise. Chair shared the ‘Who does what, where and when’ presentation.</p> <p>Sources of guidance brainstormed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CL spoke about the <b>scheme of delegation</b> to know what informs LB Responsibilities. It was suggested and agreed it should be referenced more often.</li> <li>• LR uses the National Governance Association website for advice and tips in her role.</li> <li>• The <b>local governance planner</b> from the Vine was viewed – this informs the heads as they prepare their values reports.</li> <li>• <b>Code of conduct</b></li> <li>• <b>Terms of reference</b> compliments the scheme of delegation</li> <li>• <b>Local Governor Role</b> document</li> <li>• Training – Essex, NGA training, etc. - always needs to be interpreted through the documents named above</li> </ul> <p>The Chair emphasised that The Vine Trust Board is accountable directly to the Secretary of State – LB is only a committee of the Trust Board. It is directly accountable to the Trust Board.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b></p> <p><b>How effective is our communication? Do we ensure that information concerning board decisions is managed appropriately and communicated in a timely way to the right people in order to avoid speculation?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SJ requested that the minutes from meetings need to be prompt to allow enough time to act on any actions before the next meeting. The Chair proposes that any messages to the Trust Board go directly to the CEOs PA in an e-mail. The actions to be put into a table and sent out to everyone within days of the meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION :</b> <i>This is the aim our new clerk will be instructed to do.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Google drive is a big help unless there are problems. GH shared that she has problems with the drive which the chair will address after the meeting. LR requested a training session for 5 mins on using the google drive. SJ puts everything in one Orsett folder then finds other files – Asked if we agree which folders are needed for each meeting? The Chair shared that the Vine Trust cloud is in the process of being rolled out and when it does, we will then use the cloud not the drive.</li> <li>• JS asked if a paragraph from governors on school news would be helpful. SH suggested that parents need to be clearly explained what LB does as the role has changed.</li> <li>• JS suggested talking to the School Councils so that they have a voice. CL shared that she used to attend school council meetings.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION</b> – to improve communication with parents/children the LB should have a paragraph on newsletters, possibly attend Parent Council and pupil council meetings.</p>
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7	<b>Chairs Report</b>	<p>The Chair apologised as he had failed to be held to account on signing off the budgets in the late summer term, for all 3 schools. This was done under chair's action once they had been agreed by the COO. He reported that in the transition state, each school was at a different stage of being able to report and the LB had little handle on the budgets. The COO and business managers with head and chair are involved but we are presented a budget agreed by the COO which the chair approved.</p> <p>The chair shared that in the future there will be a different process in agreeing budgets.</p> <p>There followed a long and detailed discussion on the Finance and related matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SJ questioned how long the transition should last.</li> <li>• LE shared deep concerns about finance and the negative impact on the schools.</li> <li>• LR agreed – Orsett did not have a deficit before the Vine and now there is a deficit and were being asked to make cuts. It is not possible yet to interrogate the finance details, yet this information is being published. It was agreed that concerns to be noted.</li> <li>• The chair explained that costs have risen and income has not resulting in an impact on budgets. The ESFA have directed that budgets be projected over 5 years which requires cuts in order to balance.</li> <li>• The Vine approach to training AFLs over a period of a year has added to the challenges. A restructure, which is being opposed by some Trust schools, is leaving uncertainty.</li> <li>• Rev DI shared that the emotional well-being of the children and staff is most important, and finance should not cause a negative impact on this.</li> <li>• LR gave an example of pension contributions being incorrect and having a negative impact on teachers' morale. The Chair is seeking clarity and has been reassured that this will be sorted out.</li> <li>• JS shared that her experience where all schools are having to make cuts right now. LE agreed with this. The Chair indicated that the staffing budget at Orsett is higher than the other 2 schools – 88% at Orsett and needs reviewing further.</li> <li>• The current restructure consultation of finance staff across the Vine was explained and that a decision by the Trust Board would be made later in the week to continue, or pause for local solutions to be developed and considered.</li> <li>• GH referred to the SIAMs Schedule regarding the wellbeing of staff and children – finance is having a negative effect.</li> <li>• The Chair suggested that being guided by the central team in balancing a budget we might feel reassured as they seek to avoid receiving a Financial Notice to Improve.</li> <li>• SJ is concerned that budgets are being set by the Trust who don't know the school and don't see the big picture. She referred to an example of the breakfast club which was not financially viable. The Chair reminded SJ that this was a local decision to close the club. GH suggested that Orsett look at an alternative way of providing this service if it is not financially viable which is happening. LR shared that the closing of the breakfast club ignited a negative response on FaceBook. The Chair suggested a more positive way of communicating the positives with parents. Rev DI shared that we need to counteract the negative with positive news from the schools.</li> <li>• EW shared that she had a conversation with a director to share her concerns about the impact on being a part of the Vine. The director agreed to share this with the board as the same message had been shared by many HTs.</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LE would like the concerns about the impact on children and staff to be shared with the trust</li> </ul>
8	<p><b>Executive Headteacher &amp; Heads Reports</b> (verbal) Vision, Collaboration, Teaching School, term dates and non-pupil days Data, Values, APP, SOAP (One Page Summary)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was requested that all three schools create one report together in future.</li> <li>GH suggested a statement in each section to reference how the new christian vision is having an impact.</li> </ul> <p><b>Values report shared from St Margarets and Bulphan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair asked about progress towards using Pupil Asset (PA) for progress data. GS explained that data has now been transferred over to PA but needs to all be checked – data for end of autumn will be inputted onto PA. LR will carry out her data monitoring once PA data is trustworthy.</li> <li>EW shared that another SLE has recently been approved, making three SLEs. The Chair shared that at his last monitoring visit he heard how there was high quality CPD in the triads.</li> <li><b>SIAMs at Bulphan</b> - GH monitoring visit indicated that RE subject leaders are all on board with brilliant things happening. Children are very confident and very informed. She believes they should receive a GOOD judgment providing they can evidence how the vision impacts everything that goes on in school.</li> <li>Pupil Parliament initiated in both schools. Ministers include learning, sport, health, values and ethos etc. so pupils work alongside members of staff. Each minister feeds into a section of the SIAMs – they will also feed back to the LB. Chair suggested the parliament might propose how they would like to communicate with the LB.</li> <li>LR asked about Chris Quigley – EW explained that this was a curriculum for foundation subjects which all 3 schools are working on together.</li> </ul> <p><b>Values report shared from Orsett</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair asked for the business plans for the proposers to run breakfast and after school clubs. SJ is waiting for the second plan then she will pass them on to him. It was agreed that LR and MS meet with SJ to look at these plans and are delegated to make a decision.</li> <li>LR asked how the MDA resignations are having an impact. SJ is using LSAs to cover lunchtimes and adapt their contracts to cover lunchtime they have time in lieu. Shelley is seeking HR advice for a long-term solution. It was suggested that LSAs make better MDAs and SJ agreed that there has possibly been a positive impact?</li> <li>Suggestions were given regarding changing work pattern of LSAs eg.changing worship to after lunch to allow LSAs to have their lunch break. SJ will to look at alternative operational ways to manage this.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION</b> : <i>It was agreed SJ would monitor the use of LSAs as MDAs and report to the next meeting.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SJ reported One teacher is off sick currently – there is concern this may be until Christmas. Year 2 – DHT is covering while she is off.</li> <li><b>Phonics</b> – GS carried out a monitoring visit . The report was shared and SJ indicated that she had acted upon some of the feedback. The Deputy is leading this. GS</li> </ul>

**ACTION :** *The LB would like Orsett to access the support offered urgently and report back next meeting.*

- GH reinforced that the SIAMs inspection is inspecting against the vision and how it is worked out through the values. She is carrying out a monitoring visit tomorrow to look at preparation for SIAMs.

**Data – Orsett**

- The data report for Orsett is taken from PA but SJ explained it does not tally up with her data report.
- LB is waiting for the schools to have data to share with them as none of the schools are confident with PA. Heads have used the HT data report for this meeting as this is a more accurate picture.

**ACTION :** *all three schools look at PA to see if/how the SOAP report is accurate*

- Attention was drawn to the high number of staff absence days – SJ explained that this is mainly down to one long term sick and her own sickness days which have been recorded as 20 days. Whole school attendance has improved.
- CL questioned how personal development, behaviour and welfare has been self-evaluated as a 1 when they have shared their concerns over welfare throughout the school. This will be reviewed.

**Data – Bulphan**

- SF shared data. GH reported that the difference in year 5 / 6 class to last year's is dramatic, ethos is good, children are ready to learn.
- Attendance is good.
- Bulphan doesn't have a SOAP yet as the data is not yet on PA. Data is shared as a predictions report:

Phonics – 90% year 1

GLD 91%

year 2 in line or better than last year

Year 6 –

There is a huge improvement in targets set this year for year 6

Read 73%

Write 73%

Maths 73%

- MS commented on the huge improvement in this data.

**Data – St Margarets**

- Chair noted that the school had self-evaluated at 2 / 1.
- LR asked if it is possible to self-evaluate at 1 in the new framework. GS explained that St Margarets are not due an inspection for SIAMs but work is being carried out in preparation. This SEF judgment might be reviewed closer to inspection.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GS shared predictions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GLD 84%</li> <li>Phonics above national for year 1</li> <li>Year 2 above national targets set - a similar picture to last year but slightly lower than as the cohort has high number of SEN (7 on register including one EHCP) with lots of intervention and adult support.</li> <li>Year 6 targets in line with national but expecting a slight drop from last year (100%) because there is one EHCP and 3 non-core children who came into school at year 5 or 6 below ARE. Still expected to be above national with progress being closely tracked. Targets set above FFT.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>INSET dates:</b> This had been an action from the last meeting</p> <p>After discussion it was agreed that the board would like to see the schools align INSET dates so that they can work together in their strategic planning. 20<sup>th</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup> July should be joint days so that all leaders in all 3 schools should strategically plan together.</p> <p>SJ indicated she didn't know that the 3 days were put aside for strategic planning and had already planned some wellbeing training.</p> <p><b>Dates Approved;</b>–</p> <p>3 Sept 2019 – all schools</p> <p>14<sup>th</sup> Feb report writing – St M and B</p> <p>1 June report writing – Orsett</p> <p>20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> July – all schools</p> <p>EW and SJ to discuss and agree how these days should be spent.</p> <p>Half term 21<sup>st</sup> Oct – 1<sup>st</sup> Nov</p>
9	<b>Finance / Budget Verbal update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Much had been covered earlier.</li> <li>Chair reported that the Pay Committee met last month and took recommendations from all three schools for pay awards. All were awarded except for two teachers and one of these has appealed. An appeal panel meeting is fixed for Fri 14<sup>th</sup> December at Orsett 1.30pm to hear the appeal. The grounds of the appeal have been given but no reasons have been given as to why the person believes the decision is wrong. Three people are needed to sit on the panel. GS LE and JS agreed to be panel members.</li> </ul>
10	<b>Pupil &amp; Sport Premium Reports</b>	<p>To be reviewed at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>Agenda item</i></p>
11	<b>Outcomes and action as a result of any external visits (local governors, AIC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The schools have a new academy improvement consultant – Keith Pullen.</li> <li>The chair has noticed the good quality of this report elsewhere.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>The Reports to be shared with the LB.</i></p>

12	<b>Safeguarding Update</b>	LE reported that she has visited St Margaret's twice, Orsett on Friday and will rearrange her visit to Bulphan. St Margaret's report is on the drive and GS has updated LE on individual cases.
13	<b>Governor Training</b>	LE ,CL and JS are applying for the Liverpool Hope online course. The Trust will pay half of the fee, the balance from the Schools CPD budget. LR asked these governors to bring their learning back to share with the group.
14	<b>Policies &amp; Risk Registers</b> Including to review and sign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme of Delegation</li> <li>• LB terms of reference</li> <li>• Code of Conduct</li> </ul>	<b>Risk Register:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes noted for Orsett reference the breakfast club</li> <li>• Changes to St Margaret's and Bulphan's higher risk around finance</li> </ul> <b>Policies Approved/noted:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistleblowing Policy – mandatory</li> <li>• Debt Management – mandatory (although some spelling errors in section 4.4.41 refers to section 4.4.44 which doesn't exist....)</li> <li>• Pay Policy</li> <li>• Gifts and Hospitality Policy</li> <li>• Finance Regulations</li> <li>• Declaration of Pecuniary and Business Interests Policy</li> <li>• Lockdown Policy (spelling error – site not sight)</li> <li>• Anti-bullying Policy</li> </ul> <b>Admissions Policies/Consultation:</b> - EW and SJ will meet to develop the policies for each school. The drafted documents will be circulated for agreement and where consultation is required it will be started before the end of term to meet the required period. The outcomes to be reported at the next meeting and a final decision taken.
15	<b>Communication to and from The Vine Trust Board</b>	The following were noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern that financial information is published and available to the public but the LB has limited information/reports.</li> <li>• Further clarity and reassurance required on pension contributions</li> <li>• LB is concerned about and wants noted the negative impact on the wellbeing of children and staff because of the financial context.</li> <li>• Debt Management Policy: some spelling errors noted in section 4.4.41 which refers to section 4.4.44 which doesn't exist)</li> <li>• Lockdown Policy: spelling error: 'site' not 'sight'</li> </ul>
18	<b>Date and time of future Meetings</b>	The Meeting schedule was reviewed and amended as follows:  Wednesday 30 January - 1.30 pm Wednesday 27 March - 9.30 am Monday 20 May - 1.30 pm Wednesday 17 July - 9.30 am  All Meetings to take place at St Margaret's.

<b>19</b>	<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Rev David Ibiayo closed the Meeting with a prayer.
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With no further business to discuss MS thanked everyone for attending. The Meeting closed at 12.30 pm.

Minutes prepared by: Helen Norbury

Minutes authorised by: .....

Chairman

.....

Date

**Communication and actions for the Vine Trust:**

Agenda Item / Action Point	Action	Responsibility	Priority
Agenda Item 7 / AP 1	Concern that financial information is published and available to the public but the LB has limited information/reports.	COO	<b>HIGH</b>
Agenda Item 7 / AP 2	Further clarity and reassurance required on pension contributions	COO	<b>HIGH</b>
Agenda Item 13 / AP 3	LB is concerned and wants noted the negative impact on the wellbeing of children and staff because of the financial context.	CEO/COO	<b>HIGH</b>
Agenda Item 13 / AP 4	Debt Management Policy: some spelling errors noted in section 4.4.41 which refers to section 4.4.44 which doesn't exist) Lockdown Policy: spelling error: 'site' not 'sight'	CEO	<b>HIGH</b>

**Actions from the Meeting**

Agenda Item / Action Point	Action	Responsibility	Priority
Agenda Item 2 / AP 1	SJ agreed that Orsett would give Lynn flowers and a card to say thank you.	SJ	<b>HIGH</b>
Agenda Item 3 / AP 2	LR, LE to send their declaration of interests forms to the Chair and also sign the Code of Conduct	LR & LE	<b>MEDIUM</b>
Agenda Item 5 / AP 3	New photos for the governor ID badges to Bulphan	Chair	<b>MEDIUM</b>
Agenda Item 6 / AP 4	New clerk to send actions and Communications to the Trust Board within a week or so of a meeting. Minutes to follow shortly after.	Clerk	<b>NORMAL</b>
Agenda Item 8 / AP5	Pupil parliament to propose how they would like to communicate with LB	GS/SF	<b>NORMAL</b>
Agenda Item 8 / AP 6	Breakfast/After School Club: LR and MS meet with SJ to look at business plans and are delegated to decide.	Chair	<b>HIGH</b>
Agenda Item 8 / AP 7	SJ to monitor the use of LSAs as MDAs and report to the next LB meeting.	SJ	<b>MEDIUM</b>
Agenda Item 8 / AP 8	Phonics support to Orsett to be urgently taken up and reported on at the next meeting.	SJ	<b>HIGH</b>
Agenda Item 8 / AP 9	All three schools to look at Pupil Asset Reporting and the accuracy of the SOAP Reports	EW/SJ	<b>MEDIUM</b>
Agenda Item 8 / AP 10	INSET Days: to EW and SJ to plan best use of joint days	EW/SJ	<b>HIGH</b>



Agenda Item 8 / AP 11	Next Agenda: Pupil & Sport Premium Reports	Clerk	<b>NORMAL</b>
Agenda Item 8 / AP 12	Keith Pullen Reports to be shared with the LB	SJ/SF/GS	<b>NORMAL</b>
Agenda Item 14 / AP 13	Admissions Policies/Consultation to be undertaken imminently	EW/SJ	<b>HIGH</b>
Agenda Item 14 / AP 14	Agenda Item for the next meeting: Approve Admissions Policies	Clerk	<b>NORMAL</b>