



SS Philip and James' Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting Wednesday 15 October 2025, 6.30pm, in school

Present Hazel Shaw (HS, Foundation Governor) (Chair)
Paul Atkins (PA, Headteacher)
Louise Fox (LF, Local Authority Governor) (Vice Chair)
Kim Mortensen (KM) (Parent Governor)
Michael Carter (MC, Co-opted Governor)
Hayley Smith (HSm, Foundation Governor)
Robert Aitken (RA, Foundation Governor) (from 6.45pm)
Daniel Walters (DW, Foundation Governor) (from 7.00pm)
Susie Bagnall (SB, Foundation Governor)
Frank Newhofer (FN, Foundation Governor)

Apologies Ella Handley (EH, Staff Governor)
Izzy McRae (IM, Foundation Governor)
Emily Smith (ES, Foundation Governor)

In attendance Ruth Morrison (Clerk)
Rob Miles (Associate Member)

The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate.
Agenda items were rearranged to suit governors' availability.

1 Prayer

1.1 RM opened the meeting with the school prayer.

2 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES.

2.1 The Chair gave a warm welcome to FH to the Governing Body. Apologies had been received and were accepted as recorded above. Governors noted that EH the newly appointed staff governor was currently on a school residential trip.

3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

4 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16-7-25

4.1 RM corrected a detail in minute 6.1 regarding Phonics. Subject to this amendment the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair for filing in school.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16-7-25– not covered by later agenda items.

5.1 All matters arising and actions were to be covered by later agenda items.

10 GOVERNORHUB REPLACEMENT

10.1 The email sent to all governors from Governor Services regarding the move from GovernorHub was available on GovernorHub. The Clerk gave information on the new system and sought permission from governors that this school be used as a pilot; this was

approved. SB gave information on a Governor Services briefing attended where further information was given. In consultation with the school, governors will need to arrange for current documents on GovernorHub to either be moved to the new system or archived in school. Further information is awaited regarding training sessions for governors on the new package.

11 COMPLIANCE

11.1 The OCC Governor Services Annual Schedule for 2025-26 was available on GovernorHub. Governors gave an update on the autumn term statutory actions not covered later on the agenda.

- 1) Ensure the school website is up to date, including publishing details of governing structures and people on the school's website: (item A1) – Governors complimented the new website. The Headteacher advised that policies and some of the compliance information are still to be added. HSm will carry out a website audit in advance of the next meeting, and the Chair will update the governor pages possibly with bios and photos.

ACTION HSM AND HS

- 2) Ensure GIAS is up to date (item A1.13) – The Headteacher confirmed that the School Business Manager had updated this including the new staff governor.

COMPLETED

- 3) Update GovernorHub with required governance information (item A1.14)

COMPLETED

- 4) Conduct Headteacher's appraisal (Appraisal Sub-Group) (A2.15) – The Chair will set a meeting date in November with the Headteacher appraisal governors (Chair, SB and RA).

ACTION HS

- 5) Ensure Staff Pay Policy is adopted (A2.16) –

(P&S) COMMITTEE

- 6) Receive report on teacher appraisal process (A2.18) -

ACTION (P&S) COMMITTEE

- 7) Ensure the pay committee (or governor panel) has received recommendations from the Headteacher for teacher pay and the appraisal sub-group for headteacher pay (A2.19)

ACTION (P&S) COMMITTEE

- 8) Confirm pay decisions for all teachers by 31 October 2025 and for the headteacher by 31 December 2025 (A2.20)

ACTION (P&S) COMMITTEE

- 9) Confirm Whistle-blowing procedures are in place (A3.2) -

ACTION (P&S) COMMITTEE

RA joined the meeting

- 10) Ensure all governors have completed a DBS check and section 128 check (A3.3) – The Headteacher confirmed that these were up to date.

COMPLETED

- 11) Approve strategy statement on use of Pupil Premium and publish on website (A3.4) – The headteacher advised that the 3-year strategy is due for review in December and will work with the Curriculum committee.

ACTION HT

- 12) Complete evaluation of spend on Pupil Premium and Service Pupil Premium pupils in previous academic year and publish on website (A3.5) - The headteacher advised that the 3-year strategy is due for review in December and will work with the Curriculum committee.

ACTION HT

- 13) Review and agree the annual safeguarding (Section 175) report and submit online to the LA before the deadline of 28th November 2025 (A3.8)

SEE AGENDA ITEM 8

- 14) Ensure all governors have completed Level 2 Safeguarding training and record training record on GovernorHub (A3.10) – The Headteacher will arrange this with the new governors and for DW whose training will expire shortly.

ACTION HT

- 15) Ensure all governors have completed Prevent Duty Course 1 (Awareness) and record on GovernorHub training records (A3.11) – The Chair will send a reminder to all governors to complete this training and record on GovernorHub.

ACTION HS

- 16) Ensure all staff safeguarding training is in place (A3.13) – The P&S committee will check this at their next meeting.

ACTION P&S COMMITTEE

- 17) Review and monitor compliance with cost of school uniform statutory guidance (A3.14)
This school does not have a uniform apart from for PE. The PE kit was reviewed last year and is in line with the statutory guidance. **COMPLETED**
- 18) Check that the school is compliant with attendance statutory guidance (A3.15) – This will be reviewed by the curriculum committee. **ACTION CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

6 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

6.0 The following reports were available on GovernorHub for this item:-

- Headteacher report October 2025
- School Development and Improvement Plan (SDIP)– as at 15-10-25
- Self-Evaluation (SEF) 2025-26 – updated October 2025

6.1 **Headteacher Report** – The Headteacher presented slides giving a precis of the Report.

Key points highlighted included:

i) Safeguarding – All systems and processes are compliant. There are currently 6 Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL). IM (Safeguarding Governor) visited the school on 14-10-25. Records of Concern show increased complexity of cases. There were 19 entered as 'Cause for Concern' and 1 MASH referral. Staff Level 2 Safeguarding training is up to date. Two members of staff returning to work next week will be trained.

ii) Admissions – Currently there are 391 on roll and 1 pupil joining next week. There were 391 on the October 2025 census, compared with 400 last year. 48 pupils joined Reception, this reduction in numbers will have an impact on the budget for this and future years.

iii) Behaviour – There have been no suspension since the report was issued. There were 8 Step 4 negative behaviour incidents in this reporting period; 6 were for the same pupil who is being supported by the school and external agencies.

iv) Attendance – Overall attendance to date is 97.1% which is 1% higher than last year. Persistent Absence is 9.6%. The SENDCo will become the Inclusion Lead and join the SLT and take on leading on attendance.

v) Current Challenges – These are admission numbers, staff absence and creating a positive culture.

Initiatives to promote the school include weekly tours, and open morning on Saturday, new website, growing Facebook presence and outreach with local nurseries. The school is keen to maintain its current class structure.

Staff absence was 4.9% in September for a mix of reasons. This created stresses for the organisation. The school offers good wellbeing and CPD packages.

DW joined the meeting.

Q: Are there any vacancies?

A: No, there are however 2 staff on long term sick leave.

The culture is not consistently positive throughout the school. RM led a session for staff seeking information about what they would like to stop/start and what they would like. A lot of the responses related to behaviour and attitudes. A further session has been planned.

The Headteacher and RM answered governors' questions.

Q: What arrangements are in place to cover the staff on long term sick leave?

A: System knowledge is required for the admin cover so a temp would not be appropriate. Tasks have been prioritised. The workload for other staff has increased and teaching assistants used at pinch points. Plans for teacher cover change depending on the length of the absence.

Q: Are temporary or supply staff used?

A: Agencies are helpful, but they are short of staff. For long term absence we try to find supply who are consistently available. We listen to feedback from parents and pupils. The supply staff currently being used is working well.

Q: Is the cover needed for a critical year?

A: It's year 4 who have the multiplication test. The partner year teacher is supportive and does all the planning.

Q: Are there pre-emptive things the school could do?

A: Events such as parents' evenings are scheduled to be at times to reduce the workload at pinch points; October to December is a busy period. We've tried to create space in the timetable. Training on resilience is being explored.

Q: Are there any Early Careers (EC) teachers this year and what is their impact on workload?

A: There are two in their second year. There is an increase in the workload, but the school is keen to offer places for them and PGCE students plus work experience.

Q: Does the school offer flu jabs to staff?

A: Yes, it's funded up to £20.

Q: Has persistent absence dropped and are these pupils in the SEND or pupil premium groups?

A: Yes, it's fallen. It includes pupil premium and SEND pupils and this also has fallen.

Q: In the safeguarding policy, persistent absence is a marker so should we make a link with the attendance policy?

A: Yes. See item 13 below.

Q: Is the data for on track for SEND and vulnerable pupils real time data or end of year data.

A: It's end of the year data as they have not been assessed yet this year.

Q: Does the long term teaching assistant cost the school more or less?

A: It's similar. It costs more but there are no associated employer costs. It's worked well.

Q: Could we have some feedback about the curriculum evening for parents?

A: Around 40 parents attended the Key Stage (KS) 1 evening and the hall was full for KS2. There were no questions from parents in the hall. RM gave KS1 parents information about socioeconomic factors impacting the school as this had been raised last year; data had been shared with parents.

Q: Was there a sense of goodwill and support from parents?

A: Yes.

Q: Who was the Welcome breakfast for?

A: For all parents, not just the new ones. It was well attended and is good for our values with links to the community.

Comment: OPAL offers a good opportunity to target vulnerable pupils and get them to school. The Headteacher reported that it supports behaviour for learning and leads to improved behaviour.

Q: Who funded it?

A: The PTA and Sports Premium funding. Pupil premium numbers are low so these pupils can be targeted.

Q: Are SEND number low as compared with other Oxfordshire schools or national?

A: They are low compared to both. It's the context of the school and demographics of the area.

Q: What about gifted pupils?

A: Some pupils with SEND are also at Greater Depth and are supported emotionally and academically.

Q: Have the comments made in the parent survey been looked at?

A: There are some themes such as communication which the admissions committee looked at. The Inclusion Lead is looking into comments reading SEND.

Governors agreed that the curriculum committee looks at the comments made and actions taken in response.

ACTION CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Q: How much time is spent dealing with false positive reports from the filtering and monitoring system?

A: They come in batches when pupils are looking at things which can be dealt with quickly. There are 5 levels of risk and the Headteacher receives alerts for levels 4 and 5. It's not onerous.

Q: Have there been any positive results?

A: One, and the Headteacher spoke with the child.

Q: Where is the data stored?

A: It's cloud based and industry standard recommended for monitoring.

Q: How many pupils are here for less than a year after the census?

A: Only one that the Headteacher remembers. The numbers are low. On average 40 pupils join, and the same number leave each year, plus around 60 Year 6 pupils. This means a quarter of the school population changes each year.

6.2 **SDIP 2025-26**

The Headteacher explained that this is based on the 3 priorities presented at the July meeting – Outcomes for KS1, Implementation of OPAL and excellent learning behaviour across the school. Some of the actions still need populating. Governors agreed to consider the plan in more detail at the next meeting.

Comment: The Governor Services briefing mentioned that there is some funding for phonics.

A: The Headteacher is arranging for staff to attend training sessions from the LA on phonics. The school uses Rocket Phonics phonics.

Q: Do screens increase or decrease pupils' focus?

A: When used well they are a positive. We challenge teachers about the use of screens and ask them to think about how they use them. Flipcharts are also used in class.

Q: Is anyone responsible for displays in school?

A: No, but there is guidance.

The Chair asked that all committees look at the SDIP and that monitoring takes place as per documents 9.1 Strategic Priorities 2025-26.

ACTION ALL COMMITTEES

6.3 **SEF** – Governors agreed that the curriculum committee reviews this at their next meeting.

ACTION CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

6.4 **Parent survey** – This had been covered earlier.

7 **STATUTORY INSPECTION OF ANGLICAN AND METHODIST SCHOOLS (SIAMS)**

7.1 The Headteacher and Deputy presented information on what SIAMS is and expanded on the questions that the inspection is based around. Information on what the school has done was shared.

Q: Lots of good things have been happening. Is it included in the strategic plan?

A: It needs to be tied together. We're getting everyone to think about the impact of what they do, for example if they are raising money to think about the cause they are raising money for.

Q: Does it include other religions?

A: Yes, the Headteacher explained how other religions are taught on a cycle.

The Headteacher will circulate the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for RE to governors to read.

ACTION HEADTEACHER

Q: Is RE a pilot for Rosenshine?

A: Yes, and it's in the SDIP. Formative and summarise assessment were used for RE first and now other subjects.

Q: Are buddies used?

A: Yes, for example, Year 6 Playground Detectives is part of OPAL. This has been included in the SDIP and there will be training.

Q: What are the possible outcomes from the inspection?

A: There are no descriptors, the school is either effective in implementing its vision and are completely, or not.

Q: What involvement is needed from governors?

A: The Headteacher will share the SIAMS SEF tool, and the Deputy will share the notes on spirituality after staff input has been added.

ACTION HEADTEACHER AND RM

8 SAFEGUARDING

8.1 **Section 175/157 Safeguarding audit** – The Headteacher advised that the initial sections of the report had been completed by 12-9-25. The final report will be reviewed by IM and the curriculum committee before coming to the next full FGB. The date for submission is 28-11-25.

8.2 **Monitoring** – Governors noted the Safeguarding Monitoring report from IM following her visit on 7-10-25.

9 GOVERNING BOARD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1) Governing Body Strategic Priorities/Objectives 2025/27, Autumn 2025 update – LF had updated this as per the discussion at the July meeting. Committees are to look at their areas and monitor them as detailed in the plan. Governors noted that a communications working group may be needed.

2) **Roles and Committees for 2025-26.**

Committee list – Governors updated and approved the list available on GovernorHub. The Clerk will update them on GovernorHub.

ACTION CLERK

Approve individual roles descriptors – These were approved.

Headteacher appraisal governors – The chair, SB and RA.

Terms of reference, Membership and Clerks for each committee – Terms of Reference for Curriculum committee, Resources committee, Personnel and Safeguarding committee, and Admissions committee were on GovernorHub and were approved.

Discussion; Governors discussed if there should be governor links to each subject. It was agreed that it would be better that governors visit together for a more wide ranging visit. The curriculum committee will consider a rolling plan of subjects for visits.

ACTION CURRICULUM COMMITTEE.

3) Delegation Planner – This was approved.

4) Agree Monitoring Schedule for 2025-26 – **Action curriculum committee**

5) Updates and minutes from the committees – The following documents were available on GovernorHub, Admissions minutes 13-10-25, Resources minutes 14-10-25 and slides on Affordable Schools from a training session.

Q: Should Admissions committee minutes be published on the school website?

A: The Clerk advised that there is no requirement for them to be published but that all Full Governing Body and Committee documents including minutes must be made available on request unless they had been marked as confidential.

LF advised that the 2027-28 Admissions policy will be consulted on.

- 6) Updates from lead governors and monitoring visit reports
 - SEND Governor monitoring visit report 23-9-25 – SB - Governors noted the clear report available on GovernorHub.
- 7) Code of conduct, approve National Governance Association version – Governors agreed the code available on GovernorHub.
- 8) All governors to confirm the following on GovernorHub: Governors were reminded to update the following on GovernorHub.
ACTION ALL GOVERNORS
 - Declarations of Interest,
 - Reading Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025,
 - Not disqualified from being a Governor.
- 9) Fundraising Strategy – LF gave an overview of the Fundraising Pilot Project, ideas for consideration which was available on GovernorHub. Governors were mindful of the line between strategic and operational matters. Governors agreed that RM meets with LF, the Chair and Alice Buxton to consider it further and to arrange a shopping list of priorities.
ACTION RM AND CHAIR
- 10) School Website update – See item 11.1 earlier

12 GOVERNING BODY MATTERS

- 12.1 **Membership of the Governing Body** – Governors noted the constitution available on GovernorHub.

Parent governor vacancy – An election will be arranged when there is capacity in the admin team.
ACTION HEADTEACHER

Associate Member – Governors agreed to reappoint RM as an associate member for a further 4-year term of office.

- 12.2 **Training log** – Governors noted the training log which the Clerk had downloaded from GovernorHub.

13 DOCUMENTS FOR APPROVAL

- 13.1 Governors approved the following which were available on GovernorHub.
- Behaviour Policy 2025-26
 - Behaviour Statement 2025-26
 - Charging and Remissions Policy 2025-26
 - Privacy Notice Ss Philip and James 2025-26
 - Privacy Notice for Staff 2025-26
 - Governors Expenses Policy 2025-26 – Subject to names being replaced with positions and correcting the name of the committee to Resources.
 - Data Protection Policy 2025-26
 - PSHE including RSE Policy 2025-26
 - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2025-26
 - Attendance Policy 2025-26 – Subject to a link being made to persistent absence as per the safeguarding policy
 - Complaints Policy 2025-26
 - P & J play Policy – RM explained that this is a model policy from OPAL. The highlighting will be removed from the final version; these link to our Vision.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 14.1 There was no further business to consider.

Meeting dates for the current academic year

Governors approved the proposed meeting dates

1st October 2025 in person

26th November 2025 online

14th January 2026 in person

11th March 2026 online

29th April 2026 online

15th July 2026 in person

Online meetings will start at 7.30pm and in person meetings at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.