St Mary's Church of England Primary School
Northchurch, Herts. HP4 3QZ

Minutes of the Governing Board Meeting
held on Tuesday 25th February 2025 via MS Teams

Present:
Parent Governor (2): Leena Clark, Kirsty Largent
LA Governor (1): Karol Freeman
HT and Staff Governor (2): Sarah Gray (HT), Sarah Stewart (staff)
Foundation Governors (8):
DBE Appointed (2): Julia Hughes, David Laird
Ex Officio (1): Revd Jonathan Gordon
PCC Appointed (5): Steve Hill (Vice Chair 01.10.24), Linda Slim (Chair 01.10.24), David White, Kat Worth, 1 vacancy
Co-Opted Governor (1): Sarah Morris
Associate Governors: Phil Anderson, Lu Farr-Smith
In attendance: Tracey Middleton, Clerk to Governors, Laura Zimet, Deputy Headteacher
Documentation circulated in advance:

- Final St Marys CofE Primary School FGB Agenda 25.02.25
- 5 St Mary's Pupil Premium Strategy 2024-25
- 6. Draft minutes 26.11
- 8. CM012 Special Educational Needs and Disablity Policy (February 2024)
- 8. GB007 Operation of CCTV Policy (Feb 2025)
- 8. PC020 Penalty Notices Unauthorised Absence Code of Conduct
- 8. PM016 Grievance Policy (February 2025)
- 8. St_Mary's_Admissions_Policy_In_Year_Form_2026
- 8. St_Mary's_Admissions_Policy_SIF_2026_Final
- 8.St_Mary's_Admissions_Policy_2026_Final
- 9. St Mary's CoE Primary School Vision Statement
- 10 250109-EA-916-CSV Final Report (Visit 2 PP Review)
- 10. SIF/SEF 2024_25
- 11. Headteacher's report to the Governing Body Febraury 2025 (Updated)
- 12.1 Academic Standards Meeting Minutes 3rd Feb 2025
- 12.1 Academic Standards Minutes 18.11.2024
- 12.2 Feedback from Consultation on Admissions Policy 2026-27
- 12.4 Minutes - Resources Premises Committee - 14.01.2025 v1
- 12.4 Premises HS Inspection Minutes 14.01.2025 v1
- 12.5 Finance Terminology answers
- 12.5 Schools_financial_value_standard_SFVS_checklist_2024-25 March 25 submission v1
- 12.6 Schools T&D Booklet 2425
- 12.10 Curriculum Link Visit Geog. Nov. 2024
- 12.10 Curriculum Link Visit History Nov. 2024
- 13.Termly Safeguarding Report to Governors Spring 2025
- English Curriculum Link Visit Dec. 2024

Documentation circulated in advance by the clerk:

DfE Prevent training, DfE Attendance data, DfE IDSR, DfE Alternative provision, Rowntree's poverty report, EDI training, GHUB website, compliance, DfE SEN guidance for governors, Finance terminology, News British values webinar
Dfe Attendance webinar, Recruitment sites for governance, Gatsby benchmark, Schools week – Schools bill conversation
NGA – SEND exclusion guide, Ending Gender-Based Violence and Abuse in Young People's Relationship, NFF from govt
DfE 16-18 attainment, DfE Trusts financial pressures, CGI High performing teams, Gatsby guide and benchmarks, DfE – attendance, exclusions, multiplication tests

Meeting opened at: 19.00 ACTION

1 Welcome and prayer:

1. The meeting was opened with a prayer.
2. The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting.
3. The Chair noted that the meeting was quorate.

2 To receive apologies for absence and to consider approving any absences:

1. Colleagues were reminded that notification of absence from a meeting should be forwarded to the clerk, Chair and Head at least 3 days in advance of the meeting and that it is the decision of the Board whether to approve an absence. Governors/Trustees are being increasingly held to account for their commitment and capacity to attend meetings regularly, with schools now required to publish this information on their websites.

3 Confidentiality and to declare any Conflict of Interest from any items on the agenda and confirm if any new declarations require adding to the register:

1. Colleagues were reminded that if a governor/trustee, or anyone else present, has a conflict of interest on an agenda item(s) – pecuniary or other, they must declare it and voluntarily withdraw from the meeting for that item(s) and not take part in that discussion. It is for individual governors/trustees to declare a conflict and voluntarily withdraw and not for another governor/trustee to instruct withdrawal.
2. None declared.
3. Colleagues were reminded to add any new declarations to the statutory register which is recorded in GHUB and published on the school website and alert the governance professional and Chair of any updates.
4. None declared.
5. Colleagues were reminded that if any colleague has received any gifts or hospitality, it should be recorded on the statutory register.
6. None declared.

4 To consider notification of any items for AOB:

1. None.

5 Pupil Premium Grant at St Mary's – what it is and how it is used

SS introduced the presentation circulated in advance of the meeting. Further discussion and questions elicited that:

1. There have been 2 external visits from HfL which were effective in developing the strategy and evidencing impact.
2. The statement of intent was outlined and it was noted that there are some children with SEN, EAL and PPG to consider.
3. Areas of challenge have been identified and strategies to support these planned. Parental engagement has been a focus and quality first teaching continue to be a priority.
4. Governors were assured that the strategies are regularly reviewed for impact and amended accordingly. Spending is in line with requirements.
5. **Question - Are group sessions available?** Yes, these are in place for identified pupils.
6. **Question – Does the school reach out to families who may not have registered?** This is covered sensitively by the office who know the families well.
7. Thanks were extended to SS for informative presentation

The Board noted the update

6 **To agree minutes of the last meeting: (previously circulated):**

1. The minutes of the meeting dated **26.11.24** which were circulated in advance of the meeting were agreed as an accurate record; signed and dated by the Chair **ACTION: To be added to the school files.** LS
2. It was noted that the signed copy of the minutes must be kept indefinitely. They must be held at the school for a period of six years, after which they can be sent to archive.

7 **To consider matters arising from the last meeting's minutes:**

1. The matters arising from the last meeting's minutes were considered and it was agreed that all actions are closed or in hand or on the current agenda.
2. **ACTION: Proposal for stakeholder voice to be circulated**

KW, SG

8 Policy Approval:

1. The following policies which were circulated in advance of the meeting were approved
2. PM016 Grievance Policy

3. PC001a Admissions (Reception) was agreed. The consultation has been undertaken and will be published on the school website
4. GB007 Operation of CCTV
5. CM012 SEND Policy – no changes
6. PC020 Penalty Notices Unauthorised Absence Code of Practice – model policy

The Board noted the update.

9 School Vision:

1. The Board discussed the impact of School's vision "Shining Brighter and Brighter" and examples of the impact they have seen. These were:
2. Year 5 children were empowered by the response to their letters, i.e. a dog was brought into school to recognise their persuasive requests.
3. Year 3 shared their work with other classes - providing opportunities for sharing good practice and role modelling. This is a key aim of the updated writing curriculum - writing for purpose.

DW arrived at 19.40

4. It was noted that the collective worship led by the Baptist Church had a warm and inclusive environment and every child was included in the collective worship

The Board noted the update.

10 School Development Plan and School Self-Evaluation:

1. The Board was provided with an update on each priority and governors evidenced examples of progress and impact.
2. An overview of the progress against each priority was provided and examples of the impact provided.
3. Colleagues were assured that effective progress is being made and external verification from the HIP noted.

The Board noted the update.

11 To receive and ask questions of the Head's termly report:

The HT introduced the documentation and report circulated in advance of the meeting. Further discussion and questions elicited that:

1. **Question - I love the idea of Obi coming in to visit, is there possibility she could become a 'reading dog' in the future?**

Obi and the children managed her visit really well. It is felt to be a safe and positive experience. She could be used effectively as a reading dog and also in ELSA sessions. She did well at supporting children with emotional regulation.

2. **Question - It's also good to see a good budget for the sports CPD for staff, do you have any specific plans for this?**
   The CPD budget is being spent on specialist coaches to lead PE with the support of teachers - supporting them to learn about setting up sessions, managing groups, coaching/teaching points and subject knowledge. The school has asked "Sports Fever" to begin increasing the teacher involvement and to provide feedback to support their development.
3. **Question - Can you tell us more about why you decided to update the Marking and Feedback policy and what a "marking codes" approach is?**
   The school have been trying to implement a "no written feedback" approach and "whole class feedback" approach for a while. This was found to be only effective for a limited number of classes with highly experienced teachers. It's been used inconsistently, difficult to monitor and teachers have not found it easy to use. In SLT book-looks, it was identified that it was not being used consistently and children's editing was inconsistent. These finding were supported by the book-look in the SEA meeting. The school has therefore moved to "marking codes" to provide teachers with clarity - which is especially important for less experienced staff. Children will have a better understanding of how to edit and improve their work. We are encouraging "live" (in the moment) feedback and editing – this is more impactful and kinder on the workload. Teachers were positive about the changes and the impact will continue to be monitored and the need for further support will be identified through SLT monitoring. The policy has been updated. Laura Zimet led SLT on this.
4. **Question -Can you share with us what these interventions look like and how frequently the reduced timetables are reviewed?**
   Reduced timetables are reviewed every 8 weeks. This does not mean they are always changed during these time frames, but they are reviewed – this is a positive step as it ensures that children don't remain on reduced timetables unnecessarily. Interventions include further adaptations to timetables, additional ELSA sessions, personalised behaviour plan (RAMP), and further adaptations to

learning. Some reports have now been received from external support bodies.

5. **Question - In relation to KAPOW, what does "teacher expertise required to “keep the main thing the main thing” as bought scheme overfill to offender value " mean?**
   A scheme of work is a product. Companies often include lots of resources so that schools feel that they are getting value for money. And they are, are teacher can select resources that will best suit their classes. However, if a teacher tries to do everything included in the scheme, they will rush learning and the main learning won’t be the focus. For example, they often include quite involved starters that are fun, involved and review previous learning. However, if these are fully completed, the teacher would run out of time to complete the main learning activities. They can be reduced to allow the main learning to be achieved. However, children may need some more time to secure previous learning and spending time on a starter, it may be necessary to achieve the learning outcomes. The skills required by the teachers are: a knowledge of end point (the intended outcome of the units); the steps to achieve the outcomes; formative assessment to know where the children are and identify gaps; an understanding of previous learning; and being able to gauge pace
6. **Question - What is the plan for regarding recruitment to the Year 5 teacher post?**
   The supply teacher will remain in class until the end of the year and an internal recruitment campaign will be held to secure a permanent replacement.
7. Thanks were extended for the informative report which supports governor triangulation

The Board noted the update

12 To receive Committee and Link Visit Reports since the last meeting:

1. Academic Standards and Achievement Committee – the Chair provided an overview as detailed in the draft minutes on GHUB.
2. Website – the site has been audited and is 100% compliant.
3. Admissions Committee has met and an overview of the application ranking provided. Assurance was provided the time frames have been met. Nursery admissions will be the next meeting.

4. Ethos Committee – the curated conversation with the Diocese was helpful. The committee meets next week.
5. Resources and Premises – the Chair provided an overview as detailed in the draft minutes on GHUB. The budget monitors have been reviewed.
6. The Board agreed the SFVS submission.
7. The water run off from New Road has been an issue.
8. Governors noted the financial position of the school.
9. Governor Development Coordinator – colleagues were reminded to undertake regular safeguarding training including Prevent and cyber security. New governors to undertake safeguarding in the first term
10. **Link Governor Visits – ACTION: All governors who have completed a link visit to upload their report to FGB folder and those outstanding to arrange them before Easter** ALL

The Board noted the update

13 Safeguarding, Risk Assessment and GDPR:

1. **Safeguarding –** governor monitoring of the SCR has been undertaken and will be audited by HCC next term.
2. GDPR - There are no SARs/FOIs/GDPR breaches to report. The DPO has met with the HT. The website will be updated to reflect that the school used AI.

Staff left the meeting at 20.28

The Board noted the update.

14 Chair's Business:

1. Succession planning was considered at length in line with the end of terms of office, skills and experience. Governors were encouraged to promote the vacancies to their contacts.
2. J Gordon expressed an interest in Co-Chair of Governors for the next academic year.
3. The Academisation agenda was reflected on and no further requirements at this stage.
4. The Chair confirmed that there are no notifications and correspondence received to share.

5. The Chair confirmed that there have been no audits, reviews, inspections since the last meeting to note which have not been referred to.
6. Confirmation was given that no action has been taken by the chair on behalf of the board since the last meeting.
7. Colleagues confirmed that the meeting has been conducted in an open manner, and, that all governors have been able to participate and contribute to discussions. The Board has monitored its statutory requirements with regards to annual business.

The Board noted the update.

15 Any Other Business:

1. None.

16 To agree Date of next meeting:

1. Colleagues were thanked for their contribution to the meeting.
2. The next meetings will be held:

Date	Start	End	Meeting
Sat 7 Jun 2025	10:00	12:00	Board meeting followed by lunch and Strategic Away Afternoon until 3pm (venue TBC)

The meeting closed at:21.15

Signed ………………………………………………………………………………………………Dated: ……………………………………………