Minutes of the Governing Board Meeting held on Monday 29th September 2025 via MS Teams

Present:

Parent Governor (2): Leena Clark (vice-chair 07.06.2025), Kirsty Largent

LA Governor (1): vacant

HT and Staff Governor (2): Sarah Gray (HT), Sarah Stewart (staff)

Foundation Governors (8): Revd Jonathan Gordon

DBE Appointed (2): Julia Hughes, David Laird

Ex Officio (1):

PCC Appointed (5): Linda Slim (Chair 01.10.24), David White, 3 vacancies

Co-Opted Governor (1): Sarah Morris

Associate Members: Phil Anderson, Larry Eaton, Scott Wallbert

In attendance: Tracey Middleton, Clerk to Governors, Laura Zimet, Deputy Headteacher

Absent:

Associate Members: Lu Farr-Smith

Documentation circulated in advance:

- St Marys CofE Primary School FGB Agenda 29.09.25
- 7_Draft minutes 07.06
- 9_Confirmations-Summary-St Mary's CofE Primary School, Northchurch
- 9_Register-of-interests-St Mary's CofE Primary School, Northchurch
- 11_NGA code-of-conduct-maintained July 25 - Church
- 12_Annual Programme of Business
- 13_Terms of Reference - FGB Committees
- 14_Copy of F0010 Schedule of Financial Delegation 2025-26 (June 25) v
- 15_Policy Register
- 18_School Improvement -SEF 2025 - 2026.docx
- 18_Summary School Improvement Plan 2025 - 2026
- 19. Termly Safeguarding Report to Governors Autumn 2025.doc
- 20_PE and Sport Premium Evaluation 2024_25
- 23.Child Protection Policy 2025-2026
- 24_Training-StMarysPrimarySchool
- KeyDoc_whole_school_sustainability_audit_July_2025
- NGA risk-management-maintained-20250224

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

The core functions of the governing body are as set out in (regulation 6) and include, but are not limited to ensuring:
- that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined
- that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school
- the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources

A governing body and its governors must, as required by The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013, regulation 6(2):
- act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school
- be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and shall be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties
- The governing body also has legislative responsibility and strategic oversight for the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Meeting opened at:19.03 **ACTION**

1 Welcome and prayer:

1. The meeting was opened with a prayer
2. The Chair welcomed colleagues to the first meeting of the new academic year
3. The Chair noted that the meeting is quorate
4. The following vacancies and expiring of terms of office were noted and succession planning considered: L Slim 19.12.25
5. Scott Wallberg was appointed as Associate member for a 4-year term of office appointed to Resources and Premises Committee and Admission Committee
6. Leena Clark was appointed as LA Governor from 30.09.2025
7. **ACTION: Databases and websites and subscriptions to be updated accordingly** **SG**
8. **ACTION: Parent election to be commenced before half term** **SG**

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
2. Apologies were received and absence accepted from: Lu Farr-Smith

3 To make appointments (if required):

1. None

4 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
7. Colleagues were reminded that any RPTs must be recorded
8. Colleagues undertook an annual review of the register of the statutory declarations register and noted any links to the contract register
9. **ACTION: Confirmation was given that the outstanding GHUB register completion to be done by all governors/trustees for the current academic year by the end of the week** **ALL**

5 To consider notification of any items for AOB:

1. One item from Julia Hughes.

6 To agree Terms of Office for Chair and Vice Chair and Confirm/Elect Chair and Vice Chair and discuss succession planning of Chair and Vice Chair:

1. The term of office for the Co-Chairs was agreed to conclude on 01.10.2026
2. The term of office for the Vice Chair was agreed to conclude on 01.10.2026
3. Julia Hughes and David Laird were elected as Chair of the Board
4. Leena Clark was elected as Vice Chair of the Board
5. The Board considered succession planning
6. **ACTION: Subscriptions, websites and databases including GIAS and Company House to be updated accordingly** **Chair**

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

1. The minutes of the meeting dated 07.06.2025 which were circulated in advance of the meeting were agreed as an accurate record; signed and dated by the Chair
2. **ACTION: Signed minutes to be added to the school files as soon as possible** **Chair**
3. 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

8 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

9 Membership:

1. The Board reviewed the Instrument of Government to determine the terms of office and considered vacancies and succession planning. There is no requirement to amend the Instrument as it is fit for purpose
2. The Board reviewed resignations/end of office/appointments/elections since the last meeting

3. The Board confirmed that the information regarding governance is accurate on the school website, GIAS, Company House (Academy) including updated register of interests and attendance at meetings last year
4. The Board noted vacancies and considered recruitment requirements
5. Monitoring was undertaken to ensure that each colleague has completed reconfirmation of declarations on GHUB which include: Register of Interests 2025/6; KSCIE 2025; Code of Conduct; ICT Acceptable Use Policy; Whistleblowing Policy; Child Protection Policy; Maintained schools governance guide; cyber, prevent and GDPR training
6. Each colleague confirmed that their DBS certificate number/date/check box is registered, Training record and Contact information on GHUB are up to date
7. School should print a copy of the business interests for the board to be kept in the school office. Previous years declarations for governors/trustees/directors must also be retained in the school office for financial audit purposes
8. As part of their induction, are all colleagues are required to read and sign that they are aware of the school's whistleblowing policy which clearly notes the process that would take place in the event of fraud being found or disclosed

10 To confirm agreement of virtual attendance at meetings:

1. The Board noted the dates are detailed on GHUB and agreed that virtual meetings are allowed

	Start	End	Meeting
Monday 29 Sep 2025	19:00	21:00	Virtual
Monday 15th Dec 2025	15:45	17:45	Board Meeting in person
Monday 23rd Feb 2026	19:00	20:00	Virtual
Sat 6 Jun 2026	10:00	12:00	Board Meeting in person

11 Ratify the Code of Conduct for 2025/6 which has been confirmed on the compliance tab:

1. The Board ratified the Code of Conduct

12 Ratify the Annual Programme of Work for 2025/6:

1. The Board noted that the current PoW for 2025/6 is published on GHUB
2. The Board ratified the PoW for 2025/6

13 Ratify the Committee Terms of Reference for2025/6:

1. **The Board ratified the Committee Terms of Reference for 2025/6** which had been reviewed and recommended by the Committees. Academic Standards, Achievement and Ethos Committee, Resources and Premises Committee, Pay Sub Committee, Admissions Committee

Standards and Ethos Committee	Resources and Premises Committit
Julia Hughes	**Phil Anderson**
David White	Sarah Morris
Sarah Gray	Sarah Gray
Leena Clark	Larry Eaton
Sarah Stewart	Kirsty Largent
Lucinda Farr Smith	Scott Wallberg
Jonathan Gordon	
	Pay Sub Committee
	David Laird
	Sarah Gray
	David White

Admissions Committee	Headteacher's Performance Managen
Leena Clark	**David White**
Sarah Gray	Julia Hughes
Lucinda Farr Smith	Jonathan Gordon
Sarah Morris	
Scott Wallberg	

Link Governor Roles	Governor
Safeguarding	Leena Clark
Pupil Premium	Julia Hughes
School Priority 1: Writing	David Laird
School Priority 2: Phonics	Sarah Morris TBC
School Priority 3: Maths	David Laird
School Priority 4: SEND	Julia Hughes/Lucinda Farr
School Priority 5: Christian Distinctivenes	David White/Jonathan Gordon

Other Responsibilites	
Website Monitoring Governor	Kirsty Largent
EDI Governor	Kirsty Largent
Health and Safety Governor	Sarah Morris
Looked after Children	Leena Clark
Attendance Governor	Leena Clark

2. The Board confirmed clerking arrangements for GB and Committees

14 Ratify the Scheme of Delegation for 2025/6

1. **The Board ratified the Scheme of Delegation**

15 Ratify the Calendar of policy review for 2025/6

Signed: ……………………………………………. **Dated:** …………………………………………….

1. **The Board ratified the calendar of policy review**

16 Receive DfE Documentation:

1. The board received the DfE KCSIE 2025
2. The board received the DfE Maintained School Governance Guide – updated June 25 and noted added requirements for this year
3. The board noted the Digital and technology standards – an understanding of and be working towards meeting the six core digital and technology standards by 2030 and provided a link to the plan technology for your school service to help them do this (Plan technology for your school - GOV.UK)
4. The board noted the requirement to review progress against DfE's six core digital and technology standards
5. The board noted the Estate Management requirements - (Good estate management for schools - Guidance - GOV.UK)
6. The board noted the requirement to determine monitoring arrangements

17 Appoint Committee membership and Link Governor roles:

1. The Board considered the skills matrix/audit to support membership and link roles
2. **The Board agreed the membership and link roles action: GHUB to be reflected accordingly** **LC**

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18 To Approve the School Improvement Plan for 2025/26 and Financial Monitoring:

1. Assurance was given that the strategic plan/improvement plan 2025/26 is considered in the finances
2. **Question – Do we have the data reflected without SEND and PPG and Gender? No however it can be presented at a future meeting in the HT report**
3. **Question – Is the data of those exceeding expectations presented as well? Yes, it can be included in the HT report**
4. **Question – Is the progress data available? Yes, it can be included in the HT report**
5. **The Board agreed the SIP and SEF as presented**
6. A review of the current financial position was provided and there are no concerns to raise at this stage
7. There are no Contracts renewals to consider however grass cutting and tree works have been reviewed
8. Specific lines of expenditure were outlined and confirmation of the house rent to be provided
9. The Board noted that the financial position of the school is as expected

19 To receive Committee and Link Visit Reports since the last meeting, consider recommendations from the Committees and note action taken under delegated authority, and, determine link visit priorities for this academic year:

1. The focus on the SDP priorities was noted
2. The Safeguarding link visit report was noted. Assurance was provided that the new requirements from KCSIE are in place
3. We aim for 2 link visits a year in line with the Policy and reporting form circulated – this term is preferred – colleagues encouraged to try the VISIT link page on GHUB

20 Monitoring of premiums including Pupil Premium Grant and Sports Premium:

1. It was noted that this is reported through a committee and governors assured that funding has been used appropriately in terms of interventions and impact on progress and attainment
2. Confirmation was given that the pupil premium strategy statement will be reviewed and published on the website by 31.12 **ACTION: Present at the next GB meeting on 15.11** **SG**
3. Confirmation was given that the PE and sport premium was published by 31.07
4. CPD with Watford Football club is proving to be effective and welcomed by the staff

21 **To receive and ask questions of the Head's verbal report:**

1. 227 children on roll with a PAN of 240. There have been 5 in year starters. 24 nursery pupils 3 of which are nursery PPG, 26 in reception. 43 children on SEN register. PP and FSM have dropped slightly
2. Attendance is stable at 95.8%. Assurance was provided that families are supported to remove the barriers to learning (16 PA) and 1 family with housing issues has been appropriately supported during this difficult time
3. 1 child on a reduced timetable and a flexi timetable is under discussion
4. Safeguarding continues to be proactively addressed and the children have undertaken training in terms of feeling safe. 6 vulnerable families are being supported with external professionals. SCR audited at the end of last year
5. No FOIs, SARs or GDPR breaches to report
6. No racist incidents, complaints, exclusions, or suspensions to report
7. The curriculum remains the same as last year
8. CPD for staff continues to be invested in
9. The public examination outcomes were noted – KS2 maths lower than expected
10. **Question – What is being done to address this? It was unexpected and the papers have been analysed and has indicated it is fluency based and is prioritised in the SIP**

11. **Question – Do you have reading volunteers? Yes, and it has been advertised to the parent community**
12. **Question – Do they have safeguarding training? Yes, and the induction policy has been updated accordingly which includes a checklist and personal induction**
13. **Question – Regarding child mental health, are there any patterns in the CPOMs data? The categories can make monitoring difficult and further interrogation will be undertaken**
14. The transition and start of term arrangements were noted
15. An overview of the staffing structure was provided and the start to term has been enjoyable and successful. The Diocese is funding a year of coaching for the Head which is much appreciated
16. The school prospective will be printed in time for the new families looking around the school
17. Governors thanked the head for the update

22 Chair's Business:

1. Confirmation was given that Get Information About Schools (GIAS) and the school website have been updated with governing board membership
2. The board noted the DfE recommendations for external reviews of governance to be undertaken at least every 3 years
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. It was agreed that there are no items to be added to the risk register from this meeting
8. 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
9. Thanks were extended to the team for their support during this tenure as Chair
10. Priorities for the next agenda are considered in the PoW

23 Policies to agree:

1. CM001 Child Protection Policy was ratified

24 Skills Audit and Training:

1. GHUB effectiveness tool was undertaken in May and new colleagues invited to complete it
2. Training services the school subscribes to are: NGA, HfL, Knowledge and Modern Governor
3. The focus for in house training session for this year was considered and will be booked
4. Safeguarding, prevent and cyber training are required by all colleagues

25 Items from Annual Programme of Work:

1. None

25 **Any Other Business:**

1. None

26 **To agree Date of next meeting:**

1. Thanks were extended to Linda for contribution and support to the school during her tenure and her welcomed enthusiasm and commitment. A get together will be planned to mark this much appreciated occasion
2. Colleagues were thanked for their contribution to the meeting
3. The next meetings will be held on Monday 15st December 2025 at 15:45 in person in school. The day of the strategy day was considered and will be reviewed

The meeting closed at:20.25

Signed: ……………………………………………. **Dated: …………………………………………….**