



WITTERSHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL
MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Held at School on Wednesday, 22nd May 2024 at 6.30 p.m.
On a voyage of discovery, flourishing in God's love.

Christian Values of

Compassion

Courage

Cooperation

Present: John Collins (Chair), Stephen Rogers (Vice Chair), George Hawkins (Headteacher), Nick Barnet, Jane Burnett, Harry Lingfield and Stella Coulson (AHT/Staff governor)

Governance

Professional: Jane Phillips

The meeting commenced at 6.32 pm.

ITEM	PROCEDURAL	ACTION
1.	<u>WELCOME, APOLOGIES, QUORUM</u>	
1a	The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting which was opened with a prayer.	
1b	Apologies were received and accepted for Kerry Dean (child care) and Rachel Georgiades (away). There were no other apologies for absence.	
1c	The governance professional confirmed the meeting was quorate.	
2.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF BUSINESS INTEREST</u>	
2a	Jane Burnett declared she was Chair of governors of Norton Knatchbull School in Ashford. There were no other declarations of business interest made against any agenda item.	
2b	Governors were reminded to declare any business interests which became relevant during the meeting.	
3.	<u>MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING HELD ON 25TH JANUARY 2024/MINUTES OF THE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL MEETING HELD ON 17TH MAY 2024</u>	
3a	The minutes of the previous meetings were agreed as an accurate account which would be signed electronically by the Chair.	
3b	<u>A Review of Governor and Clerk's Actions Arising</u> All actions had been completed or would be discussed during this meeting.	
GOVERNANCE		
4.	<u>MEMBERSHIP</u> The governing board continued to have vacancies for an ex officio foundation governor and two foundation governors.	
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT		
5.	<u>SAFEGUARDING</u> The HT said there were no incidents, issues or concerns to report.	
6.	<u>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</u> (Some discussions within the item were considered confidential and were contained in part two of the minutes.)	

The HT's term five written report, INSIGHT demographics report and 'SEND in a Nutshell' were made available in advance of the meeting (filed electronically).

The HT and AHT responded to governor questions arising.

For the benefit of all governors, the HT was asked to explain what 'ranking distance' meant as part of the school's Admissions policy. The HT explained this was how children were given priority over others when the school was oversubscribed. As a Voluntary Aided school, the first ranking matrix was an association with the Church. The second ranking matrix was in respect of looked after children, those in care or the children of military personnel. The third was a sibling link and the fourth was distance. This year, two children had fallen into matrix one where a written letter would be received from their clergy stating they were engaged with the Church. No children had fallen into matrix two this year. Eight children had fallen into matrix three and sixteen into matrix four. The cut off distance this year was a radius of 2.4 miles from the school as the crow flies. As a consequence, eight children were on the waiting list for a space in Reception for September 2024. There had been twenty eight first choices and thirty six first, second and third choices combined.

A governor asked how the radius of 2.4 miles was arrived at. The HT explained that parents and carers were asked to provide their address and postcode when applying for a place. Where the school had been undersubscribed last year, there were children who had joined the school from much further afield.

A governor asked how many nurseries the Reception pupils would come from. The HT said the school would welcome children from nine different nurseries this year, eight of which the HT had previously engaged with during September and October 2023. Two further children had either been with child minders or had not been in a nursery setting.

Following on from the HT's written report, a governor asked if there was an update on applications/interest in the current teaching vacancies. The HT explained there were currently two teaching vacancies, one which was part-time and the other which was fulltime. There were three parties interested in the part-time role and two interested in the fulltime role. Interviews would take place as soon as possible. Two of the interested parties had previously applied for a post at the school where one applicant was considered a particularly strong practitioner.

A governor asked if all applicants were currently in post. The HT said all but one were in post where one was working for a supply agency. The window for teacher resignations would close on 31st May 2024 for a September 2024 start. A further consideration was to employ an early career teacher (ECT) as the school had a number of experienced teachers who would be able to support an ECT. The HT explained both positions were on fixed term contracts as they related to maternity cover. On that basis, it was thought there would be a degree of reluctance to move from a permanent position.

A governor asked if the HT knew at this stage whether there were viable options relating to the flexible working requests (FWRs). The HT explained there were eight reasons within the FWR Code where such a request could be declined which would require justifying quite explicitly. The HT commented he had also sought HR's advice on this. The requests would be declined because there was a duty of care to the child that they had a consistent adult working alongside them.

A governor commented it was great to read the Improvement Advisor's (IA) comment that the provision in EYFS and Key Stage one provided "an outstanding environment of learning". The HT said it had been a particularly positive visit, particularly in Key Stage one. The IA's report had been received the previous day which further reiterated this. The IA had also commented that she felt a 'buzz' when she walked around which she wouldn't normally get.

A governor said the new assessment/pedagogy for the foundation subjects was extremely impressive and obviously would ensure consistency across all subjects and classes. Clearly a tremendous amount of work had gone into this already. Was it the intention to roll this out across all foundation subjects from September? The HT said this was the intention. The HT and Curriculum Lead had planned days offline in term six to ensure the curriculum was in a position to be ready to roll out. The curriculum would keep moving forward and would develop over time where Subject Leaders would review and refine it. This had also been shared with the IA who had been extremely complimentary about it.

A governor commented the 'Reading for Pleasure Spine' was another wonderful initiative. The HT said the Curriculum Lead had also worked hard on this which had gone down well.

A governor said the HT had clearly identified the main strengths observed in teaching and learning. Could the HT describe how his regular staff CPD (continuous professional development) sessions were prioritised and structured which resulted in a much greater consistency across all classes? The HT said one thing which was taken away when visitors to the school were looking at the curriculum was the consistent practice they had seen across the school. This was something which the SLT had worked particularly hard on over the past two years to make sure staff had clear expectations of the work and how it would be recorded.

A governor commented that during a recent joint learning walk, governors had seen evidence of consistency and obvious progress across all classes. Based on the book scrutiny which had taken place, this was the most obvious it had ever been. The HT said the SLT had worked really well together this year where time had been taken to plan out the focus of next term's staff meetings when the expectations of staff were clearly defined. Referencing the learning logbooks, the HT explained the Curriculum Lead had developed the criteria of what should be seen in those books which was very explicit and very clear.

A governor commented the idea of a Cultural Capital 'roadmap' across the seven years of a pupil's school life was excellent. It was understood that within the planning, a set of opportunities and experiences across the seven years had been produced. A governor thought it would be useful if this could be shared with the board when available.

A governor asked if these would be timetabled across the year to ensure a good balance across the terms? The HT said he was happy to share the document with governors during the July meeting. Whilst not wishing to make this overwhelming, there would be one detailed, more time consuming experience once each term which would be meticulously planned out. Trips would also be linked to what the children were currently learning about so there was a purpose to the trip. There were also ongoing smaller experiences which were less time consuming such as learning how to tie your shoes.

Action: The HT to present the Cultural Capital 'roadmap' seven year opportunities and experiences during the July FGB meeting.

A governor asked if budget constraints would impact the Forest School programme for next year. The AHT said they would not. Sessions had been budgeted to continue to take place where there would be one provider next year enabling each class to continue to have a full day's access to the Forest School provision. Specific high needs children would access one session each week.

A governor said the new menu looked impressive which was a vast improvement on the previous ones. It was also good to see that pupils had been involved in planning the menu. Was the HT able to provide figures to show how the average uptake now compared to the previous uptake? The HT reported that based on the old menu, the average had been seventy seven each

Head

day. Based on the new menu, the average had now increased to ninety six each day.

A governor asked if a brief description of the Leuven wellbeing scale could be provided to include how it was being used. The AHT explained it was an extensively used tool to measure children’s emotional wellbeing and involvement in their activities. It consisted of two scales:

- Leuven Scale of Emotional Wellbeing
This scale assessed how comfortable and happy a child felt. It looked at factors such as the child's expressions, behaviour and interactions with others to determine their emotional state.
- Leuven Scale of Involvement
This scale measured the level of engagement a child was showing in an activity. High involvement indicated deep concentration, motivation and satisfaction which were essential for effective learning.

The AHT further explained that each scale was typically rated from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating very low well-being or involvement and 5 indicating very high well-being or involvement. The assessment was usually done through observation by educators who looked for specific indicators for each level.

A governor asked if there were descriptors for each of the levels. The HT said there were. The HT commented that level five might not necessarily be the best where the child might be over stimulated depending on the activity. There had also been a staff discussion on the different descriptors to ensure there was a consistent approach in their application.

The AHT explained the tool was useful as it provided a further indication of whether an intervention had been successful or whether something different needed to be tried. It also provided small, measurable data where the children would hopefully move up the Leuven Scale.

A governor asked to be provided with further information on 'Homestart'. The AHT explained this was a free external resource provider which the school referred into for play therapy, drawing and talking, mentoring and sounds therapy. It was born out of the old Sure Start Centres which provided home support. The AHT commented it had been of massive support this year where the relationship would continue moving forward.

A governor asked how Homestart was funded. The AHT said it was partially funded by the NHS and partially through charitable funding. Homestart had also changed its criteria where they previously only work with under-fives. The siblings of under-fives were then included where now they provide much wider support given the waiting list for CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services). The school worked with three of their therapists who were considered incredible.

A governor asked what a Widgit was? The AHT explained it was an online communication resource which provided language and associated images for pre-verbal children and early readers. Examples of this could be seen around the school.

On behalf of governors, the Chair thanked the HT for his detailed and comprehensive report.

7. ATTENDANCE

The HT reported term five attendance as of 12th May 2024 was 95.4% based on a target of 96%.

EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
96.3%	93.7%	94.9%	94.7%	94.8%	94%	95.1%

A governor asked if attendance was improving. The HT said it had previously been improving. However, there had been six school wide term time holiday

	<p>requests during the last four weeks. Four parents had been invited into school next term as there were concerns as to their children’s attendance and the patterns in their attendance.</p> <p>The AHT said new, more severe fines would be introduced from August 2024 to include new attendance descriptors.</p> <p>A governor noted the biggest drop related to Year 5 where attendance had been 98.1% in term one where it was now 94%. The HT said there had been some term time holidays and quite a lot of sickness amongst pupils with Covid type symptoms.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>SEF/SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP) 2023-24</u></p> <p>The HT reported the school remained on track to achieve all actions contained in the SIP. There would be an evaluation of the SIP during the July meeting.</p> <p><u>Term Four Pupil Progress and Attainment Data</u></p> <p>Governors were provided with the following Spring INSIGHT data (filed electronically):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school attainment overview in reading, writing and Maths (RWM) for Year R to Year 6. • Pupil Premium attainment overview in RWM where there was a comparison to non-PP children’s attainment. • SEND pupil attainment overview in RWM where again there was a comparison to non-SEND children’s attainment. <p>Referencing the whole school overview, a governor said it would be helpful to incorporate the data from the previous seasonal term(s) within the same INSIGHT report from which a comparison could then be made as to progress. The HT said he was happy to do this.</p> <p>Action: The HT to include the previous seasonal data within future INSIGHT attainment overviews.</p>	<p>Head</p>
<p>9.</p> <p>9a</p> <p>9b</p>	<p><u>GOVERNOR MONITORING</u></p> <p><u>Monitoring Activities Since the Last Meeting</u></p> <p>Governor monitoring reports were recirculated where available (filed electronically).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND – 20th March 2024 (JB) • Learning Walk/a meeting with the School Council – 20th March 2024 (JB) • EYFS – 14th May 2024 (KD) • Collective Worship/learning walk/foundation subject assessments with HT – 17th May 2024 (Chair/NB) <p><u>Term Six Governor Monitoring</u></p> <p>Action: The Chair to carry out a SIAMS/Safeguarding visit.</p> <p>Action: RG to attend the term six monitoring morning.</p> <p>Action: SR to carry out a health & safety monitoring visit.</p> <p>Action: JB to carry out a PP monitoring visit.</p> <p>The Chair explained that during this academic year governors had attended Collective Worship, had undertaken a learning walk and had met with Subject Leaders. Next year it would not be necessary to meet with Subject Leaders but instead, to look at specific strands within the SIP where there would be a very specific and targeted focus. Given the smaller number of governors, this would involve everyone.</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>RG</p> <p>SR</p> <p>JB</p>

<p>10.</p>	<p><u>SIAMS/CHRISTIAN DISTINCTIVENESS</u></p> <p>The HT reported the school was due to receive a SIAMS inspection next year. The HT and AHT had attended SIAMS training on 19th April 2024 which had been delivered by the Deputy Director of Education at the Canterbury Diocese. During the session, the SIAMS inspection process was reviewed and participants were asked to reflect on where their school currently was.</p> <p>The Chair explained that as part of the July FGB meeting, there would be a short training session on SIAMS.</p> <p>Action: The governance professional to include SIAMS training as an agenda item for the 4th July FGB meeting.</p> <p>The Chair said it would also be useful to have a fifteen minute dedicated slot for training within all FGB meeting agendas next year. Irrespective of link governor roles, all governors would receive a whole school view. This was noted by the governance professional.</p> <p>Action: The Chair to work with the HT/AHT to determine which governor training would be most beneficial and advise the governance professional.</p> <p>The HT said an aspect which came out of the SIAMS training and previous Ofsted training was that inspectors would look for that shared and cohesive interpretation on what the school was trying to do.</p> <p>The HT reported the Diocesan Deputy Director would return on 27th June 2024 to meet with him and the two AHTs. This would include the preparation of a SIAMS Action Plan.</p> <p>A governor suggested the Deputy Director might be asked about the type of questions SIAMS would ask governors. The HT invited governors into school at on Thursday, 27th June to briefly meet with the Deputy Director.</p> <p>Action: Governors to advise the HT if able to meet with the Diocese’s Deputy Director at 9.30 am on Thursday, 27th June.</p> <p>A governor asked when the HT anticipated the SIAMS and Ofsted inspections were likely to take place. The HT thought the SIAMS inspection could take place at any time from September 2024 whilst an Ofsted inspection would be from January 2025.</p>	<p>GP</p> <p>Chair/Head/AHT</p> <p>Govs</p>																						
<p>11.</p> <p>11a</p>	<p><u>BUDGET CLOSEDOWN 2023-24 / THREE YEAR BUDGET PLAN (3YBP) 2024-2027</u></p> <p>All supporting papers for this agenda item were made available in advance of the meeting (filed electronically).</p> <p>The Finance Committee Chair reported on their meeting held earlier that evening.</p> <p><u>2023-2024 Year End Revenue Budget (Actual)</u></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="256 1534 1267 1738"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: right;">(£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Revenue Income</td> <td style="text-align: right;">912,760</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Revenue Expenditure</td> <td style="text-align: right;">958,406</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Revenue Balance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">-45,645</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Revenue Balance B/F 2022/23</td> <td style="text-align: right;">121,438</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Revenue Balance C/F to 2024/25</td> <td style="text-align: right;">75,793</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><u>2023-2024 Year End Capital Budget (Actual)</u></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="256 1803 1267 1973"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: right;">(£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Total Capital Income</td> <td style="text-align: right;">38,727</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Less Capital Expenditure</td> <td style="text-align: right;">38,727</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Capital Balance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Capital Balance B/F 2022/23</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		(£)	Revenue Income	912,760	Revenue Expenditure	958,406	Revenue Balance	-45,645	Revenue Balance B/F 2022/23	121,438	Revenue Balance C/F to 2024/25	75,793		(£)	Total Capital Income	38,727	Less Capital Expenditure	38,727	Capital Balance	0	Capital Balance B/F 2022/23	0	
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The Committee Chair reported that whilst there was an in-year Revenue budget deficit of £45,648 (a negative variance of £40,025 when compared to the original budget), this was mitigated by the carry forward from 2022/23 of £121,438. £75,793 would therefore be carried forward to 2024/25.

Governors noted the year end position where there were no questions arising.

11b Three Year Budget Plan 2024-2027

- Revenue Budget

	2024/25(£) Year 1	2025/26(£) Year 2	2026/27(£) Year 3
Total Revenue Income	878,645.00	876,799.00	853,858.00
Less Total Revenue Expenditure	925,247.04	865,479.70	869,738.55
Revenue Balance this Year	-46,602.04	11,319.30	-15,880.55
Revenue Balance From Last Year	75,793.00	29,190.96	40,510.26
Cumulative Revenue Balance Carried Forward	29,190.96	40,510.26	24,629.72

- Capital Budget

	2024/25(£) Year 1	2025/26(£) Year 2	2026/27(£) Year 3
Total Capital Income	0	0	0
Less Total Capital Expenditure	0	0	0
Capital Balance this Year	0	0	0
Capital Balance From Last Year	0	0	0
Cumulative Capital Balance Carried Forward	0	0	0

The HT presented the Revenue budget carry forward amounts for each of the following three years (Year 1: £29,190, Year 2: £40,510, Year 3: £24,629). Whilst the school's reserves would diminish, the Revenue budget carry forward remained positive for all three years.

Budget Implications

(Discussions within this item were considered confidential and were contained in part two of the minutes.)

11c **On receiving the recommendation of the Finance Committee, governors ratified the 3YBP for 2024-2027.**

12. FINANCE/HEALTH & SAFETY/PREMISES/GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

Schools Financial Services (SFS) Financial Compliance Visit – 1st May 2024

	<p>The moderated SFS compliance report was made available in advance of the meeting (filed electronically). The Chair said the report was reviewed in detail during the Finance Committee meeting earlier that evening which would be reported in the minutes.</p> <p>The Chair reported all actions arising from the visit had been actioned with the exception of those relating to the Finance policy which would be addressed under agenda item 13 (Policies) of this meeting.</p>									
13.	<p><u>POLICIES</u></p> <p>Those policies due for review were made available in advance of the meeting (filed electronically).</p> <p><u>Relationship & Sex Education Policy</u></p> <p>The Chair explained there was only one change to the policy as highlighted which related to pupils with SEN or physical disabilities.</p> <p><u>Finance Policy</u></p> <p>The Chair explained Compliance had identified that the Finance policy needed to reflect the Terms of Reference for the governing board. The use of personal cash would also not be used for the purchase of items for the school.</p> <p>Governors agreed that as per the Terms of Reference, the FGB would continue to approve the Finance policy in future.</p> <p>Governors approved those policies presented.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Policy</th> <th>Next Review</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Recruitment policy (HR Connect model policy)</td> <td>March 2025</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Finance policy</td> <td>May 2025</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Relationships and Sex Education policy</td> <td>"</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Policy	Next Review	Recruitment policy (HR Connect model policy)	March 2025	Finance policy	May 2025	Relationships and Sex Education policy	"	
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Finance policy	May 2025									
Relationships and Sex Education policy	"									
OTHER										
14.	<p><u>WEBSITE/TEP GOVERNANCE MONTHLY BULLETINS/DFE UPDATES</u></p> <p>The Education People’s monthly bulletins for March and May 2024 were recirculated as a supporting paper for this agenda item (filed electronically). The governance professional had incorporated links to items of interest within the meeting agenda.</p>									
15.	<p><u>GOVERNOR TRAINING</u></p> <p>15a <u>Summary Findings - NGA Skills Audit 2024</u></p> <p>The NGA skills audit dashboard was made available in advance of the meeting (filed electronically).</p> <p>The Chair explained individuals brought skills to the board which weren’t necessarily related to governance but from which the board would benefit. Governors were individually able to identify any skills areas which required further development. The dashboard evidenced there was a broad range of skills and competencies available amongst governors which were required to fulfill the core function of the governing board.</p> <p>15b <u>Training or Briefings Attended Since the Last Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Effective Governance’ (TEP Consultancy) – 30th April 2024 (GP) <p>The governance professional was pleased to report that all governor Prevent certificates were in date on GovernorHub. The date when next governors were required to ‘refresh’ their training (every two years) was now automatically RAG (red, amber, green) rated within the folder as the date approached. There was also a Word document within the folder which indicated the date when last a governor</p>									

	completed the training together with links to complete the Home Office training from scratch or refresh.	
16.	<u>CHAIR'S ACTIONS/CORRESPONDENCE</u> The Chair said there were a number of Chair's actions and correspondence which were currently ongoing.	
17.	<u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u> A governor took this opportunity to record huge gratitude to the Chair on behalf of pupils, parents and staff for his actions during recent weeks following the resignation of the HT. The solution the Chair had proposed was in the very best interests of the school. Governors fully concurred. A governor took this opportunity to query whether consideration might be given to adopting the 'Circle' model of governance (whole governing board approach) where the delegated responsibilities of the Finance Committee would be reabsorbed within the FGB's remit. The Chair said a proviso to adopting such an arrangement was that the governance professional should still receive the same remuneration regardless of whether Finance was covered by the FGB in its entirety or whether it was covered by a dedicated Finance Committee. The governing board currently followed a 'hybrid' Circle model with the inclusion of a Finance Committee. Action: The GP to send the Chair an example of a model ToR for the Circle model of governance. The Chair asked if a 6pm start for future meetings would suit governors if the 'Circle' model of governance was adopted. There was no dissent from amongst governors.	GP
18.	<u>CONFIDENTIALITY</u>	
18a	Some discussions contained within agenda item 6 (Headteacher's Report) and item 11b (3YBP) were considered confidential and were contained in part two of the minutes.	
18b	There were no papers which were considered confidential. A governor asked if there was a further update on providing confidential minutes if requested under the Freedom of Information Act. A further governor reported that the confidential minutes could be requested but that it was necessary to redact any specific names or anything where there was a specific reference to anything.	
19.	<u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u> The next full governing board meeting would take place at school on Thursday, 4th July 2024 at 6.30 pm.	

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Signed: _____
(Chair)

Date: _____

ACTION SUMMARY

ITEM	AGENDA ITEM	TO BE ACTIONED BY	ACTION
1.	6	Head	To present the Cultural Capital 'roadmap' seven year opportunities and experiences during the July FGB meeting.

2.	8	Head	To include the previous seasonal data within future INSIGHT attainment overviews.
3.	9b	Chair	To carry out a SIAMS/Safeguarding visit. (T6)
4.	9b	RG	To attend the term six monitoring morning.
5.	9b	SR	To carry out a health & safety monitoring visit. (T6)
6.	9b	JB	To carry out a PP monitoring visit. (T6)
7.	10	Governance Professional	To include SIAMS training as an agenda item for the 4 th July FGB meeting.
8.	10	Chair	To work with the HT/AHT to determine which governor training would be most beneficial and advise the governance professional.
9.	10	Governors	To advise the HT if able to meet with the Diocese's Deputy Director at 9.30 am on Thursday, 27 th June.
10.	17	Governance Professional	To send the Chair an example of a model ToR for the Circle model of governance.