



WITTERSHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Held at School on Thursday, 21st May 2026
at 6.30 pm

On a voyage of discovery, flourishing in God's love.

Christian Values of

Compassion

Courage

Cooperation

Present: John Collins (Chair), Jane Burnett (Vice Chair), Stella Coulson (Headteacher), Carly Catt, Helen Farmer, Harry Lingfield, Sean Solly and Fran Rusbridge

Governance

Professional: Jane Phillips

The meeting commenced at 6.30 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 from Kerry Dean who was currently overseas due to work commitments. There were no other apologies for absence.	
1c	The governance professional (GP) confirmed the meeting was quorate.	
2.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF BUSINESS INTEREST</u>	
2a	Foundation governor, Jane Burnett declared she was Chair of governors at The 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 19TH MARCH 2026</u>	
3a	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate account which would be signed electronically by the Chair.	
3b	<u>A Review of Governor and Governance Professional's Actions Arising</u> Item 1. Action: HL and SS to send the HT their pen portraits for inclusion on the school's website. Item 2. Action: Remaining governors to submit pictures of themselves for the school's picture board. Item 3. Action: KD to complete her Code of Conduct confirmation on GovernorHub for 2025/26. Item 4. Action: KD/HL to complete the NGA Learning Link refresher module on 'Essential Safeguarding for Governors and Trustees – 2025/26'. To send the GP a copy of her certificate. (To be carried over to 2026/27 as due to be repeated in term one). Remaining actions had been completed or would be discussed during this meeting.	HL/SS Rem. Gvs KD KD/HL
GOVERNANCE		
4.	<u>MEMBERSHIP</u>	

4a	It was noted that foundation governor, Jane Burnett had been reappointed by the Canterbury Diocese. Her new term had commenced on 8 th April 2026 and would conclude on 7 th April 2030.	
	The Chair reported there were vacancies for two foundation governors and an ex officio foundation governor	
4b	Action: KD and HL to refresh their Prevent training, forwarding a copy of their certificates to the GP. Action: SS to complete his Prevent training. Action: The GP to send KD, HL and SS the links to the Prevent e-learning modules.	KD/HL SS GP
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT		
5.	<u>SAFEGUARDING/ONLINE SAFETY TO INCLUDE FILTERING & MONITORING</u>	
5a	The HT said there were no safeguarding incidents, issues or concerns to report.	
5b	There were no issues to report in respect of online safety and the school's filtering and monitoring system which was working effectively.	
6.	<u>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</u> The HT's written report was made available in advance of the meeting (filed electronically). A governor asked how many restorative conversations had not worked? The HT said it was a less successful process for some of the neurodiverse children where they found it more of a challenge. The HT thought there were three children where the restorative conversations hadn't been as successful where further conversations had taken place with them. However, it hadn't had the same impact it would have had with others as some children couldn't see their role in things if their mindset was more egocentric. A couple of parents had concerns that as their children wouldn't respond to restorative conversations, why would the school still have them? The HT said the children would still be part of those conversations but that they wouldn't have the same results as for other children. A governor queried whether further time and energy should be spent if the restorative conversations hadn't or weren't working. The HT said restorative conversations were quite well embedded now where they could be delivered quite swiftly. It was now much more natural than it was initially. There had been an incident that morning where two children were having a restorative conversation with each other which was the point the HT had wanted to get to. Whilst there was some pushback in the home, the school would continue doing it even if a parent didn't think it was right for their child. The children should still hear about the impact of their actions on others. In looking at a steady decrease in behaviour incidents between January 2026 to date, a governor asked how much of the decrease was attributed to the restorative practice. The HT said there had been a significant amount as staff were dealing with things in a different way. There was closure to an incident where there weren't then the reoffenders. A governor referenced the HT's letter sent to parents and carers about the restorative approach and asked about feedback from parents. The HT said 99% had been extremely positive whilst one or two parents didn't see the benefit of it. The HT commented that everyone had the opportunity to speak, to share how they felt and to listen to that. The next Behaviour policy would very much be restorative led. A governor commented she'd seen restorative conversations in action during a couple of her monitoring visits. The class teacher had a very structured conversation with two particular children at breaktime where both children went out happy and content afterwards. The children also seemed to know	

there was a routine to the conversation which should happen in order to deal with difficulties or a particular scenario. The HT commented it had also helped to ease teacher frustrations where an incident could be dealt with straightaway. A governor asked what different language might be used for a child with neurodiversity? Whilst there were set questions, the staff governor (SENCO) thought it would be a case of limiting the spoken word and to be very short with the questions so that the child could understand. A governor noted 15.2% of pupils were currently persistently absent which compared to 20.2% in January which showed a reduction of four children. Were the same group of pupils persistently absent? The HT said it was. A governor asked what strategies had been used which had led to improved attendance for four pupils. The HT said meetings had taken place with parents involving the HT and Family Liaison Officer (FLO) where the school would then work with the family. The HT commented a child could quickly shift into being persistently absent if they were absent on the odd Monday or the odd Friday. In respect of unauthorised absence, a governor was aware of a child in one particular year group where the parents didn't want the child in school all of the time. This was despite the HT's expectation that they should be. Would this child be recorded as unauthorised? The HT explained that if a child was on a part-time timetable, they would be recorded under a different coded authorisation. If it had been agreed that a child should be in the school building and they weren't, the absence would be considered unauthorised. A governor referenced the CPOMS categories for welfare concerns to include those which were currently being monitored and the total number of incidents. The governor wished to clarify that where the number being monitored was less than the number of incidents, the remainder had been resolved. The HT explained the remaining incidents had been closed. Those children who were currently being monitored were considered to still need further development or support. A governor referenced the HT's and SENCO's reports where both had said the results were stable. It was thought this could have a number of meanings. The SENCO's data was considered particularly useful as it showed where the children were in the autumn of 2025 when compared to the spring of 2026. The governor thought it would be particularly useful to see the same comparison for the whole school overview. Action: The HT to include a seasonal term data comparison for whole school attainment data in future reports. A governor referenced the attainment overview for pupils with SEN Support or Education and Healthcare Plans. There was evidence of progress in reading when comparing the autumn to spring term data. However, in writing there was a larger percentage of pupils working below age expected in the spring when compared to the autumn. The staff governor explained that with the spring term data, the children were closer to that end of year expectation where the children weren't quite there yet. SEN pupils would almost never make progress if they were tracked on a mainstream system. The staff governor was currently looking at a different tracking system for SEN pupils where it would then be possible to see those smaller steps of progress. It was hoped to introduce this for September 2026. A governor noted the upcoming residential trip where thirty two Year 5 and 6 pupils would go. The HT explained there were forty two children across the two cohorts where ten children would not be attending. A governor asked if there was a particular reason why some children didn't go. The HT said some parents preferred that their child went whilst they were in one particular year group where they might not go whilst in Year 5 but would in Year 6. All of Year 6 were going on the residential trip with the exception of two children. Some	Head
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	families had put down deposits but as the date approached, they had decided it wasn't for them. Some families tended to come on board more once their child was in Year 6. There wasn't a specific reason as it was something which was personal to those families. A governor asked if there would be an issue for the two Year 6 pupils who weren't going on the residential trip. The HT said the two children would go into Year 4/5 (Oxney) where a number of activities were planned for the week. A governor asked if there was a hardship fund for those families who were unable to pay for a trip. The HT explained there was Pupil Premium funding. When parents originally signed up, the school was happy to talk about paying for a certain proportion of a trip or to arrange a repayment plan. For the majority of families, the trips weren't financially driven. It was more about anxieties from the families and children. A governor asked the HT to provide an overview of this year's residential trip. The HT said the children would go to Blackland Farm Outdoor Centre which was based in East Grinstead. The children would be there for four days and three nights from 2nd to 5th June 2026. The centre offered an activity driven camping experience. The school had used the venue last year when staff had been really impressed. It was thought probable it would also be used for next year's residential trip. There would be three members of staff together with the HT as an addition. The children would be transported to the centre by coach, leaving on the Tuesday and returning on Friday. It was also a closed site which wasn't open to the public whilst it was open to other schools. It was a very established and well run site. A governor enquired as to the cost of the trip. The HT said it was £300 per pupil. A governor asked if Wittersham pupils would mix with pupils from other schools. The HT said the school would have its own area, its own tent and own toilet block and shared facilities whilst dining would be centralised in the main block. The different activities would be specific to Wittersham pupils. A governor commented his daughter had attended the trip last year who was thrilled to be returning there again this year. Governors approved the Year 5/6 residential trip to Blackland Farm Outdoor Centre between 2nd and 5th June 2026. The Health & Safety link governor referenced his term five monitoring report in which he recommended including the short Kent model policy on 'Managing Educational Visits' as an appendix to the Health & Safety policy. Whilst not a statutory requirement, this was recommended by the local authority. A governor commented that in approving a residential trip, governors would want to seek evidence that the checks and balances, the risk assessments and the qualifications to run the activities were all in place. A governor asked if a risk assessment was in place? The HT said she had completed a risk assessment. Everything related to the trip required uploading to a platform called 'Evolve' where this was the only trip which would require KCC sign-off. Action: The HT to share KCC's sign-off of the Year 5/6 residential trip during the July FGB meeting. A governor noted that support arrangements were in place for pupils requiring additional pastoral or SEND support during the residential trip. What did this support look like? The HT explained there had been additional meetings with the families of those children with needs that would need to be met during their stay. This could be medically or personally. The FLO was also going on the trip who would run a drop in session a couple of weeks before where parents were able to come in and go through key things. The intention was to make the trip supportive and enjoyable. Also, if a child was particularly distressed, they would never be forced to stay and would be brought back.	Head
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A governor referenced the feedback from the school's Improvement Advisor (I.A) where Key Stage one writing had been identified as an area of focus. How had this situation arisen? How would the introduction of the DfE writing framework which the I.A had suggested move things forward? The HT explained the I.A had looked at several books and had suggested that the handwriting wasn't as secure as it needed to be at that point. He also identified within the learning question that it was too complex for the level of child. For example, if a sentence didn't have a capital letter and a full stop, why were the children cracking on and doing commas?

The I.A's feedback had been taken back to a staff meeting where the Assistant HT (AHT) led an extremely comprehensive session on literacy and the key features of it. The Handwriting policy had been rewritten in line with Ofsted expectations and the new framework. There had also been quite a lot of work on the expectations of handwriting and lead ins together with what that looked like. This would continue to be followed up on in term six and would be continued in the new School Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2026/27. There would be a greater emphasis on everybody teaching, developing and enhancing the handwriting, not just lower down the school and that it was a taught practice. The HT thought it was being taught more sporadically further up the school. Whilst it was there and solid in EYFS, it tended to drop off somewhat in Years 3 and 4. There had been talk about where handwriting would fit into an already busy day and where it might fit in with the early morning work rotation.

The staff governor said the AHT's session with staff was specifically on the DfE writing framework. The AHT had highlighted what each class across the school needed to do which made it extremely clear.

The HT commented that with handwriting, there hadn't been a sufficient focus on it. The I.A's visit was considered very productive.

A governor queried that a number of the SIP actions were RAG rated red or amber which were linked to learning walks. The HT was asked if enough learning walks were taking place and if so, would this have been picked up?

The HT explained the Leadership Team had been very stretched this year due to capacity. It was thought next year would be very different as the AHT's and SENCO's days would be different. Fridays were currently particularly difficult as the HT was the only member of the Leadership Team in school that day. The AHT had also had a very challenging Year 6 cohort this year where a lot of her time had been taken up with that. Time needed to be ringfenced to enable further time to be spent in the classrooms and the carrying out of learning walks. The Leadership Team needed to be better at doing this next year.

A governor said the Leadership Team would need a robust monitoring plan. It was also about 'in the moment' and 'say what you see' where there didn't need to be that planned activity. These were sometimes some of the most valuable moments and observations which should be counted as part of the monitoring plan. The HT commented it was a hard thing to do when there were so few staff where the Leadership Team were doing everything. The HT said her role had become increasingly managerial this year to include management of the school site. There would need to be a better balance next year where the AHT's and SENCO's increased availability would help with that. It was also an important part of the HT's development.

The staff governor said the two early career teachers (ECTs) had been regularly monitored by their mentors. However, there needed to be more observations of whole school.

A governor referenced the SIP report where there had been a previous discussion on having a section on in-year admissions. The HT said she had spoken to the I.A about this and that it had been added as an action on the I.A's Note of Visit. This would be looked at when the I.A returned for a follow-up visit in July.

	Action: The HT to present a report on in-year admissions during the July FGB meeting. A governor referenced the SEND report and asked if the staff governor could explain 'visual timetables'. The staff governor explained it consisted of pictures of each lesson which were placed on a widget where all the children had the same ones. The pictures were put up and were then removed once each activity had been completed. A governor sought further information on the SENCO's report specific to the strategic deployment of adult support. The staff governor said it was about looking at the Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) across the school and where the needs were. Some LSA's thought they were the TA for a specific class which they would remain in despite the needs elsewhere. The staff governor was keen to adopt more of a whole school approach where it was necessary to follow the need. This was particularly the case for some of the in-year admissions who came with SEN who needed to be followed and supported as needed. The HT reported that next year, LSAs would work across two classes. There would be no LSAs in a particular classroom fulltime. Instead, they would work three days in one class and two days in the other and then switch. This would enable the LSAs to then work with lots of different children rather than being focussed on one class. A governor asked how often the expectations of the LSA role were revisited? The HT said this was done regularly through LSA meetings and through professional development. They also worked towards Teaching Assistant standards. The staff governor commented the level of need was changing where the LSA role had changed in response to that where they would need to be on board with that. A governor asked if the changes would modify the LSAs role description. The HT said it wouldn't change as they would still be supporting children but in two different locations. On behalf of governors, the Chair wished the staff governor good luck with her NPQ SENCO (National Professional Qualification).	Head
7.	<u>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP) 2025-26</u> The RAG (red, amber, green) rated SIP was made available in advance of the meeting (filed electronically). Some SIP discussions were contained in item 6 (Headteacher's Report). A governor referenced SIP priority three on broadening pupils' understanding of diversity through curriculum and enrichment. It was noted the plan was to deliver one whole-year group trip to a location of significant cultural relevance had been RAG rated red. This was because it wasn't financially viable due to rising costs associated with transport. On that basis, did the action require amending? The HT thought it had been somewhat ambitious to include every year group. It had been RAG rated red due to the sheer cost of trips and coaches. The intention now was that by the end of the time a child had been at the school, they would have visited a place of significant cultural relevance. A governor queried that for cultural awareness, did it need to be a visit somewhere or could it be brought into the school? The HT said this had happened previously when speakers had been brought in. Staff were aware that a lot of the children didn't leave the village and didn't experience other cultures or religions where it was considered imperative that they did. Thought needed to be given on how to timetable that and where it best fitted into the curriculum. A governor commented he had spoken to the AHT about this where the children would be given an 'experience' passport across their time at the school. The passport would be stamped as a record of those experiences. The HT said the AHT was very passionate about this and would lead on it during the next	

	academic year. The school would engage with all stakeholders as to what that would look like between the ages of four and eleven. A governor noted that pupil autonomy was RAG rated red. What was the reason for this and whether it would be moved to next year? The HT said Year 6 pupils had struggled to take on leadership where it had then been necessary to move it down to the Year 5 cohort who were more receptive. The action hadn't been as well received as had been hoped by the older children. It was also thought the teachers weren't allowing enough autonomy in the classroom. It was a bigger cultural shift than had been anticipated which required further development. It would carry on from September 2026.																			
8.	<u>GOVERNOR MONITORING</u>																			
8a	<u>Governor Monitoring Activities Since the Last Meeting</u> All monitoring reports were made available in advance of the meeting (filed electronically). The Chair thanked governors for their monitoring activities since the last meeting. • SIP Priority 1 (HF/JC) – 31st March 2026 • SIP Priority 4, an observation of an English lesson in Oxney and Smugglers classes (JC) – 31st March 2026 • Collective Worship (HF) – 31st March 2026 • EYFS and Collective Worship (FR) – 10th May 2026 • The monitoring of SATs invigilation during w/c 11th May 2026 (JC) • Middle Leaders – Follow up on the implementation of Action Plans (JB) - 13th May 2026 • Health & Safety – 14th May 2026 (JC)																			
8b	<u>Staff Wellbeing Survey</u> Action: The GP to carry over the staff wellbeing survey to the July 2026 FGB meeting. KD to present the findings.	GP/KD																		
8c	<u>Monitoring Priorities in Term Six</u> An updated monitoring schedule for 2025/26 was contained within the GovernorHub meeting folder. <table><tr><th>Focus</th><th>Governor(s)</th></tr><tr><td>Collective Worship</td><td>Harry Lingfield/John Collins</td></tr><tr><td>SIP Priority 1</td><td>Harry Lingfield/John Collins</td></tr><tr><td>SIP Priority 2</td><td>Fran Rusbridge</td></tr><tr><td>SIP Priority 4</td><td>John Collins</td></tr><tr><td>Key Stage 2 wellbeing survey</td><td>John Collins</td></tr><tr><td>Safeguarding</td><td>John Collins</td></tr><tr><td>SEND</td><td>Jane Burnett</td></tr><tr><td>Pupil Premium & Sports Premium funding</td><td>Fran Rusbridge</td></tr></table> Action: Governors to arrange their monitoring visits as early as possible in term six.	Focus	Governor(s)	Collective Worship	Harry Lingfield/John Collins	SIP Priority 1	Harry Lingfield/John Collins	SIP Priority 2	Fran Rusbridge	SIP Priority 4	John Collins	Key Stage 2 wellbeing survey	John Collins	Safeguarding	John Collins	SEND	Jane Burnett	Pupil Premium & Sports Premium funding	Fran Rusbridge	Govs
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9.	<u>TRAINING SESSION</u> The HT delivered a training session to governors on school finance to include how to interpret a budget monitoring report and the nature of income and expenditure which sat within each of the CFR (Consistent Financial Reporting) codes. The presentation would be appended to these minutes.																			

	Whilst there were internal financial controls in place, a governor asked if the school was externally audited. The HT said the school was externally audited by Schools Financial Services every four years to ensure it was financially compliant. For example, this included the checking of personnel files, payroll output, Onecard statements, invoices, procurement quotes and tenders, the Asset Register, governor business interests, terms of reference, financial skills audit together with FGB and committee minutes. There was also a requirement to evidence that specific policies were in place.																																																	
10.	<u>FINANCE/PREMISES/HEALTH & SAFETY/GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR)</u>																																																	
10a	<u>Finance Committee Meeting – Thursday, 7th May 2026</u> The draft minutes of the meeting were made available in advance (filed electronically). An overall summary of the budget outturn for 2025/26, closedown analysis of additional Revenue funding and an analysis of the Capital matrix for 2025/26 were made available in advance of the meeting (filed electronically). The year-end outturn report was yet to become available. The Finance Committee Chair provided an overview of the year-end position. <u>2025/26 Budget Outturn</u> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Revenue Budget</th><th>Budget (£)</th><th>Actual (£)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Income</td><td>967,498</td><td>1,029,089.19</td></tr> <tr> <td>Rollover From Previous Year</td><td>46,793.00</td><td>46,793.43</td></tr> <tr> <td>Expenditure</td><td>927,016.00</td><td>973,234.38</td></tr> <tr> <td>Unallocated (Budget only)</td><td>87,275.00</td><td>0.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Current Position (c/f)</td><td></td><td>102,648.24</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Diocese Devolved Capital (Funds 63)</th><th>Budget (£)</th><th>Actual (£)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Income</td><td>0.00</td><td>0.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Rollover from Previous Year</td><td>0.00</td><td>0.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Expenditure</td><td>0.00</td><td>0.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Unallocated (Budget only)</td><td>0.00</td><td>0.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Current Position</td><td>0.00</td><td>0.00</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Capital LM Budget (Fund 64)</th><th>Budget (£)</th><th>Actual (£)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Income</td><td>0.00</td><td>11,008.38</td></tr> <tr> <td>Expenditure</td><td>0.00</td><td>11,008.38</td></tr> <tr> <td>Current Position</td><td>0.00</td><td>0.00</td></tr> </tbody> </table> The Finance Committee Chair reported the year-end position was extremely positive where £102,648 would be carried forward to 2026/27 financial year compared to a prediction of £89,000. The school was to be congratulated for saving some money. It was noted that £46,793 of the Revenue budget had been carried forward from the 2024/25 financial year. Governors noted the year-end position.	Revenue Budget	Budget (£)	Actual (£)	Income	967,498	1,029,089.19	Rollover From Previous Year	46,793.00	46,793.43	Expenditure	927,016.00	973,234.38	Unallocated (Budget only)	87,275.00	0.00	Current Position (c/f)		102,648.24	Diocese Devolved Capital (Funds 63)	Budget (£)	Actual (£)	Income	0.00	0.00	Rollover from Previous Year	0.00	0.00	Expenditure	0.00	0.00	Unallocated (Budget only)	0.00	0.00	Current Position	0.00	0.00	Capital LM Budget (Fund 64)	Budget (£)	Actual (£)	Income	0.00	11,008.38	Expenditure	0.00	11,008.38	Current Position	0.00	0.00	
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10b	<u>Three Year Budget Plan 2026-2029</u> The proposed three year budget plan for 2026-2029 and 2026/27 budget Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) assumptions were both shared with governors in advance of the meeting (filed electronically).																																																	

Revenue Budget

	2026/27(£) Year 1	2027/28(£) Year 2	2028/29(£) Year 3
Total Revenue Income	997,523.00	971,920.00	963,186.00
Less Total Revenue Expenditure	1,003,286.95	992,105.81	1,028,748.08
Revenue Balance this Year	-5,763.95	-20,185.81	-65,562.08
Revenue Balance From Last Year	102,648.24	96,884.29	76,698.48
Cumulative Revenue Balance Carried Forward	96,884.29	76,698.48	11,136.40

Capital Budget

	2026/27(£) Year 1	2027/28(£) Year 2	2028/29(£) Year 3
Total Capital Income	31,192.00	1,306.00	1,306.00
Less Total Capital Expenditure	31,192.00	1,306.00	1,306.00
Capital Balance this Year	0	0	0
Capital Balance From Last Year	0	0	0
Cumulative Capital Balance C/F	0	0	0

As the HT had explained during the training session earlier in the meeting, the Finance Committee Chair said the 3YBP was very difficult to set as it was necessary to grapple with an unknown future, particularly relating to years two and three.

The Finance Committee had reviewed the proposed budget in detail as recorded in the meeting minutes. The budget had been prudently prepared where the school was congratulated on their approach. The Finance Committee recommended that the budget should be approved.

Governors ratified the three year budget plan for 2026-2029.

Action: The HT to submit the 3YBP to the local authority prior to 31st May 2026.

10c

Any Items in Respect of Premises, Health & Safety or GDPR

The Finance Committee Chair was aware a site meeting had taken place earlier that day relating to the building remedial work.

As a result of the meeting earlier that day, a governor asked if some of the budget figures had since been altered? The HT explained the work on the roof had already been signed off as the existing roof was no longer fit for purpose. The school's ten percent contribution (£22,000) to the works had been allocated within the budget. The HT explained this included the windows in Windmills (Year R), Smugglers (Year 1/2), and Vikings (Year 3/4) classes which would be replaced with solar glass to prevent too much sunlight coming in which would also help to keep the rooms cooler. Blackout blinds would also be installed, again preventing too much sunlight coming in for the children. A new door would be installed for Smugglers enabling the children to access the outdoor provision.

The HT said gates would be installed to the back of the building to ensure the site was secure. CCTV would additionally be installed around the site. There would be new fire

Head

	doors to include the office door which would also be fobbed. There would be a new fire exit door out from the kitchen. All the work was due to be completed during the summer where the school's contribution was £21,000. The HT commented the only item which might need to be carried over was the CCTV as approval was required from a different Church approval board in respect of safeguarding. If there was a delay, the work would then be scheduled for the October half term. The HT reported the school had completed its first lockdown drill earlier that week which had gone very well. However, the school site wasn't currently as safe as it needed to be. The HT said a meeting had taken place with the Schools Officer (Organisation and Estates) the previous week where a follow-up meeting had taken place earlier that day with the Diocese's Project Manager. Original meeting minutes had been shared with governors which were also available electronically via GovernorHub. The only additions to this was the solar glass and the fire door at the reverse of the kitchen. All else had been included. Both the Chair and the HT commented the Diocese had been incredibly supportive where the school had been incredibly fortunate. An offer letter would be sent out from the Diocese shortly where a contingency would be included for any price increases. A governor asked if there was a continuous loop recording on the CCTV? The HT explained there was a twenty eight day recording cycle which incorporated an eight camera system across the school. A main viewing screen would be located in the school office. Governors agreed the ten percent contribution of £21,000 towards the works carried out on behalf of the Diocese and as outlined by the HT.											
11.	<u>POLICIES</u>											
11a	All policies due for review were made available in advance of the meeting (filed electronically). Governors ratified those policies presented. <table><tr><th>Policy</th><th>Next Review</th></tr><tr><td>Acceptable Use policy</td><td>May 2027</td></tr><tr><td>Mobile & Smart Technology policy</td><td>"</td></tr><tr><td>Equality Information and Objectives</td><td>"</td></tr><tr><td>Relationship & Sex Education policy</td><td>"</td></tr></table>	Policy	Next Review	Acceptable Use policy	May 2027	Mobile & Smart Technology policy	"	Equality Information and Objectives	"	Relationship & Sex Education policy	"	
Policy	Next Review											
Acceptable Use policy	May 2027											
Mobile & Smart Technology policy	"											
Equality Information and Objectives	"											
Relationship & Sex Education policy	"											
11b	<u>Updated Policies Not Requiring Governing Board Approval</u> The HT said no policies had been updated since the last meeting.											
OTHER												
12.	<u>WEBSITE/TEP GOVERNANCE MONTHLY BULLETINS/DFE UPDATES</u>											
	The Education People's (TEP) governance monthly bulletin for April 2026 was provided as a supporting paper for this agenda item (filed electronically). A link to the proposed revisions to the DfE's statutory guidance on 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Sept. 26) was contained within the meeting agenda. The GP had also circulated guidance on dealing with complaints against education settings on social networking sites (filed electronically). The contents were noted by governors and there were no questions arising.											
13.	<u>CHAIR'S ACTIONS/CORRESPONDENCE</u>											
	There were no Chair's actions to report and no correspondence had been sent or received.											

14.	<u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u> There were no matters arising.	
15. 15a 15b	<u>CONFIDENTIALITY</u> There were no discussions or documents which were considered confidential.	
16.	<u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u> The next FGB meeting would take place at school at 6.30pm on Monday, 20th July 2026.	

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Signed: _____
(Chair)

Date: _____

ACTION SUMMARY

ITEM	AGENDA ITEM	TO BE ACTIONED BY	ACTION
1.	3b	HL/SS	To send the HT their pen portraits for inclusion on the school's website.
2.	3b	Remaining Governors	To submit pictures of themselves for the school's picture board.
3.	3b	KD	To complete her Code of Conduct confirmation on GovernorHub for 2025/26.
4.	3b	KD/HL	To complete the NGA Learning Link refresher module on 'Essential Safeguarding for Governors and Trustees – 2025/26'. Copies of certificates to be sent to the GP. <i>(Carry over to 2026/27 as due to be repeated in term one).</i>
5.	4b	KD/HL	To refresh their Prevent training, forwarding a copy of their certificates to the GP. http://www.support-people-susceptible-to-radicalisation.service.gov.uk/portal#refresher-awareness-course
6.	4b	SS	To complete his Prevent training. https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen2.html
7.	4b	Governance Professional	To send KD, HL and SS the links to the Prevent e-learning modules.
8.	6	Head	To include a seasonal term data comparison for whole school attainment data in future reports.
9.	6	Head	To share KCC's sign-off of the Year 5/6 residential trip during the July FGB meeting.
10.	6	Head	To present a report on in-year admissions during the July FGB meeting.
11.	8b	Governance Professional	To carry over the staff wellbeing survey to the July 2026 FGB meeting. KD to present the findings.
12.	8c	Governors	To arrange their monitoring visits as early as possible in term six.
13.	10b	Head	To submit the 3YBP to the local authority prior to 31 st May 2026.

See over/...



Finance for Governors – Key Facts Sheet

Why School Finance Matters

Schools manage public money and therefore must demonstrate strong value for money, transparency and accountability in all financial decisions. Governors play a vital role in ensuring that spending decisions align with the school's vision, priorities and pupil outcomes.

At Wittersham, as with many smaller schools, financial planning is particularly important because even relatively small changes in pupil numbers, staffing costs or SEND demand can have a significant impact on the overall budget.

Good financial governance helps ensure:

- High-quality teaching and learning
- Sustainable staffing structures
- Safe and compliant school buildings
- Strong provision for vulnerable pupils and those with SEND
- Long-term stability and strategic planning

Main Sources of School Funding

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

The DSG is the school's main source of funding and is split into four areas:

Schools Block

Core funding for mainstream schools. This is largely pupil-number driven and forms the majority of the school's budget allocation.

High Needs Block

Supports SEND provision, EHCP funding and alternative provision. Increasing national SEND demand continues to place pressure on this funding stream.

Early Years Block

Funding allocated to nursery and EYFS provision.

Central Services Block

Funds Local Authority statutory and central education services, including:

- Admissions
- Attendance and Education Welfare services
- Safeguarding and child protection coordination
- Support for children missing education
- National curriculum assessment administration

- Copyright licensing
- Strategic school improvement functions
- Support for looked-after children through the Virtual School
- Some statutory HR, legal and finance functions

Additional Funding Streams

Pupil Premium

Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and improve outcomes.

PE & Sports Premium

Ring-fenced funding used to improve PE provision, physical activity and sports participation.

Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)

Funding to support free meals for all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

Other Income

Includes:

- School trips and visits
- Wraparound care
- Clubs and activities
- Voluntary parental contributions

What Schools Spend Money On

Staffing

Staffing is by far the largest expenditure area, typically accounting for 75–85% of the total school budget. This includes:

- Teachers
- Teaching assistants
- SEND support staff
- Office and site staff
- Leadership costs

Because staffing forms the majority of expenditure, most financial decisions ultimately relate to staffing structures and deployment.

Other Major Costs

- Utilities and energy costs
- Building maintenance and compliance
- Learning resources and curriculum materials
- IT systems and infrastructure
- Safeguarding and statutory compliance

- SEND interventions and external agency support

Key Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

Governors provide strategic oversight and challenge rather than managing day-to-day spending. Their role includes:

- Approving the annual budget
- Monitoring financial sustainability
- Reviewing financial risks
- Ensuring value for money
- Challenging leaders appropriately
- Ensuring spending decisions support pupil outcomes

Governors should ask questions such as:

- Are assumptions realistic?
- What are the key risks?
- How sustainable is the current staffing structure?
- What actions are being taken to manage pressures?

Headteacher and Finance Team

Responsible for:

- Day-to-day financial management
- Budget monitoring and forecasting
- Operational spending decisions
- Staffing deployment
- Financial compliance and reporting

Diocese / VA Responsibilities

As a Voluntary Aided school:

- The governing body has responsibility for buildings and capital works
- Most eligible capital projects require a 10% governing body contribution
- Diocesan approval is required for many premises projects

Key Financial Pressures for 2026/27

Staffing Cost Increases

Pay awards, pension contributions and national insurance increases continue to place pressure on school budgets.

SEND Demand

The increasing complexity and level of SEND need nationally continues to impact staffing, provision and external support requirements.

Inflation

Rising costs in:

- Energy
 - Catering
 - Resources
 - Contracts and services
- continue to affect school budgets significantly.

Pupil Numbers

School funding is largely pupil-led. Even small fluctuations in pupil numbers can have a significant impact on funding, particularly in small schools.

Fixed Costs

Many costs cannot easily be reduced quickly, including:

- Utilities
- Statutory compliance
- Premises maintenance
- Core staffing structures

Wittersham-Specific Financial Risks

Key risks currently include:

- Sensitivity to pupil number fluctuations
- Increasing SEND demand and provision pressures
- High staffing proportion within the budget
- Limited flexibility within fixed costs
- Balancing curriculum breadth and enrichment opportunities with affordability

Mitigation strategies include:

- Careful three-year forecasting
- Scenario planning
- Regular staffing reviews
- Close monthly budget monitoring
- Seeking external funding and grants where possible

Important Financial Terms

AWPU (Age Weighted Pupil Unit)

The core amount of funding allocated per pupil based on age phase.

De-delegation

Funding retained centrally by the Local Authority for maintained school services such as:

- Teachers' pensions administration
- Moderation
- Health and safety services
- Statutory compliance checks
- Site management support
- Skanska compliance checks (including asbestos and legionella)

Previously many of these costs were charged annually in one larger payment, but they are now deducted monthly.

High Needs Funding (HNF)

Additional funding provided for pupils with EHCPs or significant identified SEND needs.

Good Financial Practice

Strong financial governance includes:

- Three-year budget planning
- Scenario modelling
- Regular monitoring and variance analysis
- Evidence-based decision making
- Early identification of financial risks
- Benchmarking where appropriate
- Transparent governor challenge and oversight

Key Messages for Governors

- Funding is largely pupil-led.
- Staffing remains the biggest budget driver.
- SEND continues to be a major national and local pressure.
- Small schools are particularly sensitive to financial changes.
- Strong governance supports both sustainability and pupil outcomes.
- Early challenge and proactive monitoring help prevent larger financial issues in the future.