

Governing Board

Agenda & Minutes



Date 9 th July 2026	Time 6pm	Location St Thomas'
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Member Present Paul Davies (HT) Chris McGowan (Chair) Gemma Duff Fiona Ashworth Lisa Rodrigues Nicola Weeks Danny Millington Jo Lubbers In attendance: Sarah Allchurch (clerk)	Apologies Lynsey Cooper Jon Strefford Meeting was quorate and started at 6.01 pm.
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TOPIC	NOTES
1. Welcome and Opening Prayer, Apologies	Welcome from the Chair. Apologies from LC and JS. Prayer from LR.
2. Pecuniary interests	None.
3. Minutes from previous meeting (21 st May)	Approved.
4. Chair's comments	The Chair is in the process of drawing up a Governor Development Plan. It is a work in progress. An extra meeting to discuss this has proved tricky and therefore, it has been decided that this should be incorporated into the main meetings going forwards. The Chair has drawn up this plan based on where he thinks the board is currently. He would like all governors to complete a GB Self-Evaluation form giving their views, whereupon all input can be incorporated into an updated version. HT and KK will complete it too. A separate skills audit form will also be sent out to governors to complete. The combination of these two documents will prove very useful in forming the basis of the Governor Development Plan

	and for the Ofsted inspection next year. The Chair will send out both forms early next week for governors to complete by the end of the week, so that the Chair can amalgamate them over the summer holidays. He will also send them to LC and JS separately as they are not present at the meeting. ACTION. GD also reminded governors of her idea of an Ofsted crib sheet, which all agreed would be very useful and will be drawn up shortly.
5. Headteacher's verbal report • End of key stage outcomes • Staff wellbeing • Discussion and approval of FIP 2026/2027	End of year data: SATs results are now not being released until Thursday next week, following which a report will go out to parents on Friday. Regarding the wider data, the key headlines will mostly be discussed at the T&L meeting next week. However, 78% of EYFS met a 'good level of development' for year 1. Q: How is it assessed? Through teacher assessment. Q: Does this mean 22% of Year R are not ready for year 1? Yes. The class teachers have had detailed conversations about this and what the approach will be for these children as they go into year 1. The play-based model will continue for term 1 and then there will be a mixed approach thereafter with some of them joining the rest of the class and others remaining in a separate group. Q: Why did these children not meet this level? All have complex needs. All have EHCPs or are on the SEN register. One has EAL. One has been decelerated as they are still not ready for year 1. 22% is in fact only 4 children. But the data was not close for these children. They are some way off. Q: How many of these children in EY did the Acorns nurture group? Lots of them did, therefore, there has been a great turnaround amongst this cohort. In year 1, 80% of children met the standard for phonics. There is only one

child going into KS2 who has not met the standard for phonics in year 2.

Year 4 multiplication check:

30% of this cohort are on the SEN register. Many have cognitive issues meaning that timetables are tricky for them. Although there is no pass mark here, the score only meets the 93rd percentile, so this will be questioned by Ofsted and a high level of scrutiny is expected. Pupil progress meetings will be held in September to put a recovery plan in place for these children. Starting earlier is necessary. Year 3s are going to have a structured programme on this from now on.

Q: What will that programme look like?

As well as TT Rockstars, there will also be a daily structured times table lesson first thing in the morning. This will start in year 3 in September. This is outlined in the new draft of the FIP.

Q: Does the school involve the parents on this sufficiently?

No, and this is being addressed. A parent workshop will be given early on in the term about how they can support their children with their times tables. A personalised email to parents about their own child might also be beneficial. Times tables have to be memorised, but there are tricks to help them do this. The children were re-tested again this week, and the 'next' button made no difference to the outcome.

Children are tested regularly through the year and have still made progress overall. The format of the test is where they fall down.

Q: How will we monitor children on this?

They will be tested every few weeks and results will be reported back to the GB.

The only result currently available for KS2 is writing. The higher level here has increased.

Q: Are all children who do not meet the expected level getting help and support?

Yes, this can be in a range of ways and has been talked about at pupil

progress meetings. Approaches taken will depend on whether the child has SEN needs or not.

Moderation has shown that the year 5 writing outcomes were not as strong as had been hoped. This is the direct result of the teaching this year and the impact of having a new teacher. There has not been enough reminders of the basics of writing, and spelling mistakes, joining writing and other basics have not been picked up. Careful analysis has been done on where these children were before and at what point the standard started to decline. The Ash class teacher left at Easter so just prior to this would be likely. The English manager has had a meeting with staff and has gone through all the books and created a recovery plan to get these children back on track to the expected level. A clear plan is in place for September.

Q: Have there been discussions about whether years 5 and 6 should be mixed next year?

Overall, it would cause more problems splitting them than not. This might be revisited nearer the SATs. Next year, there will be 60 pupils in upper school at the juniors and 66 in lower school.

Q: What about doing some remedial work with the fixed term teacher in the summer term?

He was only here for one term and leaves next week, so there is no point doing anything now. Losing JJ at Easter caused problems when she left. However, KK and HT are confident they can get the children back on track within a few weeks of year 6. They are all borderline at the moment, so writing should soon be stronger.

Q: Is it always the same children who do not meet targets consistently?

Yes, mostly. This situation has been reported on at the earliest opportunity. Monitoring schedules are published at the start of each term, when book looks and learning walks are carried out. Books need to be as strong as possible for Ofsted, and therefore the focus for learning walks will be foundational skills.

Ofsted Preparation

A lot of work has been done to ensure that the curriculum is progressive, up-to-date and accurate and that it is published on the website. The computing section needs updating and uploading. It has been a useful exercise.

Q: Some school websites upload examples of work to showcase it. Could this be considered?

Yes. If a link of a school which does this could be sent to HT, that would be helpful. **ACTION.**

Over the summer holidays, HT will work on a folder of documents that Ofsted will expect to see as well as a practicalities plan. This will ensure the school will be ready for the inspection when the time comes and that all staff know of the practicalities needed. This will be published in September. **ACTION.** The ISDRs will be updated in October, so these will be used for Ofsted. A clear list of all vulnerable pupils will be needed from September. These pupils will be followed closely. Case studies will be needed. **ACTION.** A lot in the plan will be about embedding information rather than starting on new concepts.

The LLPR inspections will be carried out at both schools on 5th and 6th November. These are effectively mock Ofsted inspections. Clare Beswick is the new LLPR. She will be coming into school at the start of September for orientation. Alison Rhodes might join her as it will be Clare's first LLPR.

FIP issues

There is still a sense that the infant school does not have a voice in the federation. The infant school staff attended some training and felt that it was more skewed towards the junior school. They believe that they are being told what to do rather than having their own say in the planning of the curriculum. The SLT is based at the juniors which is seen as the more important school by the infant school staff. Integration between the schools has been more challenging than expected.

However, meetings have taken place between the staff at both schools and they have had input, therefore SLT do not believe this to be the case. There is, of course, a fine line between strategic and operational

decisions and governors cannot get involved on this. However, a lot of the new FIP has been drafted as a result of these discussions with staff.

Staff meetings will take place once a week as will SLT meetings. The SLT should come to the infant school as much as possible. The vision for the infant school differs with the respective staff; the infant school staff believe that those making the decisions are KS2 trained and therefore do not understand the KS1 vision. HT knows what works and believes continuous provision does not work going into years 1 and 2, with the resources available. There are two different curriculums for EY and year 1 and the gap between the ARE for the two is huge. Ultimately, the school vision comes from the SLT, and all staff need to abide by this vision. After the next Ofsted inspection, the federation can start planning for the next four years.

(LR left the meeting at 7.10pm.)

Staff wellbeing

There are no current issues overall. One TA is on a phased return and due to return full time soon. Everyone is tired nearing the end of the academic year, especially exacerbated by the heatwave.

Q: How did the teaching staff react to the change of class structure at the juniors?

They were expecting it, so there has been no fallout from this. The new structure has meant the ECT could be offered a full-time position which is a positive step.

Pedagogy

This is outlined in section 2 of the FIP, and is the science of how children learn, particularly here in relation to an understanding of how children move from KS1 to KS2. An educational psychologist will be working with staff on this on the second inset day at the beginning of term on 2nd September. The Quality of Education curriculum includes specific skills for English and maths and this will also be a focus at the inset day too.

Cindy Pritchard will also be delivering safeguarding training on 1st September. This will be at Kingsclere school as part of cluster training. Governors are welcome to attend either inset day.

Q: Do you think staff are consistent in their approach?

Not always. It would be useful if parents can flag up any issues, but the HT's job is to have oversight on this and to ensure consistency in the classroom. Reading diaries, for example, are not being consistently completed by staff. KK and HT acknowledge they need to be present in the classroom as well as in the office.

Q: Would 'meet the teacher' be possible once a term?

Yes, that is a good idea.

Q: Are teacher trios still in the plan?

Yes, these are between teachers in both schools.

DT and computing are felt to be under-developed in the curriculum over the last two years and KK has been working with Miss Welch, who will take over DT, and Miss Halay, who will take over computing. Miss Robinson will take on MFL. All teachers have teaching responsibilities, but TLRs are only available for maths, English and EY. E-safety is going to be taught for every unit.

There will be no SIAMs inspection next year now, but Christian distinctiveness will continue to be a focus.

Q: To ease debt management, could parents be asked to pay upfront for trips?

A lot of parents would be unable to pay upfront. Also, the cost of trips is not always known in advance, so this would be difficult. The school is not allowed to make a profit either, so any remaining monies would have to be reimbursed.

Q: Inclusion: how much can be achieved before Ofsted?

As much as possible; it does not have to be perfect.

	(See confidential minutes for further discussions here.) Benedict's Law EpiPens will be kept at both schools. The model policy will be approved at FGB in September. ACTION. All staff will be trained and there will be regular volunteers. The FIP was approved. SEN issues (See confidential minutes.)
6. Financials: End of year financial update against the budget	Nothing much has changed on this front since the May FGB. The only significant thing to report is that teachers will be awarded a 3.5% pay increase as from 1st September 2026 (and an approximate 3% increase the following year). Schools will have to contribute 1% of this from their own budgets. This has just been announced and has not yet been factored into the budget for next year. Sports premium has now also been scrapped, therefore the budget going forward is not looking as healthy as it did at the end of this financial year. 3.5% will equate to a significant increase in staffing costs when these costs account for 85% of the budget. The new allergy policy will also involve some costs going forwards. Chair updated the GB on the Tesco blue token collection, which closes at the end of July: at present WH schools are in third place. We will still receive £500.
7. Committee Update a. Resourcing and Compliance - Charging and Remissions Policy - Education of Children and Young People who are unable to attend school	a) Policies - Charging and Remissions Policy: <i>approved</i> - Education of Children unable to attend School: <i>approved</i> - Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions: <i>approved</i> - Website policy: <i>approved</i> - Complaints Policy: GB decided to keep this as it is: <i>approved</i> - H&S Policy: DM has read this and notes that there does not seem to be a lot provided by the SLA paid to HCC.



due to medical needs Policy - Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy - Health & Safety Policy - Website and Communications Policy - Complaints Policy inc. update on outstanding complaints b. Teaching & Learning c. Safeguarding - Approve Safeguarding Audit - Discussion of Benedict's Law (School Allergy Safety Bill) d. Feedback from any governor visits inc. SEN visit (FA) and planning Staff Wellbeing visit (DM)	Most minor repairs are chargeable to the school: <i>approved</i> b) T&L Nothing much to report here before the T&L meeting next week. GD did a learning walk in EY and asked questions of Stacey who will report back on the processes she follows and how she meets individual need. It is not simply play-based learning: an adaptive approach is taken in planning the transition from Little Pioneers to Year R. Discussions were had around the strengths and weaknesses of the pupils in EY; GD reported that it was great to see the demographic of children as they evolve throughout the year. GD will write up her report. ACTION. Little Pioneers is now at full capacity and is proving to be a real asset to the school. Another member of staff will eventually be brought in once the budget enables this. DM has been doing some great work with Debbie re H&S and has been looking at what needs repairing. There seems to be quite a lot of maintenance work to be carried out and small jobs for Steve. The infant school has been completed, and the juniors will be looked at next. 28 children are joining year R in September; the majority are boys. The school is coming under pressure by the SEN team to admit more children with high needs. Q: If there is a current trend of increased EHCPs, have we got to increase our focus on this? Provision looks very different now to how it did previously, and if that provision increases in year R, that will feed through to the rest of the school. c) Safeguarding NW carried out a SCR check on 3rd June. There are a lot of actions to be completed by HM on this. NW will carry out another visit on 30th September and check these have been done. She will also do staff monitoring. ACTION.
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	The new allergy policy under Benedict's Law comes into force in September. As it is a new policy, it is unlikely to be a focus of the Ofsted inspection, although the basics should be known. NW is happy to recommend the approval of the Safeguarding Audit: <i>approved.</i> There was no further feedback on any other monitoring visits.
8. GB procedural matters • Agree meeting schedule for next academic year • Agree key governor roles for next academic year • Agree GB structure • Review progress against GB development plan	The Chair will look at the dates for next year's meetings and cross-check against those for The Clere. He has suggested the GB structure and roles stay the same at present until the Ofsted inspection has been completed next year. NW advised that she would be stepping back from the T&L committee in September to focus more on her safeguarding role. Clerk will check whether we are now still quorate for T&L. ACTION. Overall, staff governor recruitment remains an issue and staff governors are required, preferably from the infant school. A DTG governor also needs to be recruited, but this can be reviewed after the skills audit has been carried out. Messages will go out to parents and to staff asking for volunteers for these governor roles. The Chair will attend the T&L next week, along with Elisha, who will present on dictation. The SATs results will not have been received by this meeting. JL might be a bit late to it too.
9. AOB	JL raised concerns about going to a four-class structure, as she had missed the meetings in which this was discussed. HT and the Chair updated her on these discussions.
10. Next meeting(s)	It was agreed 10th September would be the date for the first FGB back in the new academic year. This will be at the juniors. GD will chair as the Chair is away. There will be a written report from the HT. <i>Meeting ended at 8.31 pm.</i>