

MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING
held via video conferencing at 6.30pm on Tuesday 18 March 2025

Governors Present: Alex Smith (Chair for the meeting), Sarah Abrey, Helen Darrell (Headteacher), Barry Fuchs, Simon Jarvis, Liam Kelly, Imogen Nay, Rene Oosthuysen, Jonty Roland and Emma de Vaux (Co-Chair)

Also in Attendance: Jacquie Watts (Clerk) and Natasha Thake (Deputy Headteacher)
(NB: Governor Challenge, Questions and Monitoring are highlighted in bold)

1. GOVERNOR BUSINESS

i Apologies for Absence

NOTED: apologies for absence were received from Suranga Chandratillake who was out of the country.

AGREED: apologies tendered.

ii Declarations of Interest

NOTED: Imogen Nay was a CSoC trustee and related to a member of staff at the school. No other declarations were made in relation to the meeting.

iii Election of Chair and Other Office Holders

NOTED: the resignation of Mark Elliott had left a vacancy for the Chair of the FGB. Alex Smith, as the elected Vice Chair, had stepped up into the role until formal elections could be held. The Clerk reminded everyone of the nomination and election process.

NOTED: Alex Smith and Emma de Vaux were individually nominated and seconded as Co-Chairs for the remainder of the academic year. There were no other nominations.

AGREED: to appoint Alex Smith and Emma de Vaux as Co-Chairs for the remainder of the academic year 2024-25 and until the first meeting of the FGB in the Autumn Term 2025.

NOTED: the election of Alex Smith as Co-Chair created a vacancy for a Vice Chair. The Clerk explained the election and nomination process.

NOTED: Jonty Roland was nominated and seconded as Vice Chair for the remainder of the academic year. There were no other nominations.

AGREED: to appoint Jonty Roland as Vice Chair for the remainder of the academic year 2024-25 and until the first meeting of the FGB in the Autumn Term 2025.

iv Governor Vacancies and Appointments

NOTED: there were currently three vacancies on the governing body: 2 x Foundation Governors (Diocese) and 1 x Foundation Governor (CSoC).

NOTED: governors had been active in attempting to recruit new governors, including reaching out to St. Barnabas Church. **There was a possibility of one governor candidate, but matters had not been resolved. Governors commented it would be nice to have more Foundation governors connected to St. Paul's Church. A governor raised the possibility of seeking a governor or governors with leadership skills, using the leadership document previously drawn up, to future-proof the roles of Chair and Vice Chair. Recruitment from amongst parents who also met CSoC and Diocesan appointment criteria was suggested. Highlighting the UK Public duty entitlement to 5 days leave for governor duties might prove positive.**

v Minutes of Previous Meeting: 21 January 2025

NOTED: the minutes as uploaded to GovernorHub with the agenda and the following matters arising from the minutes:

Date	Min. Ref.	Action	Lead	Completed
21/1/25	1iii	El de Vaux to circulate the Foundation Governor vacancy document via email to the Cambridge Churches Network	E de Vaux	Completed
	1iv	Mark Elliott to post a sign-up document on GovernorHub to ensure a governor presence at all parent events.	M Elliott	Completed
	1iv	Alex Smith to produce an occasional Governor newsletter for circulation to parents and others.	A Smith	In hand
	1iv	approved minutes of meeting of 3 December 2024 to be electronically signed by the Chair and stored on GovernorHub	Clerk	Completed – 21/1/25
	2i	the Chair to provide a link to the NGA OFSTED training module for all	M Elliott	Completed
	2ii	feedback from the Academisation meetings would be provided to the next FGB meeting.	M Elliott / Clerk	Completed - on agenda

	2iv	Approved the Accessibility Plan subject to removal of the reference to the T&L Committee.	H Darrell	Completed and published on website
	3i	the Head would raise the issue of Foundation Governor vacancies with St. Barnabas.	H Darrell	Completed by Jonty Roland
	3iii	Simon Jarvis and the Chair to review summary data being presented to the Data Group and agree what should be circulated to all governors.	M Elliott/ S Jarvis	Completed - on agenda
	3vi	the Health and Safety Link governor would follow up on the Cambridge Kids rating and subsequent improvements and would be kept informed of further developments.	A Smith/ H Darrell	Report shared - follow up with Cambridge Kids still to take place.
	5	Agreed the following agenda items for the next meeting: • Standard items • SFVS • Budget 25/26 • Parent Survey • Feedback from the Academisation Group • Termly Headteacher's Report	Clerk	Completed - on agenda
	6	update visit and monitoring guidance document to show that visits, by default, should be in person.	S Abrey	Completed – 21/1/25 prior to end of meeting
	7	• approval of new attendance policy • opportunities to meet with governors at parent events • thanks to the 40% of parents who completed the parent survey.	M Elliott/ H Darrell	Completed

		Governors were currently analysing results and would respond in detail after the March FGB meeting - the FGB was seeking members of the community to fill current Diocesan Foundation Governor vacancies - governors would be attending a series of curriculum presentations across the next two terms The Chair and Head to use these points to draft an update to staff and parents.		
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AGREED: the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 January 2025 as true and correct record. The minutes would be electronically signed by the Chair and stored on GovernorHub as the official record. **Action: Clerk**

v Governor Training Activity

NOTED: Sarah Abrey highlighted the training record as drawn from GovernorHub and uploaded with the agenda. She reminded the meeting that a list of recommended training activities was pinned to the GovernorHub Noticeboard. Recent training undertaken by governors was noted. The Chair encouraged everyone to undertake further training and add it to their personal record if it was not automatically added via GovernorHub.

NOTED: the increase in Diocesan training activities. Rene Oosthuysen would share a link to recent training offers. The Clerk recommended training and refresher training in pupil exclusions, Safeguarding, Prevent, Safer Recruitment and Inclusion.

Action: R Oosthuysen

vii Ratification of Indicative Decisions Taken via GovernorHub

NOTED: no indicative decisions had been discussed between meetings.

viii Governor Monitoring Reports

NOTED: individual link governor reports available via Google Docs. Jonty Roland had summarised activity on the GovernorHub Noticeboard. **A number of class-monitoring visits were outstanding. Where one had been postponed because of ill health, it was suggested that basic monitoring take place via email this term, followed by an in-person visit as soon as possible in the Summer Term.**

NOTED: positive feedback from a number of visits, including good practice in SEND, though cascading SEND information to TAs had scope for improvement.

NOTED: Jonty Roland was updating the monitoring policy, including the introduction of questions focusing on the School Improvement Plan and School Priorities.

2. ENSURING CLARITY OF VISION, ETHOS, STRATEGIC DIRECTION

i Feedback From Academisation Group

NOTED: the group had met with both ACT and DEMAT representatives. Both meetings were useful introductions to the MATs, which were dissimilar in terms of size and approach. ACT promised greater school independence but DEMAT had breadth and experience. Neither provided specific detail regarding funding. The process of pursuing Academy status was noted. As useful as the fact finding activities had been, governors had not identified a good reason for St. Paul's to seek Academy status and join a MAT at this stage.

NOTED: a governor asked if the CSoC position on academies had been clarified? CSoC was not interested in setting up a MAT. Governors asked questions about career and networking opportunities within a MAT, support available from a MAT versus that available from the LA, and funding from MATS versus the LA.

AGREED: to take no further action regarding Academy status.

ii Church School: Christian Distinctiveness

NOTED: the Foundation Governor meeting had discussed the parent survey in terms of Christian Distinctiveness. The next meeting would take place in May.

NOTED: Mark Elliott had hoped to meet with CSoC to discuss strategic direction and the school's commitment to life in all its fullness, but a meeting had not taken place.

AGREED: the Co-Chairs and Vice Chair would seek a meeting with the Chair of CSoC to introduce themselves and explore shared strategic priorities.

Action: A Smith/ E de Vaux/ J Roland

iii Policy Update

NOTED: the Staff Appraisal and Capability policy uploaded to GovernorHub with the agenda. The document was based on an EPM template.

AGREED: the **Staff Appraisal and Capability Policy**.

iv Marketing

NOTED: governors were enthusiastic about feedback from a marketing company that focused on parent experience and stories using posters, a school prospectus and a

school story book customised for the school. Rene Oosthuysen would leave examples of their work at the School Office.

Action: R Oosthuysen

NOTED: the cost of the Company's work was considered reasonable and affordable. The Head, who had been unable to attend the Marketing Group meeting, hoped to review the materials and meet with the company before reaching a view. **Governors asked questions about online activity versus traditional print, who provided the copy for the marketing materials, the shelf-life of the materials, the cost of updating the prospectus and writing new case studies. Governors maintained their favourable view of the approach.**

AGREED: the Head would meet with the marketing company as soon as possible.

Action: H Darrell

v Parent Survey

NOTED: the survey document uploaded to GovernorHub with the agenda. **Governors were pleased with the 38% response rate (the target had been 40%). There had been a consistent response as to why parents liked the school: small, friendly, kind, with a village-school feel to it, which supported the school's vision of being a "beacon of love", 93% would recommend the school to someone else. Communication showed the biggest room for improvement but required further unpacking to understand the issues. 50% of parents of pupils with SEND needs who had responded to the survey felt supported, but this meant 50% did not.** The Head asked to see the raw data behind this response as it was not clear whether it related to improvements needed at the school or the acknowledged limitations of County and national provision over which the school had no control.

AGREED: Jonty Roland would share the raw survey data with the Head, especially in relation to the SEND responses.

Action: J Roland

NOTED: governors asked questions regarding the use of the survey information? The data could be used in marketing promotions, would be used by the school to investigate and respond to areas where potential improvements were identified and might be of benefit to the OFSTED Working Group.

3. HOLDING THE HEADTEACHER TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL

i Headteacher's Update

NOTED: the written Headteacher's report as uploaded with the agenda, The Head provided an oral summary including LA adviser visits, the new SENCO, settled pupil behaviour, safeguarding, an increase in staff illness during the term, My Concern data, Long Road students visiting the school on work experience and student teacher placements at the school. The school had 15 first choice pupil applications. **Governors asked questions about the use of TAs in bringing about improved pupil behaviour, how the school communicated with parents of SEND pupils, the position of Sarah Day as SENCO and the 15 first choice applications.** Sarah Day was an interim SENCO, giving the school time to evaluate its longer term SENCO needs. 15 first choice applicants was

promising, but the combined number of first, second and third choice applicants was down on previous years. **A governor found the format of the Head's report clear and helpful and liked the analysis of the My Concern logs.**

NOTED: the pre-SIAMS visit had been valuable and had recommended reviewing the school's vision and values to make them more succinct. The draft revised vision statement was:

At St. Paul's CE VA Primary School, we are committed to nurturing every child to live "life in all its fullness" (John 10:10). Rooted in our Christian values of love, wisdom and a welcoming community, our vision is to help each child to thrive and reach their full potential.

Our vision is to be a beacon of love where all are valued equally. We aim to empower our children to make positive choices, and seek to welcome and embrace the diversity of our local and global communities.

NOTED: governors commented on the repetition of vision and suggested "vision" in the first paragraph could be replaced by "mission". It was also noted that the LA had Diocese had differing interpretations of vision and mission statements.

AGREED: the Head would post the revised vision statement on the GovernorHub noticeboard for all to read and comment on, prior to approval of the final version of the statement at the next FGB meeting. **Action: H Darrell/ Clerk**

ii School Improvement Plan 2024-25

Noted: the plan update was included with the Headteacher's report. **Governors asked if the school was behind with any actions?** The school did not feel it was behind, but some activities were not scheduled to be addressed until the summer term. **Governors asked what challenges the school faced in delivering the plan?** The Head identified the volume of work for Subject Leaders and the limited time available to them, but she felt that most areas were broadly on track.

iii Pupil Data

NOTED: the Data Group report uploaded to GovernorHub with the agenda. **It was not a draft, despite the erroneous watermark across the document. The report was an attempt to summarise the large quantities of data reviewed by the Group. Year 1-5 data was based on teacher assessments of where children would be at the end of the academic year. Year 6 was the current position for pupils mid-year. One third of years 1-5 were below the expected standard as a result of the large numbers of pupils joining the school well into their academic careers. Year 6 KS2 reading levels were extremely positive and well above national average if late-admission pupils were removed from the data. Mathematics and Writing were less positive and closer to the national average. Governors felt this was worth thinking about further.**

NOTED: EAL encompassed a wide range of English language ability. **it was not clearly evidenced how much EAL pupils impacted negatively on pupil performance, although**

many late-admission pupils had EAL status. The meeting discussed target setting and noted that some parents would like more target setting information in relation to their child. The school provided interventions for EAL pupils and was satisfied these were taking place appropriately. **Governors felt that the high turnover of pupils made tracking and identification of trends difficult.**

NOTED: governors acknowledged the complexity of the data. They asked if year 6 outcomes were expected to improve? The school expected further improvement to be evidenced by the next data drop designed to capture progress across the Spring Term. The absence of the tutor for reasons of ill health had, however, been a challenge. **In response to a further question from governors, the school expected the next data drop figures would be available in the Summer Term. The staff governor highlighted the significant improvement in the previous year's SATS results when late admitted pupils were removed from the data. The timescale for counting pupils as late admissions had extended from the last two years to the last three years.**

iv Staff

NOTED: no key issues were raised by the school.

NOTED: the HTPM panel had met and completed their mid-year review. Progress was solid, but the meeting highlighted issues of governance and governor monitoring for governors to address in general and as part of OFSTED preparation. The next panel meeting would be in September to review 24/25 as a whole and set targets for 25/26.

NOTED: governors questioned the reference to a supply teacher in the Head's report. The role provided PPA cover and varied year on year. The flexibility of long-term supply suited both the school and individual supply staff. It meant hours could flex year on year to match needs without complex and expensive HR issues. Whilst costs for hours worked were higher than for an established member of staff, the school did not have to cover holiday pay and other expenses.

v Safeguarding

NOTED: this had been covered by the Head's report. Safeguarding training had been undertaken.

vi Health and Safety

NOTED: this had mostly been covered by the Head's report. The recent change in food waste requirements was being addressed by the school.

NOTED: the school was changing its cleaning contract because of poor quality cleaning by the previous company.

NOTED: Sarah Abrey had reviewed safe practice in PE and as a result was looking to shorten the ropes in the gym.

4. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY

i Financial Monitoring Update

NOTED: Liam Kelly reported the 24/25 financial year-end was broadly as expected and a positive £256k carry forward was predicted. The Head had obtained a valuable grant from CSoC.

ii SFVS 2025

NOTED: the SFVS 2025 documents uploaded to GovernorHub with the agenda. Benchmarking was less prominent than in previous years but the governing body was obliged to evaluate its and the school's financial position. Governors queried the availability of benchmarking data, for example staff to pupil ratios. Liam Kelly, as the governor leading on the SFVS, advised that benchmarking data was available online and he would share the link to it. **Action: L Kelly**

NOTED: the SFVS benchmarking data was being used to inform the 25/26 budget setting discussions. Governors queried the accuracy of statement A1. It was confirmed that the detail related to the previous financial year and was therefore accurate. Governors queried the accuracy of A2 and C10 which made reference to a Finance Committee and the F&P Committee, which had not existed for several years. The clerk reminded the meeting that it had dispensed with all formal sub-committees from 2022/23 onwards. The only decision making body was the FGB and all other groups were advisory/discursive. **Governors asked questions regarding the school's arrangements for division of duties.** The school advised it had a division of duties document it followed and gave examples of its practice in this regard.

AGREED: the 2025 SFVS for submission by the end of March deadline, subject to it being edited to reflect the circle structure the FGB currently followed, meaning it did not have a Finance and Personnel or Finance Committee. **Action: L Kelly**

iii Budget 25/26

NOTED: in response to a question from a governor, the Clerk explained the difference between the SFVS process and end of March deadline, and the iterative process of setting a school budget and its later deadline once the school had had its formal budget setting discussion with the LA. The School's budget setting meeting was not scheduled until April. A recent governor finance workshop had considered budget possibilities and the financial profile associated with both a seven and a six class structure. **A six class structure was likely to result in a deficit of £150k per year, but the seven class structure would use up more of the school's reserves.** Discussions were ongoing. **Governors at the workshop had favoured seven classes in 25/26.** The Head and the LA favoured six classes given the year on year impact on school reserves. The situation remained uncertain as the school was not scheduled to have its budget setting meeting with the LA until 1 April and much remained unknown until then. **Governors asked questions about the relative sizes of the school deficits under the various options. The Finance lead governor was of the opinion that it was mostly irrelevant if the school did not have a plan to return to a break-even position. If a break-even position was identified, the school's reserves could be used to support a**

managed evolution to the break-even position. The Head pointed out the difficulties of producing a detailed and accurate break-even future forecast given uncertainties regarding the national position, local funding and precise payroll costs in future years when staff turnover could not be foreseen. There were multiple models that would need to be considered if a definitive forecast was required. The Head favoured a sustainable approach when working towards possible break-even scenarios. The LA's current approach pending the 1 April meeting was reiterated. **A governor stated they did not accept this stance.**

NOTED: Governors asked what steps needed to be taken to produce a budget for FGB approval? The process remained iterative. Further informal governor discussions could take place if required prior to the start of April. The school would discuss budget details with the LA on 1 April. Further informal governor discussions should take place after this to enable a budget proposal to be submitted to the FGB meeting on 29/4/25. Once a budget had been agreed it would need to be submitted to the LA by its May deadline. **Governors suggested informal discussions before 1 April 2025 followed by a larger governor finance workshop after 1 April. Informal discussion would depend on availability but should involve the Head, the Deputy Head, the School's Business Manager, the two Co-Chairs and Liam Kelly as Finance lead.**

NOTED: discussions reverted to what a sustainable break-even position might look like in future years with a pupil roll of 140. A governor suggested the school should consider opening a nursery in order to grow pupil numbers.

AGREED: to convene a governor finance workshop between 22/4/25 and 29/4/25 at 6.30pm involving Liam Kelly, the Headteacher and Simon Jarvis. Other governors were welcome subject to availability. **Action: L Kelly/ H Darrell**

Imogen Nay left the meeting part way through the above discussion

5. ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

AGREED: the following agenda items:

- Standard agenda items
- Budget 25/26
- School Vision Statement
- Feedback from the OFSTED Group
- Marketing

Action: Clerk

6. AOB

NOTED: there was no additional business

7. FIVE POINTS TO SHARE WITH STAFF AND PARENTS

AGREED: the following points:

- governors thanked CSoC for its grant to the school
- the FGB was delighted to have elected two new Co-Chairs and was hoping to find enthusiastic individuals to fill its three Foundation governor vacancies

- 93% of parents completing the parent survey would recommend the school to others
- governors were developing a detailed understanding of the school's data
- the school's new approach to behaviour management was showing positive early results
- the FGB had found its Academy fact finding activities to be useful but would be taking no further action on the matter

Jonty Roland would draft a piece for the Chairs and Head to use in an update to staff and parents.

Action: J Roland/ A Simth/ E de Vaux/ H Darrell

8. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED: the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 29th April 2025 at 6.30pm via TEAMS.

The meeting concluded at approximately 20:53 hours

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts
Clerk to the Governors
20 March 2025

Approved by The Governing Body on:

Date: 29 April 2025.....

Signature (Chair):



FGB Action Summary Grid

Date	Min. Ref.	Action	Lead	Completed
21/1/25	1iv	Alex Smith to produce an occasional Governor newsletter for circulation to parents and others.	A Smith	In hand
	3vi	the Health and Safety Link governor would follow up on the Cambridge Kids rating and subsequent improvements and would be kept informed of further developments.	A Smith/ H Darrell	Report shared - follow up with Cambridge Kids to take place.

18/3/25	1v	21/1/25 agreed minutes to be electronically signed by Chair & stored on GovernorHub as the official record	Clerk	Completed - 20/3/25
	1vi	Rene Oosthuysen to share a link to recent Diocesan training offers	R Oosthuysen	
	2ii	the Co-Chairs and Vice Chair to seek a meeting with the Chair of CSoC to introduce themselves and explore shared strategic priorities.	A Smith/ E de Vaux/ J Roland	
	2iv	Rene Oosthuysen to leave examples at the School Office of a marketing company's posters, a school prospectus and a school story book customised for the school.	R Oosthuysen	
	2iv	the Head to meet with the marketing company as soon as possible	H Darrell	
	2v	Jonty Roland to share raw survey data with the Head, especially in relation to the SEND responses.	J Roland	
	3i	the Head to post revised vision statement on GovernorHub noticeboard for all to read and comment on, prior to approval of the final version at the next FGB meeting.	H Darrell/ Clerk	Statement posted 19/3/25 - final version to be considered 29/4/25
	4ii	SFVS benchmarking data was available online. L Kelly would share the link.	L Kelly	Completed 20/3/25
	4ii	Agreed the 2025 SFVS for submission by the end of March, subject to it being edited to reflect the circle structure the FGB currently followed, meaning it did not have a Finance and	L Kelly	

		Personnel or Finance Committee.		
	4iii	to convene a governor finance workshop between 22/4/25 and 29/4/25 at 6.30pm involving Liam Kelly, the Headteacher and Simon Jarvis. Other governors were welcome subject to availability.	L Kelly/ H Darrell	
	5	Agreed the following agenda items for the next FGB meeting: • Standard agenda items • Budget 25/26 • School Vision Statement • Feedback from the OFSTED Group • Marketing	Clerk	
	7	Agreed the following points: • governors thanked CSoC for its grant to the school; • the FGB was delighted to have elected two new Co-Chairs and was hoping to find enthusiastic individuals to fill its three Foundation governor vacancies • 93% of parents completing the parent survey would recommend the school to others • governors were developing a detailed understanding of the school's data	J Roland/ A Simth/ E de Vaux/ H Darrell	

		• the school's new approach to behaviour management was showing positive early results • the FGB had found its fact finding activities in relation to Academy Status to be useful but would be taking no further action on the matter Jonty Roland to draft a piece for the Chairs and Head to use in an update to staff and parents.		
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