



MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD ON 26TH MARCH 2026 AT 8.30AM IN THE SCHOOL

“We are a community with a lifelong passion for learning.”

Present: Ian Stewart Chair of the Governors (IS), Helen Fernyhough(HF) Acting for the Head, Becky Nel (BN), Rob Hill (RB).

In attendance: Dawn Pettipiece (Clerk).

Sandie Lovell (SL) School Business Manager attended part of the meeting

MINUTES

1	Welcome & apologies for absence* Please send apologies to the clerk before the meeting. Apologies received from Hilary Priest (HP), Rich Gibbons (RG) and Jenny Barker (JB)
2	Attendance & declaration of Interest* Governors are reminded that they must declare any conflict of interest which becomes apparent during the meeting. There were no declarations of conflict of interest made at the meeting.
3	Approval of minutes of FGB meeting 9th December 2025 Please read the draft minutes in the folder. The governors approved the minutes of the meeting which were signed by IS.
3.1	Matters arising from minutes of last FGB meeting including progress made on the actions raised* - Was Item on governor recruitment emailed to parents? IS: No. I will speak to HF about this and then will send out information to the parents when the school re-opens after Easter. HF: Would I be able to become a school governor? ACTION: IS to speak to HF about the item he will email out to parents asking if anyone would be interested in becoming a school governor. He will send a message out to parents when the school returns after the Easter break. DONE. ACTION: HF asked if she could become a school governor. The Clerk will ask Fiona Collier if this is possible DONE. UPDATE: Fiona responded that this was possible and her email was forwarded to the FGB. ACTION: Clerk to send out to governors, information about when their term of office began and ended. DONE. - Was governor recruitment item put in school WhatsApp? HF: I sent this out to the school Whatsapp group. - Was item about governor recruitment put in a suitable Totnes/South Hams Facebook page. IS: There is a forum that meets at St Mary's Church, comprising of local business people, who may be interested in becoming a governor. ACTION: IS will find the email and send it to the clerk. ACTION: RH will speak to the Father at the church about the forum of local business people run by the church. - Update on parents' responses to questionnaire sent to them about wraparound care. IS: Due to changes with the after school club, which is now being run by the school and is OFSTED registered (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) a questionnaire about wraparound care will now go out by summer half term. We also need to discuss in the next meeting whether to include a question for the parents of the nursery. RH: Was the questionnaire via email? IS: I will use Microsoft forms as it is free. ACTION: IS to update the questionnaire and bring to the next meeting, so governors can approve the questions. The FGB will also decide whether to include a part in the questionnaire for parents of children in the nursery. ACTION: Clerk to put the above action on the next agenda. DONE. - Update on the outcome of the discussion with the IT technician about setting up of a google drive for governors. IS: I sent a reminder to Dickon about this last night asking about the governors google drive. BN: Do we need to have school emails? IS: I am waiting for Dickon's response and will update the governors when I get the answers. ACTION: IS to update the governors at the next FGB meeting about the governors google drive and whether they need school emails to access it. - Was email sent to the Head with contact details of tradesmen who could provide upkeep/building work/maintenance of the school? As Jo Counter was not at the meeting the clerk was asked to send her an email about this.

	ACTION: Clerk to send email to Jo asking if she had sent the Head an email with contact information about local businesses/tradesman who could provide work for the school when needed. DONE. Update: JC responded that this was not her action. I sent an email to all the FGB asking who had said this in the meeting, but did not get a response. - Was Governors Strategic plan emailed to governors? IS: This is on the school website with five objectives. We will continue with those as they are working well. - Update on meeting looking at how to promote the new caravan to parents and children – planned as a timeout area. IS: This has been an item in the school newsletter. BN: I did a governor walk around and looked at this. Is there a real vision for this? HF: There is a reading room and two sensory/pastoral SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) rooms. It is also in the alternative provision for the school. BN: What support do you need from parents? HF: There was a plan to have a timetable for parent volunteers. The governors decided to move the discussion about the timetable for parent volunteers to the next agenda as a separate item. BN: How many children need this level of provision? HF: We have four children who need time out and other children who also need it occasionally. RH: Will the intention be to take children out of class? HF: Not completely. We want to integrate them as much as possible. If at times they are unsafe and completely dysregulating they will need time out. IS: We are using the Oak room for that at the moment. RH: Do we have policies for interventions? HF: We have a separate plan for each child who needs it. IS: The Positive Relationships Policy covers that. BN: What about the caravan as adults will be isolated? RH: We just need to know if we have the correct policies. HF: Yes, we do. ACTION: An item to go on the next agenda about a timetable for parent volunteers to support the school with SEND children, also looking at how many children need this provision. DONE. - Email was sent to Pay Committee with an agenda for the Heads pay – did Pay Committee discuss this via email? IS: We need to communicate that there are no issues. ACTION: Clerk to send out email again, so the Pay Committee can respond. DONE. The clerk has not received any responses. - Were the LA birth rate predictions emailed to the FGB? IS: I could look for them but there are not any concerns about birth rates. None of the governors had any concerns about this matter as the school's numbers of pupils on role was increasing. - Did RH do the safeguarding training? RH: I cannot remember. During the meeting he found an email from the national college and said he would click on the link and do the refresher today on the train. NB: The clerk found an email from HP saying that we were no longer subscribing to the National College from the end of February and to delete our accounts or we would have to pay for any courses completed by then. The clerk sent this email to the FGB after the meeting.
4	Committee reports - Resources 19.3.26 - Teaching and Learning 27.1.26 – postponed ACTION: Clerk to move this item to the next FGB meeting. DONE.
5	Head's report ACTION: Clerk to move this forward to the next meeting as the Head is on sick leave. DONE.
6	Spring School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Governors strategic plan - Progress for this term. - Governors' Strategic plan in folder & latest SIP IS will need to spend time looking at this to see if it works with the school improvement plan. ACTION: IS and HF to look at the governor's strategic plan and how it works with the SIP.
7	Budget Update SL entered the meeting at 9.25 am. SL: We are hoping to have a reasonable carry forward. I have allocated the funding to each cost centre but I am sure there will be a few adjustments, which I need to check with HP on Monday. SL handed out a snapshot of the budget. RH: Do you know the carry forward? IS: It is estimated at £25,000 but could be more. We have received just over £14,000 from Devon County Council (DCC), which we were unaware we were getting so that has helped to increase the carry forward. RH: Is the afterschool club in here?

7.1	SL: No, as I need to speak to DCC as it may need setting up separately from the school's budget. The money we will earn from that has to be spent on things that are going to be used by the club. I have not been able to contact the person who can give me this information. RH: So the forecasted in year deficit is £2,902? SL: Yes, but there are still adjustments to be made so it is difficult to estimate at the moment. I have updated all the service fees that I am aware of and adjusted most of the cost centres. There may be a few slight adjustments, mainly because the year end is so early this year, so things may not have gone through the budget. I will need to ensure the money is in the right place e.g. If payments haven't come out of the current financial year they will need to be factored in to the new budget. RH: Have you worked out the new system? SL: There have been so many "teething problems". Yesterday I had over 300 items that had not reconciled, due to an input mistake by DCC which affected BROMCOM. I had to manually reconcile all those items. The problem with the new system is that DCC's finance system and BROMCOM don't work well together and there have been lots of glitches. DCC have now provided an FRS documents that works, so things are improving. IS: Is there another Resources meeting in May? SL: Yes, and by then all the relevant information will be in the budget and at that meeting IS: By the end of the year staff costs will be over 100% and we need to discuss that matter at an FGB meeting. We need to look at how we manage the budget with regard to when staff leave etc. RH: How long is the energy contract for? SL: It is not a fixed rate contract, so that does not help with the present energy climate. Our suppliers, Laser Energy Group, are a council run company. Some of the schools who did not sign up with it regret it and DCC recommended we go with Laser. IS: There is a £50,000 jump in staffing costs. SL: There have been a number of TA's (teaching assistants) taken on. - Budget Monitor (was FRS) approval. The FGB approved Budget Monitor. - Approval of school services The FGB approved school services. ACTION: How staff costs are managed in the budget to go to the next FGB meeting. DONE.
8	SFVS & benchmarking - To approve (SFVS in folder) Benchmarking. - Governors to discuss Benchmarking RH: I sent the Benchmarking information out to governors this morning. SL: Did you send it to me? RH: No, I will send it. Our pupil to staff ratio is average, but to meet that more money is going in the budget. As our school is fairly new our premises costs are fairly low, but as the building ages that will increase. BN: All schools are in a similar position. SL: We have been able to not spend so much money in this area, but now things are starting to need repairing and there is no money in the budget. RH: Are we allowed the deficit? SL: It is fine as we have the carry forward. - The FGB approved the SFVS and Benchmarking.
9	Mutual Fund - Governors to discuss whether the school should re-join the Mutual Fund. HF: I have spoken to HP and she does not want to join this again. IS: We should put some money aside in the budget and look at whether the Primary Partnership (PP) can support schools in this situation. The governors had a discussion and agreed that £10,000 should be put aside to cover staff sickness costs. ACTION: To go to the next FGB meeting so that it can be discussed with HP. DONE. - BN left the meeting at 9.45am.
10	Staffing Levels Discussion about the funding of staff and strategies needed to manage this area of the budget. This was discussed in item 7.
11	Childrens' views on how safe they feel in school Update on meeting with school council to find out whether they feel unsafe in school ACTION: Move this item to the next meeting as JC could not attend. DONE.
12	Policies* - Business Continuity and Emergency Plan – for approval The governors approved this policy. - Governor Induction Policy (JC/IS were going to discuss prior to it being approved) ACTION: Move the Governor Induction Policy to the next T&L meeting (where it usually is) as JC and IS need to discuss this. DONE.

	• Lettings Policy (for approval) The governors approved this policy. • SEND information and SEND policy (HP was going to review it prior to going to FGB for adoption). ACTION: Move SEND information and policy to the next meeting as HP was going to review it before the FGB adopt it. DONE. • Staff Leave and Absence Policy – <i>HP had raised a query about this with HR. Until this has been resolved the school will use the present policy.</i> The governors agreed that the school will continue using the present policy until HR have been able to answer HP's queries about this. • Positive Behaviour and Respectful Relationships Policy <i>Email from HP – was reviewed in September 2025 but may need minor changes.</i> JC: The children's behaviour policy needs to be integrated with the trauma informed policy IS: I am going to speak to some of the SEND team as they are concerned about how relevant the policy is when children are going out of school so much now. So policies will need to marry up. ACTION: IS to speak to SEND team as they have concerns about the Positive Behaviour and Respectful Relationships Policy now children are going out of school so much. ACTION: The Positive Behaviour and Respectful Relationships policy to move to the next meeting and "trauma informed" needs to be in the policy. DONE. ACTION: JC/HP to bring to the above policy to the next meeting. NB: After the meeting the clerk found the Parent and Carer code of conduct in the Parents section of the website and emailed a copy for the governors as requested. It is due for review in the next T&L meeting so the clerk will put it on the agenda. DONE.
13	Safeguarding • Update ACTION: Move to next meeting. DONE.
14	Governor visits • Reports from visits undertaken since last FGB meeting (SEND, Safeguarding and Safeguarding Audit Visits). • Curriculum area visits – to plan ACTION: Move to next meeting. DONE.
15	Governors business • INSET Days 2027-28. ACTION: The clerk to put this item on the business planner for the second T&L meeting of the summer term and the following FGB for approval. The Head does not get those dates this early in the school year. DONE. • Afterschool club. Four governors approved the school taking over this via email prior to the meeting. • FGB to decide which curriculum lead to invite to an FGB meeting and which one. ACTION: Move to next meeting. DONE.
16	Governor training • Reports back from training. ACTION: Move to next meeting. DONE.
17	Vacancy for a governor link for maths/science/EDI • Any governor who would take this on? ACTION: Move to next meeting. DONE.
17.1	Upcoming end dates of governors terms of office • Jenny Barker's term of office ends on 21.3.26 • Rob Hill's term of office ends on 25.4.26 RH agreed to continue until the end of the school year at least and the FGB would like JB to do the same. ACTION: Clerk to email JB asking if she will continue as a member of the board until the end of the school year. DONE. Governor meetings • The clerk has received updated days and times of meetings that can be attended and not every governor can attend them. Can this be reviewed? The board discussed recruitment of new governors and difficulties with governors attending day time meetings. The board said that meetings may have to be held in the evenings, some could be done via TEAMS. The FGB said the present timetable should continue for the rest of the year, acknowledging the difficulties it has meant for some governors and they would look review the meetings timetable in the summer term. The FGB also would like to thank Helen Fernyhough for all her hard work stepping up to cover for the Head and supporting the school during the Head's absence due to illness.
19	Correspondence • Please forward any relevant correspondence to the Clerk or bring to the meeting No correspondence was forwarded.
20	Items brought forward by the Chair • Update on last facilities meeting and Health and Safety walk. ACTION: To be brought forward to the next meeting. DONE.

21	FGB meeting on Tuesday 19th May at 4pm in the school
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MEETING FINISHED AT 10AM

- * = standing items

	Action	By whom	By when
3.1	Following a discussion an email will be sent out to parents, after the Easter break, asking if any of them are interested in becoming a school governor. DONE.	Chair/HF	Summer half term
3.1	HF asked if she could become a school governor. The Clerk will ask Fiona Collier if this is possible. DONE.	Clerk	End of week
3.1	Clerk to send out to governors, information about when their term of office began and ends. DONE.	Clerk	End of week
3.1	Email to be sent to clerk about the local business forum that meets at St Mary's Church.	Chair	Next meeting
3.1	The Father at St Mary's Church to be asked about the forum of local business people run by the church, so they can be asked if any of them are interested in becoming governors.	RH	Next meeting
3.1	An item about the parents questionnaire to go on the next agenda so governors can discuss the questions and also decide whether to put a question for parents of the nursery. DONE.	Clerk	By summer half term
3.1	A question about wraparound care to go on the above questionnaire. DONE.	Chair	Next meeting
3.1	An update at the next FGB will be given about the governors google drive and whether they need school emails to access it.	Chair	By end of June
3.1	Clerk to send email to Jo asking if she had sent the Head an email with contact information about local businesses/tradesman who could provide work for the school when needed. DONE.	Clerk	End of week
3.1	The clerk sent an email asking who had asked the above question and there was no response, so it has been put on the next agenda. DONE.	Clerk	End of week
3.1	An item to go on the next agenda about a timetable for parent volunteers to support the school with SEND children, also looking at how many children need this provision. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
3.1	Clerk to re-send email to the Pay Committee, about the Head's pay so they can respond. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
4	Clerk to move Committee reports item to the next FGB meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
5	Clerk to move the Head's report item to the next FGB meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
6	The governors' strategic plan to be looked at and see how it works with the SIP. To be added to the next agenda. DONE.	Head/Chair Clerk	Next meeting
7.1	How staff costs are managed in the budget to go on the next meeting agenda. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
9	The governors had a discussion and agreed that £10,000 should be put aside to cover staff sickness costs. This needs to go on the next FGB agenda to discuss with the head. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
11	Clerk to move the item about Childrens' views on how safe they feel in school to next meeting agenda. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
12	Governor Induction Policy to move to the next T&L Committee meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
12	SEND Information and Policy review to move to next meeting as Head was going to review it prior to the FGB adopting it. DONE.	Clerk	Next T&L meeting
12	Discussion with the SEND team about their concerns about the Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy now children go out of school a lot. Then bring the outcome to the next meeting.	Chair	Next meeting
12	A meeting to discuss the above policy, looking at adding "trauma response" to it.	Head/JC	
12	The Positive Behaviour and Respectful Relationships policy to move to the next meeting and "trauma informed" needs to be in the policy. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
13	Safeguarding item to move to next meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
14	Reports from visits undertaken since last FGB meeting (SEND, Safeguarding and Safeguarding Audit Visits) and Curriculum area visits – to plan to be moved to next meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
15	Approval for INSET Days 2027-28 to go on the business planner for the second T&L meeting in the summer term and then the FGB meeting following that. This is because the Head does not get the figures this early in the school year. DONE.	Clerk	End of week
15	FGB to decide which curriculum lead to invite to an FGB meeting to be moved to next meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting

16	Governors training item to be moved to next meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
17	Vacancy for governor link for maths/science/EDI to move to next meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
17.1	Email to be sent to JB asking if she wishes to continue as a member of the board until the end of the school year. DONE	Clerk	End of week
18	Annual Skills Audit, Register of Business interests and the new DES Governor Induction and Recruitment Toolkit to be moved to next agenda. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
20	Update on last facilities meeting and Health and Safety walk to be moved to next meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting