



MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD ON 9TH DECEMBER 2025, AT 4PM IN THE SCHOOL

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

Present: Ian Stewart Chair of the Governors (IS), Hilary Priest (HP) Head, Becky Nel (BN) and Rich Gibbon (RG).

Jenny Barker and Jo Counter attended the meeting via TEAMS

In attendance: Dawn Pettipiece (Clerk).

MINUTES

1	<p>Welcome & apologies for absence*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please send apologies to the clerk before the meeting <p>Rob Hill sent his apologies via email and all other governors attended the meeting.</p>
2	<p>Attendance & declaration of Interest*</p> <p>The governors signed the attendance form and it was signed on behalf of JB and JC who were attending the meeting virtually.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors are reminded that they must declare any conflict of interest which becomes apparent during the meeting. <p>There were no declarations of conflict of interest.</p>
3	<p>Approval of minutes of last FGB meeting on 25th September 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please read the minutes (in folder) <p>The committee approved the minutes of the last meeting and the chair signed them.</p> <p>Matters arising from minutes of last FGB meeting including progress made on the actions raised*</p> <p>3.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Interests register (moved forward as last meeting was held virtually) Annual update of business interests register. Please sign form in folder. Has an item on governor recruitment been sent out? <p>BN: Where have you advertised for non-parent governors? IS: Devon Education Services and by word of mouth. JB spoke to some people. JB: I cannot find anyone who has the capacity to become a governor. What about ex pupils? HP: They would have to be 18. BN: There are quite a few notice boards around the town. HP: We put a sign on lampposts once and that worked. There are notice boards at The Mansion and other places. JB: I can put something about it in the WhatsApp group. JC: I could put an item in a Totnes Facebook group. HP: It would have to be one that is controlled. RG: My mother is in a lot of groups and some of them may be interested. Action: IS to email out an item on governor recruitment this evening. Action: JB to put a governor recruitment item in the school WhatsApp group. Action: JC will find a suitable Facebook page and check it is appropriate with HP. Action: RG will speak to his mother and ask her to ask her acquaintances if anyone is interested in being a non-school governor. Update: RG spoke to his mother and she has put the word around a few different circles but no-one has responded yet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome of meeting with school council and deputy head looking at if children feel unsafe in school. <p>JC: It is on the “to do list”.</p> <p>HP: The school council is very busy. Move it forward to the next agenda and we will aim to do it in the January meeting.</p> <p>Action: Update on meeting with school council and deputy head looking at if children feel unsafe in school to be moved to next agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has summary of the parent’s responses to wraparound care been sent to governors? <p>IS: I have not done that yet.</p> <p>Action: IS to summarize parents’ responses to wraparound care questions and it will go on the next FGB agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the Parents Questionnaire been sent to governors? If yes, what was the response? <p>IS: I will do that in January/February and use the questions from the last survey unless anyone wants any others added?</p> <p>The FGB were happy for the questionnaire to be sent out in its’ present form.</p>

	<p>Action: IS to send out parent questionnaires in January/February and for it to go on the next agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress of new GovernHub drive after meeting with IT technician. <p>Action: IS to speak to the IT technician and ask him to set up a google drive for the governors and bring this action forward to the next agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the local business contacts for free support been emailed to the Head? <p>HP: It would be useful to have a directory of local businesses that can provide services such as repairs that are reasonably priced.</p> <p>Action: JC has the numbers of two businessmen and will email them to HP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Governor Strategic Plan <p>IS: The plan is on the website and I have a copy and will use the same one for the next one.</p> <p>Action: IS to email Governor Strategic Plan to the FGB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has Primary Partnership (PP) yearly plan been sent to governors? <p>IS – Has it been sent out Hilary?</p> <p>HP: It is difficult to send as it is a “live” document.</p> <p>IS: The governors meeting was last Wednesday, but I could not go due to last minute work commitments, which meant I could not get another governor to go in my place. I have not had any feedback yet.</p> <p>HP: The next PP meeting is about Finance and the PP want someone from Devon County Council (DCC) to come to that.</p> <p>The PP are writing the short-term emergency support plan for schools. Then we will work on the medium term plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the date for the next PP Chairs meeting looking at governors’ objectives been emailed to FGB? <p>IS: I will send it out when I have it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the last chairs PP meeting notes been sent to governors? <p>IS: I have not received them myself and will forward them when I get them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have invites been sent out to the governors to plan visits in school? <p>BN: I want to do some school visits in the new year.</p> <p>IS: What is the next Inset (In service Education and Training) meeting about?</p> <p>HP: It is about OAIP (Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision) and supporting children with a hearing impairment.</p>
4	<p>Head Teacher’s report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q&A – report in meeting folder <p>HP: The most important item is the very positive effect that having 13 extra children on the school roll will have on the school budget in April.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FGB want to acknowledge the fantastic achievements that Hilary has done for the school. Firstly, the new school nursery, which will bring in much needed extra funding. Also the show a rounds that Hilary and the deputy head Helen do. It takes around 15 minutes to show prospective parents around the school, but since they have started doing these it has contributed greatly to bringing more new children into the school. <p>IS: I believe all schools have been given a target regarding attendance?</p> <p>HP: I have not, but historically it has been done. This school has very high attendance levels. DCC have been restructuring and jobs have been reassigned and it is based on a “locality” format. This includes inclusion, attendance, school improvement and the 0-25 team. We have not been sent the new format yet, but have been told we will receive a flow chart. Tina Jackson from OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills) is coming to meet me tomorrow to discuss inclusion/exclusion of pupils.</p> <p>IS: They made it sound like a brand new initiative.</p>
5	<p>School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Governors strategic plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please read latest SIP in folder <p>JC: What are the “exciting” plans for school development?</p> <p>HP: We are working on inclusion and how to work differently in this area. For children who need more support we have purchased a caravan which will arrive soon.</p> <p>BN: What is your vision for the caravan?</p> <p>HP: The bathroom will be removed and we may be getting a “sensory room”. One room will be a “book corner” and the other room will be for “time out” space for any children who need that – so children can have a break from the classroom. It is comparable to alternative provision when children go off site – having this facility in school will be easier.</p> <p>Jenny (JB) can you be involved in marketing it as we want to show parents how positive this initiative is?</p> <p>JB: The SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) parent group are very positive about it. We have discussed a trauma informed wellbeing space.</p> <p>HP: Can you meet with me to discuss the plans?</p> <p>JB: Yes.</p>

	<p>HP: When we have a plan we can put in a financial proposal when the school funding increases next year. RG: What is this part about the community plan that was lost? HP: It is about using the staffroom for the community as there is lots of space, but my office is difficult to access. We are still having discussions about that. Action: JB and HP to have a meeting about how to promote the new caravan to parents and children as a special place for children who need time out from the classroom and update the next FGB meeting.</p>
6	<p>Committee Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T&L – meeting 11.11.25 <p>BN: I am now the chair since Mike retired and Rich is the vice-chair. We discussed whether the school could be a two form entry school, but that is not possible due to the building lay-out. We discussed early years and had an update on Sex Education. JC is having a discussion with KEVICC (King Edward VI community college) on Thursday about this as we are concerned that this area is not covered until year nine</p> <p>HP: We also discussed staff changes, with the replacement teacher following the sudden death of a teacher. She had a temporary contract, which has been made permanent and is doing really well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources – meeting 20.11.25 <p>IS: Rob Hill has agreed to continue as chair with JB as his vice chair. We discussed the budget. The board thanked Sandie Lovell (School Business Manager) for the sterling work that she has done on the budget, especially with the problems with BROMCOM. It is much appreciated.</p> <p>HP: We also discussed the fact that our caretaker is off sick following major surgery. There was a temporary caretaker in place, but that did not work out. One of the staff has taken on the role of cleaner to support the caretaker when he returns after Christmas and he can focus on the outside areas and minor repairs etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Pay – meeting 07.11.25. <p>It was discussed that the objectives for staff are not pay related now. So it is driven by individual outcomes and we discussed that. HP showed us the staff progression and there were no performance issues. The pay panel approved all the staff pay rises.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head's Pay meeting after this meeting, following HP's appraisal on 18.11.25. <p>This had to be cancelled due to members being unable to attend.</p> <p>IS: This will have to be done via email as there is no other way to have a meeting before Christmas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any other committee reports? <p>IS: I am doing a health and safety walk tomorrow and we will hold the facilities meeting after that. Action: The clerk to send an email out to the Pay Committee with an agenda and the panel will discuss this matter via email. (Clerk's email sent 10.12.25) Action: Health and safety walk and facilities meeting to go on the next agenda. (Done)</p>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor budget. <p>IS: This was discussed in the Resources meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve budget monitor (was the FRS) <p>IS: The recommendation from the Resources Committee was to approve the budget. The FGB approved the school budget.</p>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA (local authority) admissions <p>Information about future admissions</p> <p>IS: There is a projection from local authorities regarding the birth rate, which had been going down, which affects schools, but in The Grove admissions have been increasing. Now the birth rates are increasing. So that will be positive for both our school and others in the area. Action: IS to send the LA birth rate predictions to the FGB.</p>
9	<p>SFVS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify tasks in readiness for approval at March 26th FGB meeting. Benchmarking <p>IS: RH as the Finance Lead has agreed to do the benchmarking. BN: What is the SFVS? IS: There is a small audit and the benchmarking compares our school with other local schools to see how we fair with regard to staffing and other expenses. We normally come out high on staffing and low on income. HP: Income will be higher now we have the nursery. IS: The governors will be informed of the outcome of the SFVS when it is ready for approval.</p>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding – anything? <p>HP: Nothing to report apart from the fact we do not have a Safeguarding Lead. This matter was discussed in item 12 in the meeting.</p>
11	<p>Policies*</p> <p>For monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND information report <p>HP: This has been done but I need to look at it before it is brought to the FGB for approval.</p>

	<p>For approval/adoption.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection Policy • Finance Policy • Governors Induction Policy • Maternity Policy • Recruitment and Selection Policy • SEND policy <p>HP: I need to look at this before it is brought to the FGB for approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers' Appraisal Policy • Teachers Pay Policy <p>The governors approved all the policies apart from the SEND one and the Governor Induction Policy as JC needs to discuss this with IS.</p> <p>Review of updated policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Leave and Absence Policy (model updated October 25) <p>HP: SL is in communication with HR (human resources) as there is a big change in the policy as to how long staff can be funded whilst on sick leave. The school will use the present policy until the HR issue has been clarified.</p> <p>Action: The clerk to put the Governor Induction Policy and SEND information and SEND policy on the next agenda. DONE.</p> <p>Action: The clerk to put the Staff Leave and Absence Policy on the nest agenda as HP has raised a query with HR. DONE.</p>
12	<p>Curriculum Links/Leads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a vacancy for the Safeguarding Lead. <p>Following a discussion, the governors approved the appointment of JC and JB as joint safeguarding leads.</p>
12.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a vacancy for maths/science/EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion) Link. <p>Action: IS asked the clerk to put this on the next agenda as the meeting needs to finish promptly. DONE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First/Second C'tees • Should these committees be combined with a pool of available governors? <p>Following a discussion, the FGB decided to continue with the two committees. It is very unlikely to need a second committee and we have enough governors to cover a first committee meeting. The school would need to ask the PP for someone to attend a second appeal if that happened.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JB left the meeting at 5pm.
13	<p>Governor visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for the term – linking to any priorities: <p>IS: The plan will be sent out to governors in January.</p>
14	<p>Governor training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify any training needs. <p>JC: It would be useful for me to do a governor inclusion course.</p> <p>BN: I am going to do the governor appraisal training early next year.</p> <p>Action: The clerk to arrange appraisal training for BN early next year and a governor pupil exclusion course for JC. Update: Pupil exclusion procedures for governors course booked for 11.2.26 for JC.</p> <p>Update: BN asked Clerk to arrange training course nearer the time as the only one available is in October. Clerk has put it in her diary. DONE.</p>
15	<p>Clerk's report</p> <p>Reminders for those who haven't completed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please complete Safeguarding training and send confirmation to clerk that you have completed the training. <p>BN, IS, JC and HP have done the training. JC and HP at level 3.</p> <p>Action: The clerk and RG will do the training by the end of the year.</p> <p>Action: The clerk to send an email to RH asking if he has done the safeguarding training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Code of Conduct to be signed by the Chair as last meeting was virtual. <p>The Code of Conduct was signed by the FGB as the first meeting of the year was held virtually.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation that KCSIE (keeping children safe in education) has been read to be signed by FGB. <p>This was signed by the FGB who had done the training.</p> <p>Action: The clerk to bring the KCSIE paperwork for signing to the next FGB meeting.</p>
16	<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please forward any relevant correspondence to the Clerk or bring to the meeting. <p>There was not any correspondence.</p>
17	<p>Items brought forward by the Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was none.

18	Date & time of next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FGB meeting Thursday 26th March at 2026 at 8.30am in the school.
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Meeting ended at 5.05pm

- * = standing items
- Summary of Actions**

	Action	By whom	By when
3.1	Item on governor recruitment to be emailed out this evening.	Chair	End of the week
3.1	A governor recruitment item to go in the school WhatsApp group.	JB	End of term
3.1	A suitable Totnes/South Hams Facebook page to be found, checking with the Head that it is appropriate, then putting up a post about governor recruitment.	JC	End of term
3.1	Governor to speak to his mother and ask her to speak to her friends in her groups, to find out if anyone is interested in being a non-parent governor. DONE.	RG	End of term
3.1	Update on meeting with school council about whether they feel unsafe in school to be moved to next agenda – JC to update the FGB. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
3.1	Summary of parents' responses to wraparound care questions to be sent to governors.	Chair	End of term
3.1	Parent questionnaires to be sent out in January/February.	IS	Next meeting
3.1	Discussion with the IT technician to ask him to set up a google drive for the governors and update the governors at the next meeting.	Chair	Next meeting
3.1	Governor to email the contact details of local businessmen who can offer the school repairs, building work etc.,	JC	Next meeting
3.1	Governor Strategic Plan to be emailed to the FGB.	IS	Next meeting
5	A meeting to be held about how to promote the new caravan to parents and children as a special place for children who need time out from the classroom. Update the FGB at the next meeting.	Head/JB	Next meeting
6	Email to be sent to the Pay Committee with an agenda for the Headteacher's pay and the panel will discuss this matter via email. DONE.	Clerk	End of week
6	Health and safety walk and facilities meeting update to go on the next agenda. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
8	LA birth rate predictions to be emailed to the FGB.	Chair	Next meeting
11	Governor Induction Policy and SEND information and SEND policy to go on the next agenda. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
11	The Staff Leave and Absence Policy to go on the next agenda as the head has raised a query with HR. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
12.1	The vacancy for a governor maths/science/EDI link to go on the next agenda. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
14	Appraisal training to be arranged for BN early next year and a governor inclusion course for JC (JC course booked online 11.2.26). DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
15	Safeguarding training to be completed by the end of the year.	Clerk/ RH	End of year
15	RH to be emailed asking if he has done the safeguarding training. DONE.	Clerk	End of week
15	KCSIE paperwork for signing to go to next FGB meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting