



VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD ON 25TH SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 8.30AM IN THE SCHOOL

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

Present: Hilary Priest (HP), Head, Ian Stewart (IS) Chair, Jo Counter (JC), Jenny Barker

In attendance: Dawn Pettipiece (clerk)

Minutes

1	<p>Welcome & apologies for absence*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree if apologies are to be sanctioned. <p>Apologies were received and approved from Becky Nel (BN), Rob Hill (RH) and Richard Gibbon (RG). The meeting was quorate.</p>
2	<p>Attendance & declaration of Interest*</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>The clerk noted all attendees. There were no declarations of interest.</p> <p>2.1 Business interests register</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual update of business interests register. Please sign form in folder. <p>Action: As the meeting was held online this action has been moved forward to the next meeting. DONE.</p>
3	<p>Governing Board Composition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is 1 co-opted vacancy and following Mike Waterson’s resignation, one LA vacancy. <p>Offices ending this academic year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JB -21.3.26, RH – 25.4.26 <p>Following FBG discussion the below actions were approved.</p> <p>Action: The Chair and Clerk will meet to look at the Skills Audit Dashboard to identify the skills gap in the present FGB and this will help with recruiting new governors. DONE.</p> <p>Action: Following the above meeting the chair will put an item in the school newsletter asking for people interested in becoming a school governor to contact him.</p> <p>Action: The clerk will find out what support is available to help the school find more school governors. DONE.</p>
4	<p>Approval of minutes of last FGB meeting on 8th July 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please read the minutes (in folder) <p>The minutes were agreed as a correct record.</p> <p>4.1 Matters arising from minutes of last FGB meeting including progress made on the actions raised*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JC has spoken to the school council and will arrange a meeting with them and Helen Fernyhough (HF) looking at if children feel unsafe in school. <p>Action: JC to update FBG about outcome of meeting with HF, JC and school council about if children feel unsafe in school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wraparound care questions <p>IS: There were very low numbers of questionnaires returned by parents.</p> <p>Action: Chair to email FBG a summary of responses to wraparound care questionnaire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on whether parent questionnaire was sent out to parents. <p>Head: Did that not go out with the afterschool club questions in June? Chair: Should we do this at the end of half term? Head: Yes.</p> <p>Action: Chair to email parents questionnaire before the half term break.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on SharePoint Governorhub progress for governors to access and if the Head will have trouble accessing her separate drive. <p>Chair: I will meet with the IT technician, Dickon. Hilary you were worried about compatibility with your computer? Head: Everyone apart from me can access OneDrive, but mine has to be on a more secure system, so I cannot access it. Chair: Dickon has set up a governor area on google drive. Can you access that Hilary? Head: Yes.</p> <p>Action: Chair to meet with IT technician to progress new Governorhub drive.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the minutes of last primary partnership (PP) meetings emailed to FGB <p>Discussed in item 16.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on how the school raises funds. <p>RG sent an email to the governors for discussion at the meeting about the sustainable fund-raising options.</p> <p>JB: It has progressed. I spoke to HF and she took it to the PTA's AGM meeting. I am waiting for HF to update me. How do you feel things are going Hilary?</p> <p>Head; This is the most successful PTA we have ever had and it is very ably led as they are much more aware of the school's needs.</p> <p>JB: I think this can now come off the agenda, unless RG wishes to progress it?</p> <p>FGB agreed to take this action off the agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on last facilities meeting. <p>Chair: I did a H&S walk around and there were a few minor issues. The temporary care taker was going to do those over the summer break.</p> <p>Head: Both the caretaker and the temporary one came in for a couple of days, but there is more that needs doing when the caretaker returns from sick leave. We have been getting outside organisations to come and do repairs etc. but a lot will have to wait until we get extra funding next April, which includes funds from the new nursery. There was a discussion about a couple of local businesses that had local connections with the school, offering to do some repairs for free.</p> <p>Action: JB and the Chair to contact the local businesses who were offering free repairs to the school and give their contact details to the Head.</p>
5	<p>School Improvement Plan (SIP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIP for this term <p>Head: RG sent an email about item 4 of the SIP and how it should be an integral part of the school, this was about the new nursery.</p> <p>The FGB discussed how the SIP was progressing.</p> <p>Head: The SIP is a working document and progress is regularly added to it.</p> <p>Chair: There were a couple of areas on the last SIP which were amber, but those areas improved.</p> <p>Head: Everything is fine.</p> <p>JB: How is earth care progressing, compared to the forest school?</p> <p>Head: It is early days and every year group are still doing nature walks and the earth care lead, Ken Monro, works with classes using earth care and adds items to the curriculum. He is meeting with members of the PP so they can look at the "Climate Action Plan".</p> <p>JB: Lots of the parents are getting involved and gong on walks and are enjoying getting to know staff and pupils and this feeds onto "engagement" in the SIP.</p>
6	<p>Governors' Strategic Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor's Strategic Plan targets for year – any ideas? <p>Discussed in last meeting: Governor recruitment. More support for the chair. Succession planning for new chair of governors.</p> <p>Chair: The first target is embedding the nursery and fully integrating the children into the school.</p> <p>There is also a general one about the quality of education, focussing on writing.</p> <p>Head: I would like the PP to go in the plan as they are working about how we can support schools who do not have a head. In a local situation when this happened the school became an academy and the PP wants to prevent that happening to another school if they are in a similar position.</p> <p>Chair: I will work on the plan and send it out via email to governors so we can complete the plan via email.</p> <p>JB: Could we have in the plan about how we can help amplify and spread the good work the school does to the community?</p> <p>Chair: I will add that. Then all the governors can choose a particular area to focus on.</p> <p>The plan already has governor recruitment in it but we also need to look at succession planning as this is my last year as Chair.</p> <p>Action: Work to be done on the Governors Strategic Plan, then sent via email for FGB to complete the plan and for each governor to focus on a specific area of the plan</p>
7	<p>Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor budget <p>Chair: Has there been many changes to the budget since July? I am aware the School Business Manager, Sandie Lovell (SL) struggled to get any documents for today's meeting due to issues with BROMCOM. We will defer that until the next meeting unless there have been any issues. I presume funding for the new nursery has not yet fed into the budget?</p> <p>HP? There have not been any budget issues. The Census Day for funding for each pupil is next week and as we now have 330 children (previously 308) the school will receive more funding.</p>

	The governors had a discussion about how the school received funding and about the census.
8	<p>Annual agreements and reminders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors' code of conduct <p>For agreement. Please read before meeting. Chair to sign code of conduct. The FGB read the code of conduct prior to the meeting and approved it.</p> <p>8.1 Action: As this meeting is virtual the chair will sign the code of conduct next time he is in a governors meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting protocols <p>8.2 Any questions regarding meeting protocols? Re sanctioning of apologies and the six-month rule? The FGB discussed meeting protocols and agreed to continue as before.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor meetings <p>8.3 These are currently closed to the public. Do you wish this to continue? The FGB agreed to continue with meetings being closed to the public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills Audit <p>8.4 Please check your skills audit and update if necessary and send to clerk if changed. Skills summary in meeting folder. Action: FGB to check their skills audits and send to the clerk if there are any changes. DONE.</p>
9	<p>Committee structures, membership & terms of reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For agreement. Please read terms of reference and committee memberships and lead table. <p>FGB all agreed to continue in their present roles and to keep the present terms of reference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee changes: RG has moved to T&L from Finance Committee. <p>FGB approved RG moving from Finance Committee to the T&L Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee vacancies: Pay and Second Committee, Chair of T&L <p>RG happy to join either the Appraisal Panel or the Pay Panel. As the Appraisal Panel already has the two members required to be quorate it was decided to appoint RG to the Pay Panel. The FGB appointed RG to be on the Pay Committee and he confirmed this via email.</p> <p>The Second Committee is short on one member to be quorate and there are no eligible governors in the present FGB to fill the vacancy.</p> <p>UPDATE: The clerk emailed Governance Consultancy Team Lead, Fiona Collier: Her advice: All eligible governors can be put in a "pool" for the first and second committees and in the extremely unlikely event that the two panels need to meet, the Governance Team will assist by finding a governor from another school to be on the panel. Action: Discuss whether First and Second Committee members be put in a pool at next meeting.</p> <p>Lead governor roles & terms of reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For agreement. Please read terms of reference. <p>FGB voted to accept the present terms of reference.</p> <p>9.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead governor vacancies: Attendance, Pupil Premium, Safeguarding and SEND. <p>The FGB discussed the Attendance and Pupil Premium vacancies and as relatively minor roles the FGB requested that RG be asked to do both as he had expressed an interest. Action: Clerk to email RG to ask if he would agree to lead Attendance and Pupil Premium. DONE. Outcome: RG agreed to be the lead governor for Attendance and Pupil Premium.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding: <p>HP: IS should not be the lead (he is the deputy) as he is chair of governors. As none of the FGB in attendance were able to take on this role it will go forwards to the next FGB meeting. Action: Safeguarding lead appointment to be brought forward to next FGB meeting. DONE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND <p>After discussion the FGB approved JC as the SEND lead governor and JB as the SEND deputy governor.</p>
10	<p>Annual cycle of business 2025-26 & term dates 2026-27</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For agreement. Please read. <p>The FGB discussed the annual cycle of business, noting that the school's timetable meant some things on the cycle had to be moved to fit to the school calendar. The FGB approved the annual cycle of business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term dates <p>Head: I sent out the term dates for 2026/27 and 2027/28. Chair: The dates look fine. Head: There have been some changes to dates recommended by Devon, as they are more practical for our school</p> <p>Q: Why was this? Head: Because it is better for our school to start a new term on a Monday. Although that is not always possible. E.g. in Autumn 2027 the term has to start on the Wednesday as the Monday and Tuesday are in August and the new school year has to start in September.</p>

	<p>Head: Also, a reminder that the school has a longer summer half term in alternate years and that the next two-week summer half term would be in May/June 2028.</p> <p>The FGB approved the school term dates for 2026/27 and 2027/28.</p>
11	<p>Head's appraiser</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To appoint <p>Chair: Last year we used Kevin Martin (KM) the Head teacher of Abbotskerswell Primary School, who is in the PP. Head: He is a very experienced teacher and it worked really well last year. We did each other's appraisals and there was no cost to the schools.</p> <p>The FGB agreed to ask KM to be the Head's appraiser for this school year.</p> <p>Action: The Head will liaise with the Appraisal Panel and KM to arrange dates and times for her appraisal. DONE. (18/11/25)</p>
12	<p>Election of Vice- Chairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please self-nominate or check before the meeting, if nominating another. The term of office is two years. <p>IS continues as Chair for another year, until September 2026.</p> <p>The FGB approved RH and JB to carry on for another two-year term of office as vice-chairs.</p>
13	<p>Policies*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child protection (Safeguarding) Policy update Charging and Remissions Policy – for approval of updated version which is being brought to this meeting. <p>RG looked at the policies and stated that they were fine by email.</p> <p>The FGB approved the above policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yearly review of SEND policy <p>Action: move to next FGB meeting as the SENDco team will have it ready by then. DONE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of school's ethos and values – was last updated in 2023 – how often does the FGB want to review it? <p>The FGB agreed to review the statement of school's ethos and values every five years.</p>
14	<p>Safeguarding*</p>
14.1	<p>Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2025</p> <p>Update</p> <p>Please read September 2025 KCSiE</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2</p> <p>Please sign that you have read and understood this – form in meeting folder.</p> <p>Action: FGB to read the latest KCSiE and sign off as read at next meeting.</p> <p>Head: There is face to face safeguarding training in the school on Monday at 3.30pm and all governors can attend that or I will send the link to do the online course. NB: None of the governors or the clerk attended the training</p> <p>NB: Head sent a link to this on 24.9.25 via email. DONE.</p>
15	<p>Evaluation of Policies/Projects/Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How these are evaluated? <p>JB: I have discussed this with the deputy head and this should now come off the agenda.</p> <p>The FGB agreed to take this item off the agenda.</p>
16	<p>Primary Partnership update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary Partnership (PP) Heads' meeting update/Final report about PP objectives/summary of academic year <p>Head: We are working on a plan for the year and will be breaking the schedule down into milestones.</p> <p>Action: Head to email the PP plan, which will be broken down in milestones, to the FGB by half term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the four objectives for governors that were discussed in the last meeting? <p>Chair: I will send the minutes of our last meeting out. The meeting to discuss the four governor objectives was cancelled and there is not a new date yet, but when I get that I will inform the FGB.</p> <p>JB: Are we the only maintained school in the PP and is there a model to aid a decision to become part of a federation?</p> <p>Head: We are the only “stand alone maintained school”.</p> <p>The governors discussed different types of schools and the input from the present government about school federations, academies etc.</p> <p>Action: Chair to email out minutes of last PP chairs meeting.</p> <p>Action: Chair will inform governors of the date for the meeting to discuss the four governors objectives.</p> <p>Update on PP's climate change action plan: the plan and a lead have to be in place by the end of 2025:</p> <p>https://www.devon.gov.uk/schcomms/sc/052025-8664/</p> <p>Head: This will be in the milestone plan I will be sending out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on PP's plans, working with school governors, on how to support a school if the head teacher is not in school, due to ill-health or resignation. <p>Discussed in item 6.</p>

17	<p>Governor visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for the term <p>Head: I will send out invites for these. The governors discussed ways to support SEND as part of their role and the effect that redundancies in certain Devon Education Teams could impact schools. Schools would have to use their own funds to support these areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on last facilities meeting arranged after last FGB meeting. <p>Discussed in item 4 in the meeting. Action: Head to send out invites for governors visits to the school.</p>
18	<p>Strategic direction of PTA/fund raising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working party update on strategic direction of PTA, how to raise school funds and how they are used. <p>Covered in item 4 in the meeting.</p>
19	<p>Governor training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify any training needs. <p>Head: I sent a link yesterday to lots of free training courses that governors can access. Chair: When we have confirmed all the lead roles for governors we can look at relevant training governors need to do.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Governors for Schools website has lots of free learning available
20	<p>Clerk's report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Latest news/updates have been emailed to FGB
21	<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>
22	<p>Items brought forward by the Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RG asked for "how the school support pupils taking the 11+" could be discussed in the meeting as children have been undergoing those tests this month. <p>The governors discussed the pros and cons of this matter. Head: As a school we try to stay neutral, with an unbiased approach to enable parents to make the right choice for their children. We do invite the heads of the local grammar school and non-selective schools to come into the school. The FGB decided that the school should be neutral regarding parental choice about selective and non-selective schools.</p>
23	<p>Date & time of next meeting</p> <p>FGB meeting on the 9th December 2025 at 4pm in the school.</p>

The meeting finished at 10am.

- * = standing items
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• Summary of Actions

	Action	By whom	By when
2.1	Annual update of business interests to be moved to next meeting DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
3	Meeting to look at skills audit summary to identify any skills gap in the FGB DONE.	Chair/ clerk	Next meeting
3	Following skills gap meeting the chair will put a governor recruitment item in the newsletter.	Chair	Next meeting
3	Find out the support available to recruit governors DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
4.1	Update about meeting with HF and school council about children feeling safe in school.	JC	Next meeting
4.1	Send email to FGB about summary of responses to parents wraparound care questionnaire.	Chair	Next meeting
4.1	Parent questionnaire to be sent out.	Chair	By end half term
4.1	Meetup with IT technician to progress new Governorhub section on google	Chair	Next meeting
4.1	Contact details of local businesses who offered to do free repairs for the school to be sent to Head.	JB/Chair	By half term
6	Work to be done on the Governors Strategic Plan, then sent via email for FGB to complete the plan and for each governor to focus on a specific area of the plan.	Chair/ FGB	Next meeting

8.1	Hard copy of governors code of conduct to be signed at next meeting – put on next agenda. DONE.	Chair/ Clerk	Next meeting
8.4	Governors to check skills audits and if any changes email the audit to the clerk. DONE.	FGB	Next meeting
9	Discussion about whether First and Second Committee members to be put in a pool to be moved to next meeting agenda. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
9.1	Email RG to find out if he would be the lead governor for Attendance and Pupil Premium. DONE.	Clerk	By end of week
9.1	Which governor to be appointed Safeguarding lead to go on next FGB agenda. DONE.	Clerk	Next meeting
11	A date to be arranged for the Head's appraisal for this year. DONE.	Head	Next meeting
13	SENDco team will update the SEND policy for November when it is due and it will be put on next agenda. DONE.	Head/ Clerk	Next meeting
14	Latest KCSie to be read and signed off at next meeting. To be put on next agenda. DONE.	FGB/ Clerk	Next meeting
16	PP plan with objectives and a summary for the academic year to be emailed to FGB.	Head	Half term
16	Date of the next PP Chairs meeting about the four governors objectives to be emailed to FGB.	Chair	Next meeting
17	Head to send out invites for governors visits to the school.	Head	By half term