

Please forward any matters relating to the Minutes below to:
THE CLERK TO THE GOVERNORS

Stoke Bishop Church of England Primary School
FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING – TERM 4
Held on Wednesday 12th March 2025

DRAFT Minutes

PRESENT:

FOUNDATION

Jema Ball (JB)
Sue Rees (SR)
Rachel Powlesland (RP)

MEMBERS

Paul Wake (PW)
Yvette Kydd (YK)
Joshua Denton (JD)

PARENT GOVERNORS

Sophie Summers (SS)
James Wiggins (JW)
Michael Hordon (MH)
Richard Eaves (RE)
Mike Barnes (MB)
Dave Tilley (DT)

STAFF

David Forrester (DF) Co Head Teacher
Darren Hunt (DH) Co Head Teacher
Vickie Melton (VM) Assistant Head Teacher
Sara Bartlett (SB) – Clerk to Governors

| ITEM | MINUTES | ACTION |
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| 356.1 | <p>Welcome</p> <p>Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Opening Prayer Apologies were received from Ann Smith (AS) which were accepted by the Governing Board.</p> <p>JW thanked SLT for arranging the Governors Day today, for making it very welcoming and for accommodating everyone who attended.</p> <p>JB led the opening prayer.</p> | |
| 356.2 | <p>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests</p> <p>Governors were reminded again to update their Declarations of Interest on GovernorHub just before or just after each FGB.</p> | |
| 357 | <p>Minutes from the last meeting held on 3rd February 2025</p> | |
| 357.1 | <p>Approval of Minutes</p> <p>Thank you to SS for taking these minutes.</p> <p>The minutes were approved and will be available on the school website.</p> <p>JW to sign these electronically on GovernorHub.</p> | <p>SB</p> <p>JW</p> |
| 357.2 | <p>Matters Arising & Review of Action Points from last meeting</p> <p>JW reminded all governors to complete the Cyber Security and Prevent training asap.</p> <p>SB will circulate another reminder to those governors who have still not yet completed this</p> <p>JW & SS still to look at the Articles of Association relating to the appointment of the Head Teacher Post, for approval by FGB before the end of the current academic year.</p> <p>JW & SS still to research Governor Evaluation methods and consider tabling for future FGB meetings.</p> | <p>SB</p> <p>JW & SS</p> <p>JW & SS</p> |

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| | <p>SDG still to plan the process for appointing the substantive post for Head Teacher. We are looking at re-arranging the date for the next SDG meeting.</p> <p>SB will circulate a doodle poll with some date options.</p> | SB |
| 358 | <p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Staff Safeguarding Audit - 48 members of staff recently completed the Staff Safeguarding Audit and gave really positive feedback. Staff feel they are well trained and know who to go to with any questions.</p> <p>New Sign in System – Governors will notice a new way of signing in electronically on reception. This system was changed for financial reasons because a new signing in book was very expensive, so it was felt it was a good time to change to an electronic system. This is always plugged in and is attached to an iPad with an app which does not need to be linked to a wifi connection.</p> <p>Newsletter – Our new mobile phone policy has been announced in the recent newsletter. We have reassured the parents who still believe their children need mobile phones to keep them safe, that provision is in place to make this happen, but we have stressed that children must avoid bringing phones into the playground. This is only a slight change to the policy to address the potential risks posed by children using phones in the playground before and after school.</p> <p>Safer Recruitment Panel – Thank you to YK who has signed up to do the Safer Recruitment training. We also need another willing governor to do this. The training is online and takes approximately 75 minutes to complete. Governors will then be able to sit on interview panels.</p> <p>MH said he is willing to do the training but will probably not be able to attend all of the interviews. DT will also do the training. It would be better if there were a number of governors trained who would then be available to attend a cluster of interviews over a few days which were spread out.</p> | MH & DT |
| 359 | <p>Headteacher Report</p> <p>Governor Question: Re: Funds for Subject Leads. Are there any thoughts on approaching PTA for themed fund raising perhaps? E.g. Cake sale for History?</p> <p>There is a bigger discussion for SLT to have with the PTA around their future planning with what they are doing with the funds that they are raising and how much they have. It may be simply a case of them setting themselves a 5-year target for achieving things. The other issues are the continuity of PTA members in lead roles and the PTA having an agenda. We already have big projects such as a MUGA on our wish lists. In effect the fund can go to subjects indirectly as what they already provide each year is a specific amount of money for each year group (£400) to spend on resources/ trips etc. This is in addition to a central budget that hubs are already given. Currently, cake sales are year group organised which helps to create that funding.</p> <p>Governor Question: Re: MAT agenda, this is an opportunity to remind FGB of the September resolution, <i>'In light of the current and changing educational landscape, the Governing Body resolves to actively explore if joining a multi-academy trust would enable us to fulfil our vision and provide long term financial stability'</i>. Another governor exchange with the schools SLT see as sensible to retain/strengthen links with could be arranged and it is also a good PD opportunity for governors.</p> <p>It could be, but to save extra work for you given the landscape has changed, it is likely to be sufficient to keep an eye on any developments. If Heads hear anything from the Heads meetings, they will let governors know.</p> | |

Governor Question: Re 'First 20%' - this sounds like a good idea. Does school feel it has been going long enough with current strategies to try to close the gap with PP children? Has school really had a chance to implement and see a change or lack of?

The short answer is no! We are making improvements on practices and strategies that help this group of children but the reality of it is that sometimes no matter what support is put in place, the progress for some children is very little. While this is still something to celebrate, it is not always closing the gap as children at the other end are also making just as much progress. What we need is for children in this group to make accelerated progress over a number of years. However, we can never predict what other factors come into their lives that may disrupt learning for them.

Governor Question: How will staff not miss the 'challenging' and 'progression' part for the 80%? Is there are risk progress will dip as a result?

The focus on the first 20% is not at the exclusion of the other children. It is about ensuring an appropriate starting point that then allows all children to experience challenge and progress in their learning. This doesn't look like vertical learning however. Sometimes, it is more likely to be that children go into real depth around specific knowledge rather than accruing a greater number of broad facts/knowledge.

Governor Question: From a strategic, keeping children at this school, point of view, challenge and progress are something school could consider being more vocal about/raising parent awareness. Anecdotally, and acknowledging SLT will have more insight why children move to independent schools after year 2 or after year 4 (that seems to be the pattern you've observed)), is that parents feel their children are not challenged enough/are bored by school.

Unfortunately, that may be the reason given by parents, though our observation is that there are many factors at play in these decisions. We are aware that private schools can persuade families by telling them they must apply for a place by Year 3 or Year 5 or they will not get a place in Year 7. The reality is that we have no control over their final decision or what motivates it.

Governor Question: The Heads' report recognises 'cultural capital' might be nice to have if children aren't secure in Maths & English. Please explain what will classes be doing more or less of?

Cultural capital comes through the wider curriculum enquires. These will continue.

Governor Question: Picking up on the comments on Maths and English, how will you ensure that the lack of consistency in the practice of implementing expectations seen in English won't be repeated now in Maths given the acknowledgment of "the work is only ever as strong as the teacher with the least knowledge/ experience/ aptitude for this." Does this also lead to approaches that can be pushed out to other subjects too?

Yes, these things do happen as we prioritise one thing and other things can tend to slip. The importance here is that we have identified this early now in English and we are addressing it. English writing isn't falling apart. Rather it has become inconsistent/vague in some areas and we really want to tighten that up.

Governor Question: Re: Ofsted inspections, you comment that the new methodology may help reduce the stress of inspections, but how?

This methodology is their words not ours. Ofsted is saying it will help reduce the stress of inspections. The reality is that will never be the case no matter how pretty they paint the picture. They are still coming in to observe us! There is no change in needing to be prepped for a day that you don't know about until the day before etc.

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| | <p>Governor Question: Following HJW's departure, how is LL settling in?</p> <p>LL is settling in very well and has been really diligent about understanding what is already in place in terms of inclusion. She is positive about things she feels she can change. Staff feel comfortable with her and she is getting on very well with CWS.</p> <p>Governor Staff Survey during Staff Twilight Sessions 19.3.25</p> <p>Work life balance is one of the focus topics for the twilight sessions. PW and SS will be collating some questions for governors to ask staff during their visit. Staff can either choose to answer during the session or afterwards via a Google form anonymously if they wish. Time management will be tight with only 30 minutes for the sessions but hopefully staff will feel they can talk freely.</p> <p>Thanks to all governors who are helping with this.</p> | |
| <p>360</p> <p>360.1</p> | <p>Governor Updates</p> <p>Leadership Succession</p> <p>HG has stood down as a governor which leaves us with a Community Governor vacancy again. We are currently unsure of the reason for her resignation.</p> <p>It was agreed that it would be helpful to have a tool for governors to be able to reflect/feedback why they choose to leave. JW will look into this.</p> <p>JB has offered to put an article in the Messenger that we are recruiting for a Community Governor.</p> <p>JW has updated the Members with the next course of action re: Leadership Transition. Communications are due to be sent out to all staff/parents shortly.</p> <p>In the next SDG meeting, governors will need to design the process for appointing the substantive Headteacher post. We will need to re-arrange the date for the next meeting (currently 25.6.25) as it is too close to T6 FGB meeting. SB will send out a doodle poll with some other date options.</p> | <p>JW</p> <p>JB</p> <p>SB</p> |
| 361 | <p>Policies</p> <p>Equalities Policy – VM reported that this policy has been updated and shared with the Personal Development Committee.</p> <p>The Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) applies to all policies and procedures. This is a tool which helps us place equality, diversity, cohesion and integration at the heart of everything we do. It ensures our strategies, policies, services and functions do what they are intended to do and for everybody.</p> <p>Governor Question: Are staff trained on this?</p> <p>No, it is a SLT process as all policies and documents go through them. SR will be applying it to governor business where relevant.</p> <p>Whistleblowing Policy – there are no changes to this policy. Governors approved this policy today.</p> | |
| <p>362</p> <p>362.1</p> | <p>Committee Reports</p> <p>Finance – The Accounts are looking healthy. We were originally forecasting a deficit budget but we are now looking at a more positive figure with a £6.5k surplus.</p> | |

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| | <p>We are still waiting for the funding figures for next year. DfE has recommended a pay rise of 2.5% but this is unfunded, meaning schools will need to meet the pay rise but school funding will not be increasing.</p> <p>Our internal auditors recently audited us and gave us a glowing report. A reminder to all Governors again please to complete the Cyber Security training if they haven't already done so.</p> <p>The School Resource Management Self-Assessment tool (SMRSAT) has to be submitted to the DfE each March. We are expecting to submit a well-balanced budget and must be able to have enough budget to meet any urgent capital funding.</p> | ALL |
| 362.2 | The Benchmarking review shows that we are in a really positive position. | |
| 362.3 | Quality of Education – The next meeting is on 20.3.25. JD will be catching up with DH and DF after the meeting today. | |
| 362.4 | <p>Leadership and Management – The next meeting is on 27.3.25.</p> <p>Personal Development – JB, RP and VM have produced the Spirituality and Collective Workshop Statement. This is not a policy but a document for the school community to answer 'what do we mean by collective workshop?' Staff have found this document really useful.</p> | |
| 363 | Link Governor Reports/Updates | |
| 363.1 | Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – SB will request a copy of the SEND Policy from LL and send to all Governors asking for any comments on the Appendix Section to be sent to SR within 2 weeks. | SB |
| 363.2 | Health & Safety – A meeting is taking place on 13.3.25 to discuss the Fire Safety Assessment. | |
| 363.3 | EYFS – No update. | |
| 363.4 | Church Links – RP and SR will be running an Easter Puzzle Event for Inventors Hub. Discoverers and Innovators will be visiting the church for the Easter Trail. The whole school will be attending church for the Easter Service. | |
| 363.5 | <p>Risk Review – SS pointed out that several workplaces undertake test 'phishing' or similar exercises to check employees' awareness. She asked whether governors felt they knew what 'phishing' emails look like?</p> <p>There are Box phish Cyber Awareness and IT Security training courses available online which would be a good exercise for governors to complete. This training helps to understand how phishing works, how to spot the tell tale signs of an attack and what secure actions they should take when they feel as though they have been targeted. JW will add to the next Finance Committee agenda.</p> | JW |
| 363.6 | This is a good reminder as to why we only use school email addresses and not personal ones. | |
| 363.7 | <p>GDPR – No update</p> <p>PE – No update</p> | |
| 364 | <p>Correspondence</p> <p>None.</p> | |
| 365 | <p>AOB</p> <p>None.</p> | |

The meeting closed at 3.22pm

Date of the next meeting: Monday 12th May 2025, 4.30pm, in School

SIGNED: DATE: