

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 6**  
**Held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

**Minutes**

**PRESENT:**

**FOUNDATION**

Jema Ball (JB)  
Sue Rees (SR)

**MEMBERS**

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

**PARENT GOVERNORS**

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

**STAFF**

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

ITEM	MINUTES	ACTION
376.1	<b>Welcome</b>  <b>Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Opening Prayer</b> Apologies were received from Rachel Powlesland (RP) which were accepted by the Governing Board.  JB led the opening prayer.	
376.2	<b>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests</b>  Governors were reminded again to update their Declarations of Interest on GovernorHub just before or just after each FGB.	
377	<b>Minutes from the last meeting held on 12th May 2025</b>	
377.1	<b>Approval of Minutes</b>  The minutes were approved and will be available on the school website.  JW to sign these electronically on GovernorHub.	<b>SB</b>  <b>JW</b>
377.2	<b>Matters Arising &amp; Review of Action Points from last meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>DT is still to complete the Safer Recruitment training.</li></ul>	<b>DT</b>
378	<b>Safeguarding</b>  VM reported that the DfE are planning to update its statutory RSHE (Relationships, Sex & Health Education) guidance this month, with schools having until September 2026 to implement the changes. Key updates include enhanced guidance on online safety, consent and health relationships, with a stronger focus on challenging harmful online behaviours like online misogyny and the implications of AI-generated deep fakes and fake intimacy. The guidance also emphasizes positive male role models and provides information on online scams and misinformation.  VM thanked everyone for their hard work this year.	

379	<p><b>Headteacher Report (available to read on GovernorHub)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>End of Year Events</b> <p>8th &amp; 9th July 2025 – Year 5&amp;6 Performance  15<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – Year 6 Leavers  16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 - Volunteers Afternoon Tea  16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – Year 6 BBQ</p> </li> <li> <b>Internal Data</b> – Our numbers are in a positive place, this is really helped with the work that VM is doing alongside the pre-schools and the school is stable in terms of enrolment. We are seeing a good number of families arriving and have a full reception intake. We have lost 7 children to the private sector, 2 to a neighbouring school, 1 to a special needs provision and 2 due to their families moving out of the area but despite this, the numbers are not as damaging as in the past. We are seeing a number of families who have confirmed or are considering moving their children (10 in total) to the school in September so we are estimating a figure of potentially 405 children for next year. We expect to have lots of enquiries coming in over the summer as always, so this figure will change by September. <p>Absence figures have dramatically reduced since this time last year thanks to the great work being carried out by VM and Claire Woodman-Smith (CWS) - Family Link Worker. We want to support parents and communication is definitely key. Absence is one of the hardest things to manage in school. When a child's absence drops, it can take months to get the figure back up to the expected 97%.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Do you send out letters to parent about unauthorised absenteeism?  VM said yes we do. We use a tool kit provided by the LA. Each family is very different to the next so we use the same format as the LA template but personalise it to suit the circumstances. Some parents just do not wish to engage with us where as others will come in and ask before they book holidays for example.</p> </li> <li> <b>SDP 2025/26 – Main Headers</b> <p>If anyone has any questions about the Annual Reports, can you please send in any questions.</p> <p>We are still working on the draft SDP for 2025-26 which has been drawn from the SLT T5 review of the current SDP and initial internal data points.</p> <p>Quality of Education – Focusses on curriculum, maths and writing.</p> <p>Leadership &amp; Management – Monitors capacity for leadership to improve the school.</p> <p>Personal Development – Focusses on ensuring the school is linked to teaching strategies.</p> <p>EDI – Focusses on the principles around the wider things such as SIAMS inspections to ensure the outcomes are appropriate.</p> <p>Pastoral Team – Advocates to ensure all of the above is happening and monitors the learning behaviours of pupils along with visions and values of RE.</p> <p>Questions and ideas can be discussed in Committee meetings in Term 1, to establish if we are happy with the success criteria based on evaluation points before we agree on the final version.</p> <p>The next Leadership and Management meeting is not until November 2025 so please feel free to email DH with any questions you may have before then.</p> <p>DF thanked governors for their time with this.</p> </li> </ul>	
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	<p><i>The proportion of pupils with SEND is rising steadily, especially those on SEN Support. The reason for this is due to some more children being added to our SEN register. This has been seen in Year 1 where children have moved away from the EYFS curriculum to KS1 curriculum and specific needs are being identified. We have also had new children who have joined us with SEND needs. Some children with a previous diagnosis of Dyslexia, without a need for a support plan, have also been added. These have been identified through LL's audit process since starting.</i></p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Is the Year 1 increase higher than previous years? Am I correct in reading that LLs audit has identified children that were previously not considered? Have standards of assessment changed or have children just developed?</p> <p>The Year 1 increase is not significantly higher than previous years, but it is a reflection of the changing needs of children coming through and also an increase in staffs CPD in being able to recognise said needs. LL's audit has identified children that had previous Dyslexia Assessments that were not on a support plan as they did not need one. LL has made sure that they are now on our SEN register, so that this information is readily available to future schools. Some are also due to children having new assessments this year.</p> <p><i>You will also find a summary (a) of the Internal data for all year groups in RWM. This provides summary statements based on the outcomes of tests, ongoing assessment and pupil's work through the year. It clearly indicates that Writing is the key issue we know it to be, in terms of incremental progress for children. Yes, they are getting there by the end of KS2 but that is ultimately not a healthy picture and we want to smooth their progress throughout KS2. Otherwise, whilst we have a strong picture of attainment and progress in most year groups there are pockets of focus that need to be addressed around the attainment of disadvantaged children, the overall picture of outcomes for children in KS1 and what seems to be a lack of impact in early KS2.</i></p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Has writing always been a concern or is it something that has weakened in recent years? Is this cohort related? Is there a clear pathway for teachers to follow to help children to improve? Is this discussed at Q of E?</p> <p>It has been something we have noticed from last year's data, hence the focus this year in the SDP on writing and the radical changes to how we do things. These practices are only just being put into action over the later part of this year. We are working with Vicky Gordon (English Specialist) and The English Hub next year and we anticipate that this picture will most certainly improve.</p>	
380	<b>Governor Updates</b>	
380.1	<p><b>Parent Survey Update</b> – Responses received covered all school years. The results overall were very positive with over 85% of the responses being in agreement with questions. There was a low level of parental disagreement on a just a small number of questions that were noted.</p> <p>The most repeated comment from parents, as is often the case, was around communication, saying that they wanted more communication throughout the year relating to have more notice of events and as to how their child was doing.</p> <p>We will try harder next year to encourage more parents to complete the survey as this year we had 57 responses. Governors suggested doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Could the newsletter be sent out any earlier? Does it have to be around the summer?</li> <li>- Could future surveys be left outside so parents can see it more easily?</li> <li>- Could the survey be displayed on PTA boards?</li> <li>- Could parents answer the survey questions while they are waiting at drop off and pick up times?</li> </ul>	

<b>380.2</b>	<b>Training</b>  RE has completed the Essential Safeguarding for Governors and Trustees training. MH and YK are still to complete this.	<b>MH &amp; YK</b>
<b>380.3</b>	<b>Governor Roles for next year &amp; Communications</b> – We are sadly saying goodbye to JD who is leaving us this term. JW said a big thank you to JD for all of his involvement with the school. YK will be taking over as Chair of the Q of E Committee Group. She is also considering becoming NW24 link governor and assist on the NW24 Committee, but will check any potential conflict of interest she has with her work as a consultant.  JW has met with 3 potential new recruits for Community Governors. Decisions on appointments will be made by the end of Term 6.  JW and SS invited any feedback on how governors feel this year has gone. For example, is there another way governors would prefer to stay in contact? Would a governors WhatsApp group be helpful?	<b>YK</b>
<b>380.4</b>	<b>SL meetings and reports</b> – JD reported that all reports are available to read on Governorhub. Feedback received so far has been very positive. Staff are confident talking about their subjects and are demonstrating a clear understanding of where they want to take it.	
<b>380.5</b>	<b>Meeting with SIA's</b> – The meetings were held in May and June. SR and JW have since met to discuss plans for next year, which will include focussing on supporting DH and embedding the curriculum.	
<b>380.6</b>	<b>Draft 2025/26 FGB and Committee meeting Dates</b> – SB will send out the dates for all the meetings for next year.  The FGB will be held earlier in Term 6 because it is always such a busy time.	<b>SB</b>
<b>380.7</b>	<b>Leadership Transition</b> – This has been discussed at the SDG Committee Group meeting along with legislation around how we want to proceed. Advice from HR has been followed and there are no implications to not advertise externally.  We must follow Safer Recruitment guidance and undertake a rigorous recruitment process even though this is an internal process. The selection panel must include someone who has completed the Safer Recruitment training and someone who has Church Links.  The proposal is to have a selection panel of 4 governors, these are proposed to be: JB, DT, PW and JW.  Chairs will keep the Members informed of what is going on.	
<b>381</b>	<b>Policies</b>  <b>Risk Management Policy and Risk Register</b>  The Risk Register is a standing item on the agenda and is discussed at each meeting. We recently carried out an annual review of the policy and risk register and this was shared with governors. There were a few changes to the Risk Register concerning Governance and Chairs, the MAT agenda and wraparound care.  Governors were happy to approve the Policy today and there were no further changes to the Risk Register.	
<b>382</b>	<b>Committee Reports</b>	
<b>382.1</b>	<b>Finance</b>  <b>Management accounts May 2025</b> - We are still forecasting a surplus of just under £5k. RG is currently working on the June accounts and will update our forecast outturn for the year.	

	<p>We are looking into what maintenance works can be carried out over the summer but apart from that, we are not expecting any significant changes between now and the year end.</p> <p><b>One West Internal Audit Report and Programme for next year</b> - One West carried out their third and final audit visit of the year on Value for Money which was very positive. The report was shared with governors and gave the school Level 5 full assurance in this area. Governors congratulated AS and RG on a fantastic outcome. PW added that he saw the report as really positive in the way how the school is run.</p> <p><b>Approval of 2025/26 Budget Papers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governors budget summary 2025/26</b> – AS explained the core assumptions used in preparing the 2025/26 budget to governors. It was noted that the school has had no increase in its GAG funding for 2025/26. A 4% pay-rise for teachers has been agreed and a 3.2% pay-rise is expected for support staff. Staff pay-rises and increases in employers NI are only partially funded, leading to increased pressure on the school's budget. The overall impact is that the school is budgeting a £17k in-year deficit for 2025/26. The school will keep a close eye on this as the year progresses and opportunities to make cost savings will be sought.</li> <li>• <b>5 Year budget summary</b> - £17k in-year deficit next year will reduce our cumulative reserves to £389k by August 2026. We expect the in-year deficit to steadily increase over the following years due to a continued lack of sufficient funding and further staff pay-rises which are not fully funded. The 5-year forecast shows that the school will run out of reserves at some point during 2028-29. The school will continue to keep this closely under review and take action where appropriate.</li> <li>• <b>2025/26 budget overview (including review of reserve levels)</b> - In August 2024, the school had reserves of £402k which represented 17% of total income. Whilst the DFE does not specify a required level of reserves for an academy, it deems reserves of between 5 and 20% to be appropriate. Each year the schools set a reserves level and last year this was set at £350,000 which sits comfortable at the higher range so we do have grounds to reduce this. This year, the school proposes to reduce its reserves to £300,000. It is important that we keep the school 'fit for purpose' and well maintained at a level which is consistent with other schools. By reducing the reserves, this would enable the school to access sufficient funds to carry out much needed capital improvements to its estate. A reserves level of £300,000 would cover one month's worth of total costs for the school as a revenue reserve as well as a sufficient capital reserve. This would provide adequate working capital to cover any delays in the receipt of DFE grants and also a cushion to deal with unexpected emergencies. At 12% of total income, a reserve level of £300,000 would also sit comfortably between 5 and 20%.</li> <li>• Governors approved the 2025/26 budget and reserve levels and thanked AS and RG for their continued hard work</li> </ul>	
382.2	<p><b>Quality of Education</b> – There is no update today as the next Committee meeting is on Thursday 10th July.</p>	
382.3	<p><b>Leadership and Management</b> – The Committee will think about how to manage the staff survey for next year.</p> <p><b>MATS Update</b> – JB and PW attended the online Bristol Diocese training about Academisation. Jo Willis who led the session has a role at the Diocese specifically to assist schools in joining MATs.</p> <p>JB asked a question at the outset about whether the Diocese are steering all schools to be part of a MAT? The headline answers were as follows:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Diocese strongly encourage all schools to not be operating in isolation, BUT, this does not mean that all schools have to be in a MAT. Partnerships like NW24, with other schools can be fruitful without all being in a MAT together.</li> <li>The Governors are responsible for regularly (usually annually) asking the 'is it the right time to join a MAT?' question, so that there is evidence that the Governing Board are continuing to review whether remaining as a SAT or LA school continues to be in the school's best interests.</li> <li>When the Governors feel that the time is right to pursue joining a MAT, the Governors are responsible for leading this process.</li> </ul> <p>There was a presentation given by a school who has recently joined a Mat in which they talked about process they have been through, which could be helpful to us in the future. There were also presentation slides showing the 7 different MATs that the Diocese are currently having schools linked with and they reported that they are happy with all of these mats.</p> <p>Comments from schools who have joined the MATs were not conclusive on giving any extra benefit that we already have at Stoke Bishop and our partnership with NW 24. They also talked about better procurement power and staff having wider groups to discuss subject leads etc and a few interesting comments from raised by 2 schools saying that their financial situation was so poor, that MATs would not even consider them joining.</p>	
382.4	<b>Personal Development</b> – The Cultural Day was great with lots of good things to celebrate.	
383	<b>Link Governor Reports/Updates</b>	
383.1	<p><b>Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion, Statutory Report (SEN, PP, CiC)</b> – SR shared that it is very interesting to see how far the School has progressed and thanked everyone involved for their hard work.</p> <p>SR said thank you to Lindsey (Inclusion Lead) for the Inclusion Report which all feels very supported with lots of monitoring taking place.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> In terms of the SEND data report, was the Year 3 data comparing to last year's Year 3, or the same cohort, i.e. the same children from Year 2 now in Year 3? DF confirmed that it was the latter comparing the same children from Year 2 now in Year 3.</p>	
383.2	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b> – MH reported that there was a Health &amp; Safety meeting last week in which the Headteachers' Annual Health &amp; Safety report was discussed. The report was also shared with FGB. In addition, the recent fire risk assessment and its recommendations were discussed. There are some actions in respect of compartmentation, staff training and appropriate signage that are being addressed.</p> <p>MH wanted to acknowledge the good work that PA (Site Manager) carries out during the year.</p>	
383.3	<p><b>EYFS</b> – VM's comprehensive Subject Leader report on EYFS is available to read on GovernorHub. The report outlines the differences from Term 2 up to Term 6.</p> <p><b>Key Headlines are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>62% of boys are NYM in writing. Through discussions in PPM this has a direct link to their fine motor/pencil grip. Provision now has increased opportunities for children to develop their fine motor skills with key children targeted as a focus for all staff.</li> <li>PP children (4) are NYM in the specific areas of the curriculum and are already having interventions focused around phonics and number work.</li> </ul>	

<p>383.4</p> <p>383.5</p> <p>383.6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· There is a significant gap between girls' achievement (21%) in word reading than boys (42%). Children are involved in daily interventions to close the gap and parental engagement has been a focus for staff.</li> <li>· Number and Numerical patterns show a strong picture of progress and attainment. Mastering number has been crucial in embedding early number skills.</li> <li>· There is a positive picture around children's self-regulation and managing self, especially for this time of year. All children are making good progress.</li> <li>· Writing is a key area of focus for 2024 – 2025 in line with whole school developments and actions.</li> <li>· Progress for many children has already been made in Terms 1 and 2 and the current picture of particular children reflects this and is evident in observations made by staff.</li> <li>· NELI to be implemented for key children in Term 3. This has proven successful in building children's oracy skills, and confidence in speaking.</li> </ul> <p><b>Church Links</b> – An Art exhibition was held recently with 12 schools from NW24 which was really good with lots of parents and grandparents attending. Positive feedback was received following this.</p> <p>RP, SR and JB are all Trustees of the Stoke Bishop Education Fund. This money goes towards things such as buying bibles and funding children who are unable to afford to attend residential. The fund has also covered some emergency costs via certain requests through CWS. It currently has a surplus of £5k to spend so a suggestion was raised to spend some of this on outdoor space for the school.</p> <p><b>PE</b> – MB said that the statutory report has been completed. No concerns were raised. Some good work has been completed around diversity and inclusion within activities. 'Get Set for PE' has been positive as has 'Future Stars'.</p> <p><b>GDPR</b> – AS explains that the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final audit of this year has now been completed and an annual audit report will now be provided by One West. This will be shared with governors at the next FGB.</p>	<p>AS</p>
<p>384</p>	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NW24 2025/26 Annual Report – NW24 members are meeting next week to discuss peer reviews across NW24.</li> <li>• Resignation from DF – JW confirmed that he has received an official resignation letter from DF.</li> </ul>	
<p>385</p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Goodbye to DF and JD</b></li> <li>• <b>DF</b> - JW said in recognition of everything DF has done for the school it is now time for him to go and enjoy his retirement. DF's legacy will continue to set a great example to staff parents and children. JW thanked DF on behalf of everyone for his continued hard work over the years including leading the school all the way throughout Covid. DF has always put the children first and has lived and breathed the values of the school. We wish DF the very best in his retirement.</li> <li>• <b>JD</b> – JW said a huge thank you to JD and explained how much the school and governors have appreciated his input and dedication to the school since he joined us and wished him luck in his future work.</li> <li>• JW also thanked everyone else for their efforts and hard work throughout this past year.</li> </ul>	

**The meeting closed at 6pm**

**Date of the next meeting: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025, 4.30pm, in School**

**SIGNED: ..... DATE: .....**