

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 2
Held on Monday 1st December 2025

Minutes

PRESENT:

FOUNDATION

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

MEMBERS

Paul Wake (PW)
Stephen Cottam (SC)
Yvette Kydd (YK)

PARENT GOVERNORS

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

STAFF

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
396.1	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Opening Prayer</p> <p>Apologies were received from Yvonne Wyatt (YW) which were accepted by the Governing Board.</p> <p>JB led the opening prayer.</p>	
396.2	<p>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests</p> <p>Governors were reminded to update their Declarations of Interest on GovernorHub just before or just after each FGB.</p>	
397	<p>Minutes from the last meeting held on 22.9.25</p>	
397.1	<p>Approval of 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>	SB JW
397.2	<p>Matters Arising & Review of Action Points from last meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JW was unable to attend the Bristol Chairs meeting at the end of last year. - SS and PW had no questions relating to the SDP. - David Wolstenholme is no longer joining us as a Co-opted Governor. 	
398	<p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VM reported that there were no significant issues regarding Safeguarding that we are currently dealing with. • VM, DH and AS attended an AI workshop recently. NW24 will hopefully be producing an AI model policy soon and once this is ready, one of our Committee's will check it. This will include how we will approach AI in school and it will be shared with governors once it is finalised. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Safeguarding Training Action Plan for the year is up and running and there are termly tasks which we are working towards. All of the work we do is included in the plan. • AS and DH have both attended the Martyn's Law training. This is a result of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act which became law on 3 April 2025, with an expected operational start from 2027 after an implementation period. • Operation Encompass – Lots of schools use this guidance. It sets out the legal duty on Police forces in England and Wales to notify a child's educational setting, such as their school or college, where they have attended a domestic abuse incident in that child's home. VM, DH and Anna Beach (AB) have undertaken the training on this. VM will put a statement onto our website to make parents aware that we are a part of this initiative. VM explained how it works. She would receive a Police notification re: an incident involving a child and this would only be shared between her, DH and AB. This information would not necessarily be shared with staff and although a plan would be put in place, it would definitely not be shared with the parents. <p>Governor Question: How would we know if that child has come from Stoke Bishop? The report will come directly from the Police if the child is from the school. The Police will then categorise it in terms of 'immediate risk' etc.</p>	VM
399	<p>Headteacher Report – This is available to read on GovernorHub</p> <p>Attendance Report – Our attendance rate is 97.8% which is above the National and Local Authority percentages. There are still persistent absentees. VM explained the processes in place for those persistent absentees. In some cases, a member of SLT will go and collect a child from home.</p> <p>SS expressed concern that staff who are already stretched, are going out of school to collect children and asked if a strategy was in place for this? DH reassured SS that this does not happen all of the time, maybe once every few months, but there is a need to get children into school, otherwise this is going to have a negative impact on their future. Attendance is a priority on the Government's agenda.</p> <p>There are some gaps in Year 4 and Year 6.</p> <p>Governor Question: Are the numbers challenging in terms of ratios? The numbers are always a bit delayed, for example, we are currently receiving money for 398 children which was the figure based on last year's Census in October 2024.</p> <p>Curriculum & Teaching</p> <p>Governor Question: In terms of new arrivals, how many are reflected in the word 'some'? How many classes and hubs are affected? Some = 2, 2 classes (Year3 and Year 6) and 2 Hubs (Inventors and Innovators). A year 6 child is looking like they will be returning to their old school. External support has been sorted for a Year 3 child.</p> <p>Governor Question: How are teachers coping generally on a day to day basis? Teachers are filling the gaps, with in-year admissions, however, these children can come with other challenges. At the moment, there is a particular challenge around persistent absences. VM, SLT and the Pastoral team are working really hard to get advice on how to approach this.</p> <p>Governor Question: Is the challenge mainly in reception? No, it is mainly new arrivals in other year-groups.</p> <p>DH explained we are having to tighten up on provision. The hub structure does not work like it used to (with Tas dedicated to a hub) and we are having to move hub supports. This is</p>	

	<p>down to the evolution of teaching and learning and we are making the best of what we can do.</p> <p>Governor Question: How has this been received? This time of year is very busy and staff can feel tired and seasonal bugs means they can be unwell so we just need to be supportive. There is a TA meeting every week which is good for them to be able to share concerns and for us to remind them that we understand how hard it is and that we appreciate them. The current situation has its challenges but it is not unmanageable.</p> <p>Personal Development & Well Being</p> <p>Governor Question: Re: Hamish and Milo (mental health and wellbeing intervention resource), did the PTA just fund this or are they involved any further with it? The PTA funded just the product, they are not involved any further in it.</p> <p>Leadership & Governance</p> <p>Governor Question: Re: positive feedback from children, what form does this arrive in? These are anecdotal conversations with the children.</p> <p>Governor Question: What are the SIA plans and governance expectations being implemented? The expectations are for each committee for the year, i.e. Terms of Reference etc.</p> <p>General</p> <p>The early morning club has been really positive and has had a big impact on 4 of our children. We had received comments from one particular parent who explained that they used to hate coming into the playground and having to socialise because they had high anxiety. Now they can just come in early to drop off at the morning club to avoid this.</p> <p>The Values ambassadors were praised during our recent SIAMs inspection and feedback was very positive.</p>	
<p>400</p> <p>401</p> <p>402</p>	<p>Leadership Transition Update</p> <p>Outcome</p> <p>The governing body was asked to vote on the Selection Committee's recommendation that the Headteacher post was to be offered to DH. All voted in favour.</p> <p>JW shared that it has been a privilege to watch DH work over the past 2 years and that this transition period has worked really well. JW wanted to give credit to Bridget, DF, DH, AS and VM for all of their involvement and said they all thought DH was the 'right person to run the school'.</p> <p>Next steps</p> <p>Offering DH the job is not the end of this process. Governors will now continue to support DH to develop his team and help make sure he has the appropriate support to lead the school, to ensure he is successful.</p> <p>We will be formalising the next steps in terms of what the SLT structure looks like.</p> <p>Terms of Communications - Members have already been told. Staff are being told tomorrow morning and then parents are being told tomorrow afternoon.</p>	

<p>401</p> <p>401.1</p> <p>401.2</p> <p>401.3</p> <p>401.4</p>	<p>Governor updates</p> <p>AGM 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The members approved the accounts today. • There were no resignations from members. <p>New Governor Updates</p> <p>David Wolstenholme has unfortunately decided to step down and not become a Co-opted Governor. We are unsure of the reason but understand DW's expectations of what the role actually involves did not align.</p> <p>It was suggested that all future governors are directed to watch a few of the videos available so that they can gain more of an insight of what is involved before committing.</p> <p>Training</p> <p>DH and JB went to the Flourished conference in Bristol which offered a collective vision for the education system. They fed back that the guest speakers were very good.</p> <p>Subject Link Meeting 3.12.25 – DH has sent out information to everyone on where they should be. There are standard questions that need to be asked such as:</p> <p>'What are you doing to champion your subjects'?</p> <p>'What are you doing to make your subject stand out'?</p> <p>'Who will do the monitoring etc'.</p> <p>It was suggested that our new governors read over these questions. It is important to keep an eye on the time as a few subjects are being covered within the hour.</p> <p>Governor Question – Is this a standard format of questions? Yes, though we aim to be supportive rather than trying to catch them out.</p> <p>DT and RP have both sent their apologies.</p> <p>Governors Day March 2026 Planning (WC 9.3.26)</p> <p>SB will send out a poll to governors offering 3 dates in March 2026 (10th, 11th & 12th) to see which one is the most popular for the Governors Day. Our FGB Term 4 meeting will also be held later on the same day.</p> <p>We will be asking Committee's what topics they would like to discuss on Governor's Day with input from our SIA's. JW will let SIA's know the date once it is confirmed.</p> <p>Suggestions for topics to ask staff: 'How do you know what you know?', 'is there anything you would like our SIA's to help you with' and 'is there anything else you would like to see happen in school?'</p> <p>Historically, governors have visited classes. DH could hold a whole school assembly to give governors a chance to talk to teachers, especially as there will be no twilight training this year. JB asked whether children could be given the opportunity to ask Governors questions.</p> <p>We will be looking at how we are formatted as committees etc. Other NW24 schools operate differently. Some only have a FGB and no committees, so it would be interesting to know about other models and potentially get feedback from our SIA's around this.</p>	<p></p> <p>SB</p> <p>JW</p>
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<p>402</p> <p>402.1</p>	<p>Policies</p> <p>Pay Policy</p> <p>AS explained this is updated each Autumn to reflect any changes to the School Teachers Pay and Conditions documents (STPCD). School pay policies remain in line with the STPCD and the policy has been updated to include the 4% pay rise awarded to teaching staff wef 1st September 2025. The impact of the pay rise will show in November's pay and has been included in the budget. The Policy has been discussed by the Pay Committee.</p> <p>Governors approved the policy today.</p>	
<p>403</p> <p>403.1</p>	<p>Committee Reports</p> <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval and signing of the Annual report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st August 2025: <p>The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st August 2025 were presented and discussed. These have already been presented to Finance Committee and at the AGM and the Accounts have been audited by Bishop Fleming. The audit went smoothly and there were no significant matters arising. The only adjustment to the audit relates to the IAS pension adjustments required. The management accounts for the year ended 31st August 2025 ended with a surplus of £3k so the position was positive and a reconciliation between the management accounts and the statutory accounts was shared with governors. · The Key Issues Discussion Document (KIDD) summarise the audit process and states that no management letter points were raised this year.</p> <p>Governor Question: How many schools are still having balanced budgets? It is difficult to know, however four Business Managers were in school last week carrying out peer to peer reviews and out of those, we are the only ones with a surplus in-year budget. Some schools have in-year deficits in the region of £80-£100k.</p> <p>Governor Question: Where are the other schools in terms of pupil numbers? One school we are aware of has seen their numbers drastically reduce, others are seeing some small reductions and others like us are maintaining their numbers</p> <p>Governor Question: What is the long-term prognosis? We have no idea – although birth rates are falling across Bristol and have been for a few years now, we are still managing to maintain our numbers on roll. Numbers are definitely dropping off for some schools and there is definitely a reduction in PAN for some Bristol schools .</p> <p>Governor Question: Are we expecting to struggle financially next year? Our budget for the current year was based on pupil numbers of 398. Our pupil numbers for next year will be 407 based on our Autumn census numbers, so this will immediately provide us with additional funding of approx. £45k. SEND funding continues to be a challenge as funding does not always cover the cost of the provision needed. Other strands of funding such as funding for Universal Infant free School Meals provided by the DfE does not cover the cost of providing those meals. Under-funding for staff pay-rises will also continue to be a concern.</p> <p>The accounts were formally approved by members/governors today. DH and JW will receive these from Bishop Fleming to be able to sign electronically. AS will submit the accounts, and the Annual Internal Assurance report to the DfE by the deadline of 31st December 2025.</p>	<p>DH/JW</p> <p>AS</p>

<p>403.2</p> <p>403.3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters of representation and management letter from Bishop Fleming; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This contains the usual representations required from the school, at the time of signing the accounts. DH and JW to sign and AS to return to Bishop Fleming. • Review of the effectiveness of the external auditors; <p>Re-appointment of Auditors – Bishop Fleming. A review of the effectiveness of the external auditors was shared with governors. This was also discussed with members in the AGM who recommended the re-appointment of Bishop Fleming as auditors for the next year. Governors agreed with this decision.</p> • Internal audit reports summary report for 2024/25 <p>One West – This report summarises all of the reports they have raised in the past year. It is a requirement for schools to have a programme of internal scrutiny and to submit an annual summary of their findings to the DfE alongside their annual accounts.</p> <p>There have been 2 recommendations over the year which have both been actioned. These were concerning vetting procedures for suppliers and a register of renewal on contracts with BCC.</p> • Internal audit report – Visit 1 2025/26; <p>Term 1, HR & Safer Recruitment – This is the first review of the year which was carried out on site. No recommendations came from this visit and the report was graded 5 – full assurance. AS noted that this year is the final year of a 3-year contract. Later in the year, we will need to decide whether to continue with One West for internal assurance. The remaining visits for 2025/26 will cover income/purchasing and inventory.</p> • Schedule of Musts from the Academies Trust Handbook <p>This was shared with governors – there were no areas of concern.</p> • Current Forecast for 2025/26 <p>AS noted that the latest forecast for the year ended 31st August 2026 is a small deficit of just under £1k. This is a significant improvement on the budgeted deficit of £17k for the year and is largely due to finalisation of staffing and pay-scales. Some staff had been forecast to progress through threshold and have not done so and there are some other changes concerning maternity cover.</p> • Census numbers on roll. <p>Numbers on roll is 407 from the Autumn Census.</p> <p>Quality of Education</p> <p>YK will be reviewing data next week. She met with the English Leads last week about English writing and they each shared their teaching plans with her.</p> <p>Leadership and Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee met last week so the minutes from that meeting will follow shortly. They looked at the SDP, SLT structures and developments and how they will enhance Maths and English and discussed how hub leads will take responsibility from an SDP point of view. • A number of HR policies were reviewed and approved in the meeting. It was noted that we do not need a policy on job sharing as this is incorporated within the flexible 	<p>DH/JW/AS</p>
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403.4	<p>working policy and the key thing is to have no more than 1 job share per hub in principle. Flexible working requests are assessed using set criteria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber Response Plan – It was agreed that this would be uploaded to Governor Hub so that governors are aware of this. It is useful to remind governors that in the event of any incident, they are advised not to comment to the media but direct all enquiries to the school. <p>Personal Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school passed the SIAMS inspection and received very positive feedback. The report has been shared with governors, staff and parents. Those governors and staff members involved have been thanked. 	
404	<p>Link Governor Reports / Updates</p> <p>404.1 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (SEN, PP, CiC) - LL and SR met for a strategy meeting with DH. Observations will take place on phonics and pupil voice. An Inclusion Support person from the local authority will meet with us 3 times a year to ensure we are up to date. We do not get charged for this.</p> <p>404.2 Health & Safety - There is nothing to report. The committee are meeting next Thursday. There are leaks due to ongoing roof problems. These are being handled well in terms of managing children when they cannot use the library for example (this has the worst leak).</p> <p>AS is going to submit a bid to the DFE requesting for Conditions Improvement Funding (CIF) with the support of Trinity Clifton. This will cover the replacement the entire roof of the main school building and the Oak Block but we will not find out until May 2026 whether we are successful or not.</p> <p>Governor Question: Would the school consider adding solar panels? Yes, we will definitely consider this if we get the roof done.</p> <p>404.3 EYFS</p> <p>An EYFS meeting is taking place on Friday. We have got 2 maternity staff returning, one in January 2026 and one in February 2026.</p> <p>404.4 Church Links</p> <p>RP has recently resigned as Family & Children’s Minister which is separate to her governor role. RP will continue to be part of the church, but as a volunteer. This means St Mary’s will be recruiting someone new who needs to be a committed Christian. In the interim, there are a few things which will be different in terms of what can be offered. The whole school will be in church for Christmas.</p> <p>404.5 PE – There is nothing to report and a meeting is taking place this week.</p> <p>404.6 GDPR – There is nothing to report. Implications are being discussed in terms of the AI policy. The school was due to have its first GDPR audit this week, but this has been rearranged to next week. There have been no data breaches.</p> <p>404.7 Risk Review – AS has reviewed the risk register and updated a few things including an update on the Leadership transition, breakfast and after-school club capacity and roof leaks having an impact on the school premises. Governors did not identify any further changes needed.</p>	AS
405	<p>Correspondence None.</p>	
406	<p>AOB</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies House Registration – A new requirement is being introduced to require individuals to verify their ID on Companies House. A link has been emailed to all governors with instructions on how to do this. Can all governors please send the code they receive after completion of this to SB. These verification checks should be completed before the next FGB in February, in advance of the school's annual confirmation statement in March 2026. 	All governors
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The meeting closed at 6.16pm

Date of the next meeting: Monday 2nd February 2026

FGB – 4.30pm, in school

SIGNED: **DATE:**