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Minutes – meeting of the Full Governing Board Tuesday 28 April 2026 at 5.00pm online

Governors Present:	Foundation Governors	Stephen Craggs (SC) (Vice Chair) (Chair for this meeting) Dale Gingrich (DG)
	Local Authority Governor	Kevin Moyes (Chair KM)
	Headteacher	Sarah Marshall (HT)
	Parent Governors	Elliot Manning (EM) Melanie Christianson (MC)
	Staff Governor	Louise Thomas (LT)
	Co-opted Governor	Gillian Barnes (GB)
In attendance:	Clerk	Ruth Morrison (Clerk)
	School Business Manager	Lucy McKenna (SBM)
Apologies:	Foundation Governor	Nick Westbury (NW)
	Co-opted Governor	Fran Peirson (FP)
Quorum:	The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate.	

Item No	Topic	Minutes	Document Reference	Action
1	Welcome	The Chair (SC) welcomed all to the meeting.		
2	Opening Prayer	The Chair opened the meeting in prayer.		
3	Apologies for absence	Apologies had been received and were accepted from NW and FP.		
4	Urgent Additional Items	There was no urgent business to discuss.		
5	Declarations of Interests	There were no new declarations of interest.		
6	Approval of FGB Minutes	The minutes of the FGB meeting held on 16-3-26 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting for the Chair to mark as signed on GovernorHub.	6.1	Chair: mark as signed
7	Matters arising not covered on the agenda	The action log was noted. All actions had been completed, were covered by later agenda items, or deferred until the next meeting.	7.1	
8	Budget	<p>8.1 Budget breakdown 26/27</p> <p>8.2 Budget summary 26/27 to 28/29</p> <p>The SBM gave an overview of the above documents available on GovernorHub. Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The budget is balanced over the next three years. • A deficit of £60K from the current financial year has been carried forward to next year; this reduces over the next three years. • Available pupil numbers data has been used. • Staffing is based on current knowledge and decreases over the 3 years in line with pupil numbers; this is the biggest budget expenditure. 	8.1 8.2	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Capital budget is healthy; decisions will need to be made on how it is spent. <p>Comments and questions to challenge the school leaders had been submitted in advance of the meeting on GovernorHub, and some answers given; these are copied below.</p> <p>Comment from NW: I visited the school on 24-4-26, Lucy and I went through the figures in the Budget line by line, the figures appear to have a sound basis, appear reasonable and are balanced for the next three years. I am waiting to see the final position for 25/26 which I will use as a bench mark for the Budget.</p> <p>Q. How robust are the pupil number assumptions, and what is the risk if numbers fall faster than forecast?</p> <p>The forecast assumes pupil numbers reduce from 326 in 2026/27 to 304 in 2027/28 and 283 in 2028/29, with delegated LA income also falling across the period.</p> <p>A: The school has sought data from OCC with respect to pupil forecast numbers and is awaiting a response.</p> <p>Q: Is the planned staffing reduction deliverable without weakening education quality or SEND support? The budget notes that staffing will be reduced over the next three years to align with pupil numbers, with teaching staff FTE falling over the forecast period and teaching support hours also reducing.</p> <p>Q: What is the plan to stop reserves being eroded year on year?</p> <p>The school is forecasting in-year deficits of £11.0k, £8.7k and £17.9k, reducing the carried-forward revenue balance from £60.6k to £23.0k by 2028/29.</p> <p>Q: Are non-staffing costs, especially trips, learning resources and lettings assumptions, being actively controlled?</p> <p>The budget commentary refers to pressure from low pupil numbers, high costs and two</p>		

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		<p>large residential in the same financial year, while also assuming higher income from lettings.</p> <p>Q: What are the three biggest risks to this budget, and what decisions would governors need to revisit first if pupil numbers or staffing savings do not materialise?</p> <p>Q: How does this budget directly support the priorities in the School Development Plan?</p> <p>A: The SDP runs September to September. The current SDP links to the budget approved last May, however realistically the main cost within the budget is staffing.</p> <p>Q: Is there 'space' in the budget for money saving investments, e.g. the Carbon Reduction report we had done last May suggests changing the 186 lightbulbs to LED would save over £3000pa, but probably cost upwards of £18,000 to do.</p> <p>A: At this stage the budget is unlikely to allow for a spend of this nature. If the school is able to secure a grant to support this, then this would likely be the most obvious way to enable these changes.</p> <p>Q: What reserve do we hold? Are we in compliance with our reserves policy?</p> <p>Q: I would quite like to understand the reasons behind the material differences from the budget last year. So, for example, I note that in 2025 we forecast 26-27 'other income' as 213.9, but we are now saying 190.5. In terms of expenditure, there were particular changes between the 2025 and 2026 budgets (for 26-27) in "Education Support Staff" and "Learning Resources", although there was a saving in "Supplies and Services".</p> <p>The Headteacher gave further information to answer the above questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil numbers reduce from 326 in the first year to 283 in the third. The Headteacher has requested information from OCC on birth rates, if catchment 		

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		<p>children have been lost and the position for neighbouring schools. This school has not reduced the number of classes as there is building work in the area. The budget is cautious, but realistic. A risk is that pupil numbers fall faster than anticipated which would impact funding and staffing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing reductions are aligned to falling pupil numbers. Class structures will be designed to maintain the high quality of education. The level of non-teaching staff which is already tight has been maintained. Nurture staff are a selling point for this school. • SEND funding is stable. Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs) cover the first 15 hours of support. Top-up is then available, but this does not cover the cost. • School visits are aimed to be cost neutral. Parents and staff are informed if there is a risk of trips being cancelled. Pupil Premium funding can be used; parents are aware of this. The SBM has applied to local charities for funding towards some trips. • Letting have increased. Pauline Quirke classes on Saturdays will continue. There are some users on old rates, when contracts are due for review the rates will be more competitive. <p>Risks to the budget are – Falling pupil numbers, increased class sizes where permissible, a decrease in lettings and unanticipated external costs. An unresolved matter with a former staff member may impact future budgets. Teachers can give their notice for September until 31 May, and support staff must give one month’s notice. The SBM advised that if required the budget can be revised in September.</p> <p>Governors were given the opportunity to ask further questions.</p> <p>Q: There has been a lot of press about increased SEND funding, has this led to more income?</p> <p>A: Not yet. The SBM will share further information as it becomes available.</p>		

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		<p>Q: What are the reasons behind the material differences from the last budget for income and expenditure, for example with educational support staff?</p> <p>A: Pay rises, plus keeping on a couple of staff we had not expected to. One child who now has an EHCP needs two members of staff with them. Backdated funding has been requested from OCC. The funding will not cover the whole cost.</p> <p>Q: What is included in learning resources and why has this increased?</p> <p>A: It's supplies, books, ICT learning, resources and subscriptions to them. Some subscriptions are bought for 3 years so expenditure increases that year.</p> <p>Q: Have OCC been helpful in preparing the budget?</p> <p>A: The SBM has met once with Mike Naylor, the new OCC Finance Advisor for this school. As there is a deficit, budgets are submitted monthly, OCC have been supportive. The SBM attends quarterly briefings. The SBM went through the budget with Mike a week ago and there have been no further changes.</p> <p>Governors thanked the SBM for her work on the budget and ensuring it is balanced.</p> <p>Approval – Governors approved the budget for submission.</p>		
9	<p>Non-Standing items for the next FGB meeting</p>	<p>Headteacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly report to include School Admin data; attendance; incident reports; mid-year appraisal (pt 2) report; SDP progress update (If applicable) and provisional outline of SDP targets for next year • DATA PACK and GROUPS DATA: review pupil progress and attainment, including reporting on vulnerable groups. Agree SDP monitoring actions for the coming term • Discuss Residential visits and approve planned Residential Visits for the year after next • (If applicable) Review Appraisal & Performance Management Policy and staff job descriptions; Review staff attendance; report of effectiveness of Continuing Professional Development <p>Kevin/Steve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Governor Monitoring Report 		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety Walk • Review systems and procedures for monitoring Health & Safety including risk assessments • Review insurance arrangements and premises cost • Report on annual inspection of premises and grounds including reporting on security and on monitoring of energy and utility bills to support sustainability • Review Hall bookings/usage and discuss promotion of community hall • Conduct self-review of governing body effectiveness: include succession planning, training needs and review of all governance policies if applicable. Consider Governance objectives for the year – SDP Targets <p>Gill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly Report on meeting with SENCO -SEND/PP and other vulnerable groups provision effectiveness 		
10	Meeting dates for the rest of the academic year	<p>Governors noted the meeting dates. Meetings will start at 5.00pm unless noted below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thursday 21 May – online 2. Wednesday 8 July – in school – meet with teachers 3.30pm. FGB at 4.30pm 		
	Additional Matters raised	<p>Meeting dates next year – The Clerk will upload a message to GovernorHub asking which days to avoid next year with a view to the Headteacher and Clerk proposing dates.</p> <p>Suspension – The Clerk reminded governors not to discuss any suspensions in case a panel is required. The Clerk will forward relevant legislation to the Headteacher.</p> <p>Staff governor – There have been no nominations for the forthcoming vacancy when LT reaches the end of her term of office. This will be an agenda item at the next meeting.</p>		<p>Clerk: GovernorHub message Clerk/HT: Dates</p> <p>Clerk: Info to HT</p> <p>Clerk: Agenda item</p>

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		Parent governor vacancy – The Headteacher will progress this.		HT: Parent governor vacancy

The chair thanked all for their contribution to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 5.30pm.