

‘With God there is no limit to what you can do. There is no obstacle you can’t overcome.

Through Him, all things are possible.’ Matthew 19.26

Believe and Achieve

ST NICHOLAS CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL
FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING
Monday 6 February 2023 at 6.45pm held at the school
MINUTES

FGB ATTENDANCE TRACKER					
Name	Governor Type	4 Oct 22	6 Feb 23	18 May 23	10 Jul 23
Kate Birss	Staff Governor	P	P		
Delia Bonner	Foundation Governor	P	P		
Stuart Burnett	Foundation Governor	P	P		
Simon Counce	Foundation Governor	A	P		
Rizelle Crouch	Headteacher	P	P		
Hilary Doherty	Foundation Governor	P	P		
Dr Hannah Draeger	Parent Governor	P	P		
Caroline Fleming	Foundation Governor	P	P		
Dr Catherine Harvey	Co-opted Governor	P	P		
Henry Loweth	Foundation Governor	P	P		
Lucy Parr	Foundation Governor	P	P		
Natalie Pepper	Parent Governor	P	P		
Mary Jean Pritchard	Local Authority Governor	n/a	P		
Rev'd Dennis Stamps	Foundation Ex-Officio	P	P		

P	Present
A	Apologies provided
N	Not present
O	Observer

1.	School Council Presentation Three members of the school council joined the meeting, Lily, Ruby and Oliver. They described the work they had been doing in the autumn and spring terms and how they had been elected: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ They had sent thank you letters to the organisers of the Harpenden Fun Run.▪ The School Council had arranged a fundraising Christmas Jumper Day which raised £171.▪ They held discussions and voted on which charity to support.▪ They made posters as part of anti-bullying week; describing what bullying was and how to deal with it: tell someone. Questions were invited:	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q What do you enjoy about being a school councillor? The position of responsibility, meetings are fun, making a difference and having an opportunity to improve the school. ▪ Q Do you always agree? No, but different ideas are discussed and members are happy to go with the majority vote. ▪ Q Plans for the summer term? This would be taken forward by a new group of school council members, elections were held each term. <p>Governors thanked Lily, Ruby and Oliver for coming in to talk to them and asked them to pass on their thanks to all the school councillors for their work, it was greatly appreciated.</p>	
2.	<p>Welcome and Prayer</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, in particular, Mary Jean Pritchard to her first FGB meeting and Kate Birss who was attending her last FGB meeting as a staff governor.</p> <p>Rev’d Dennis Stamps led the meeting in prayer.</p>	
3.	<p>Procedural matters</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Apologies</u>: There were no apologies for absence. Catherine Harvey was running late and would join the meeting at agenda item 4. The meeting was quorate. b. <u>Declaration of any conflict of interest</u>: None relevant for this meeting. DS’s ongoing conflict (church hall letting) was noted. c. <u>Notification of other business</u>: None raised. d. <u>Minutes</u>: The minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 October 2022 were approved as an accurate record, subject to the amendment of Hilary Doherty’s designation as a governor; she was a Foundation Governor. e. <u>Matters arising</u>: All actions from the previous meeting had been completed or were in progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arrange working party in autumn term re contingency planning for low pupil numbers: awaiting final numbers, see HT’s report, 20 first choice applications had been received for September 2023, higher than last year. ▪ Arrange exit interview with office manager: item closed; JW had been unwell on the arranged date. ▪ RC to send HDr the draft wellbeing questionnaire for HDr to add in some questions on burn-out: completed. ▪ Future HT’s reports to include number of reported incidents of bullying: ongoing, see agenda item 4. ▪ CF to update the strategically important priorities document (not included in the SDP) eg admission numbers and staff wellbeing: Completed, see folder on Governor Hub “Ofsted/SIAMS”. ▪ Submit forms to PCC to move LP from LA to Foundation governor slot: completed. ▪ RC to provide feedback to staff who had requested resources but were unsuccessful: completed. ▪ All governors to complete NGA audit and return form to CF for compiling: completed. ▪ CF to update structure of Governor Hub: completed. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEC to review Child Protection and Safeguarding policies at next meeting: completed. ▪ School to share supporting children with medical conditions with a small group of parents: completed, RC had discussed the policy with two parents and some changes had been made as a result relating to the notification process to parents after medicine had been administered. The forms had been updated accordingly. ▪ RC to follow up anti-biotics incident in EY: item closed. 	
4.	<p>Headteachers report</p> <p>The following documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HT’s report ▪ HIP report ▪ Attainment data from the summer term ▪ SDP <p>Questions/comments were invited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q What were the reasons for the in-year leavers? Two families had left the school so far during the 2022/23 academic year; one because of an issue with the shared toilets and one to move their child to a school closer to the family home. ▪ There was a net increase of 2 pupils overall, and the number on roll was now 147. ▪ Since writing the HT’s report, another in-year admission had been agreed in Y1. This was a EAL pupil with very limited English. ▪ A summary of the numbers of EAL and SEND pupils in each class had been added to the HT’s report. ▪ Sapphire class had the biggest cohort with 4 x EAL and 6 x SEND. ▪ Q Was there any cause for concern re the higher level of teacher absence (compared to the same period in 2021/22)? This was due to staff illness and there were no patterns of concern. ▪ Term time holiday requests had fallen slightly (fewer families but a similar number of days off school), compared the same period in 2021/22. Q What else could the school do to address this? RC noted she would do an attendance reminder in the school bulletin. ▪ A discussion followed on the recommendation from the SIAMs health check that the school’s vision “Believe and Achieve” could be expanded to make the school’s Christian ethos more explicit. The following points were raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The vision and values of the school needed to permeate all aspects of school life. The Christian vision needs to be more explicit and integrated in all school documents. ○ The school is a Christian School which welcomes pupils of no-faith and different faiths, it should be proud of its Christian values. ○ The school had recently changed its admissions criteria to allow non-faith and other-faith pupils. ○ Suggestions from adviser: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace/expand “Believe and Achieve” with “<i>In Him all things are possible</i>”. ▪ Add in “<i>Living in the love of God</i>” to the vision. ▪ Expand the values to include “<i>we believe that God loves us</i>” and “<i>We are unique and precious to God</i>”. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop the entrance hall to have more Christian references. ▪ School policies should also include a reference to the school’s Christian ethos. ○ Governors noted the possible tension these additions might cause for those pupils with different or no faith. In response to this, the entrance hall had recently been updated to remove some religious artefacts. However, it was suggested that some parents of different faiths might welcome the school being explicit about its religious values. ○ “Believe and achieve” was inclusive and applicable to pupils of all backgrounds. ○ Governors agreed that the bullet points would benefit from being expanded/added to and that the addition of “<i>we believe God loves us</i>” was appropriate. (Catherine Harvey joined the meeting) ○ The school was that it was a community school with a Christian Ethos. ○ A discussion was held on the “we” in “<i>we believe that God loves us</i>” - the consensus was that this referred to the school community. ○ Governors noted that pupils could easily recall “<i>Believe and Achieve</i>” and talked about the school’s values during the recent governor day in school. ○ Q What were the consequences of not following the adviser's recommendations? This advice was not compulsory but was there to help the school prepare for its next SIAMs inspection. ○ The weekly newsletter always included a prayer – this had been welcomed by the adviser. ▪ Action: DS/RC to review the wording of the vision and values in line with the discussion above. ▪ Q How would staff address the point raised by HIP report about a pupil who had already read a book they had been asked to read in school? RC had instructed volunteers and staff to check with a pupil if they had read the book before embarking on a reading session. Books selected for a reading session needed to be 80/90% decodable by the pupil. ▪ The HIP report identified some good progress against the SDP. ▪ Q Had changes been made to TA deployment following comments in HIP report? RC had delivered training to TAs to clarify their role. More training would be delivered to ensure they were supporting reading in the most effective way. ▪ Q What was being done to address the low attainment data in Y6 maths? Following the internal review of the assessment data, a number of changes had been put in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ RC was delivering a maths booster group twice a week. ○ Gaps in knowledge and application had been identified (two step reasoning problems and time). ○ EAL pupils would complete more test practice with a reader. ▪ Funding to release the class teacher to work with groups of identified pupils who were not yet at the required standard was requested – this would have the most impact. 	<p>DS/RC</p> <p>Res</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action: Request for funding to allow teacher release time for Y6 booster sessions would be considered at the Resources Committee. ▪ Governors noted that the Class teacher was delivering maths lessons to Y5/Y6 pupils combined, this could potentially be a challenge. ▪ Q Did the school have enough parent volunteers for reading? RC felt that the numbers were now sufficient. ▪ Writing opportunities in other subjects applied the same rigorous standards as writing in English and there were numerous opportunities for cross curriculum writing factored into each curriculum plan. ▪ Governors noted the messages of support from within the parent body for those teachers who had taken industrial action and their appreciation that the school had remained open. 	
5.	<p>Safeguarding The autumn term safeguarding report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Questions and comments were invited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q Did the school need to conduct a deed-poll check of new joiners (staff)? In case they had changed their name and failed to disclose it? Clerk to see advice – see update posted on Governor Hub. ▪ All staff safeguarding training was up to date. ▪ MJP had completed her governor safeguarding training. ▪ The safeguarding governor (CH) would be meeting with the DSP on 9 February will listen to pupil voice on internet safety teaching (part of PSHE curriculum). ▪ HL will conduct the SCR audit. ▪ There had been no referrals made in the autumn term. ▪ No pupils were on a “live” CiN plan. 	Clerk
6.	<p>Curriculum subject focus: RE Kate Birss circulated a RE subject leader report during the meeting and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A two-year curriculum was in place (Year A and Year B) which had previously been mapped out and planned by RC and Lucy Mortimer. ▪ The Herts Agreed Syllabus was in the process of being reviewed and a new SIAMS framework would be in place at the end of this academic year. ▪ Monitoring had taken place in the autumn term (learning walks, pupil voice and book scrutiny). ▪ KB noted the extensive opportunity to bring RE learning to life throughout the school with trips to the church and guest speakers at the school. She highlighted the workshop on Moses delivered by a member of the clergy from St Nicholas Church. ▪ The Milestones document had been reformatted and there were good resources to support the RE curriculum. ▪ Staff CPD/training was extensive (see table on report). ▪ Pupil voice demonstrated that pupils were able to compare religions and used comparative language/vocabulary. ▪ Areas for development: assessment and learning for all: adaptations for EAL and vulnerable pupils. <p>Questions and comments were invited:</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q Who will take on the subject leader role after KB? Miss Kieran had volunteered to take this on. She was already booked to attend the launch of the new Herts Agreed Syllabus. ▪ Parent governors noted that their children spoke positively about the links with the Church in general and the relationship with Cath in particular (member of the clergy). 	
7.	<p>Strategic discussion topic: Leadership and staffing structure (KB left the room for this agenda item to avoid a potential conflict of interest)</p> <p>Following the resignation of KB (assistant headteacher / 0.4 FTE), RC and a small group of governors (CF, LP, DB) had met to review the staffing structure and leadership roles within the school. The following proposal had been made based on the school’s financial position and the fact that many of its teachers were either on the upper pay scale or at the top end of the main pay scale. RC had also spoken to the school’s HIP, Diocese and benchmarked other small schools.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do not replace AHT role. ▪ Advertise two TLRs to existing staff to create a Pastoral Lead and a Learning and Assessment Lead. ▪ The line management of inclusion would revert to the headteacher. ▪ The new SLT would be comprised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Headteacher ○ Pastoral Lead ○ Learning and Assessment Lead <p>Questions and comments were invited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The opportunity to restructure the staffing structure was welcomed. ▪ There was concern that too many members of staff would be reporting to the headteacher and this would be difficult to manage during appraisal time. ▪ Could the line management of MSAs be given to a different member of the new SLT for example. ▪ Q What contingency planning would be in place in the event the headteacher was absent for an extended period? This could be covered by one or other of the lead teachers on an ad-hoc basis but this was not sustainable for a long period of time. RC noted that she had very few external commitments e.g. HT’s briefing. ▪ Q What would happen if the existing Lead teacher (current member of SLT) did not apply for either of the Pastoral or L&A Lead role? To be considered at the time if this was applicable. ▪ Q Did this structure provide adequate support for the headteacher? ▪ Q What would staff perception be? This would be unexpected, however, the creation of the two new Lead roles represented exciting career opportunities for any experienced and ambitious teacher. ▪ Governors noted that clear communications to parents would be needed once the final structure had been agreed. ▪ Experienced teachers on UPS should already be delivering whole school impact Q Did this structure take account of these existing roles? 	RC

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RC would announce the proposals at the staff meeting on Tuesday 7 February, LP would attend to represent the governors. Action: Update on the TLR recruitment process at the next Resources Committee. 	
8.	<p>Committee Meetings</p> <p>CF invited the committee chairs to summarise the work underway in each committee and noted that all committees should add in a standing agenda item relating to safeguarding:</p> <p>a. <u>School Effectiveness</u>: Chair: Hannah Draeger.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There had been two SEC meetings since the last FGB meeting. The minutes of the earlier meeting was available on the Hub and the recent meeting minutes would be made available soon. The most recent meeting had reviewed the HIP report in detail and the school progress data. <p>b. <u>Resources</u>: Chair: Stuart Burnett.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Termly meetings were now in place. The spring term meeting (later in February) would focus on budget setting and the SFVS submissions. The school had received a letter from HCC regarding is financial sustainability and the committee was very aware of the school’s potentially vulnerable financial position in the medium to long term if pupil numbers are lower than PAN. The letter had been sent to a number of other schools. <p>c. <u>Admissions</u>: Chair: Henry Loweth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Admissions policy 2024/25 had been approved and HCC informed. Action: School to upload new admissions policy to the website. A discussion followed on the purpose and usefulness of the supplementary form which accompanied the admissions paperwork. It was noted that this was a useful document and provided the school with the contact details of parents who had applied for a place which was not visible via the HCC admissions portal. This allowed the school to alert parents quickly if a space arose (in the event that the reception class was oversubscribed). however, the form was not mandatory and was not always completed by parents. Action: Admission committee to decide if the form was needed and if yes to ensure it was prominent in the admissions paperwork and complied with GDPR/data protection legislation. <p>d. <u>Communications working group</u>: Chair: Natalie Pepper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee were tracking the admissions process (from open day to allocation). Next meeting would refocus on the school’s communication strategy (website, social media etc) Internal debate: was this a committee or a working party? Governors were agreed that the profile of the school needed to be raised and in the short term the communications working party would need to meet regularly (as if it was a committee). Care would be taken to avoid duplication/overlap of work for staff between this group and SEC. 	<p>RC</p> <p>Adm com</p>
9.	<p>Governor Business</p> <p>a. <u>Governor visits</u>:</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A governor day in school had been held on 9 December – see visit reports and meeting notes uploaded to Governor Hub. ▪ CH reviewed governor visits reports on a regular basis and would share any themes as and when they arose. Some items to escalate to committee had been identified and included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technology strategy ○ Green resources/sustainability plan ▪ Action: Governors to liaise directly with subject leaders to arrange spring and summer term visits. ▪ Action: RC to re-iterate the purpose of governor visits to staff at the next staff meeting (ie none judgemental but finding out how the curriculum is implemented and what impact that is having). ▪ Action: HL/RC to arrange a GDPR review/DPO visit in Spring 2/Summer term. ▪ Q Was it possible for the school to be sued for breach of GDPR? Action: HL/RC to follow up. ▪ CF had undertaken a staff wellbeing visit in November and had held/had planned some follow up meetings with individual staff. The wellbeing team have held two meetings and have drawn up an action plan of things to address. ▪ Collective worship monitor: Governors were invited to attend collective worship on Mondays (10.15am in school) or Tuesdays (9.10am in church) and to complete the separate collective worship form to add to the SIAMs evidence folder. ▪ Action: Governors to attend collective worship. ▪ Action: RC and DS would meet to review the school’s business continuity plans. <p>b. <u>Composition</u>: the following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lucy Parr had moved to Foundation Governor (term: 27 Nov 2022 – 26 Nov 2026) ▪ Mary Jean Pritchard had been appointed as the LA governor (term 04 Oct 2022 – 03 Oct 2026). ▪ Henry Loweth would renew his term of office (Foundation governor) when it expired on 02 Apr 2022. This was approved by the PCC in late January 2023. ▪ Staff governor elections: Following Kate Birss’ resignation at the end of the spring term a new staff governor would need to be elected. ▪ Action: RC to arrange staff governor election in Spring 2 (this was open to all members of staff). ▪ Hannah Draeger had confirmed that she would not re-stand as a parent governor when her term of office expired on 17 November 2023 but had volunteered to move into another governor slot. <p>c. <u>Training</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CF noted that the governing body had an excellent mix of skills and encouraged governors to complete any training which would support their roles. ▪ Action: CF to agree the in-house training subject and book. ▪ Since the last meeting the following training had been undertaken or booked: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lucy Parr: Handling school complaints: 6 December 2022 ○ Simon Counce: Handling school complaints: 16 January 2023 ○ Mary Jean Pritchard: Safeguarding: 17 January 2023 	<p>All</p> <p>RC</p> <p>HL/RC HL/RC</p> <p>All RC/DS</p> <p>RC</p> <p>CF</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lucy Parr: Finance briefing for maintained schools 31 January 2023 ○ Mary Jean Pritchard: Governor induction training: 7 February 2023 <p>d. <u>Governor hub</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CF had re-ordered the document section of Governor Hub; to create a school evidence folder and a governor evidence folder and to archive out of date documents. 	
10.	<p>Policy Review</p> <p>The following policies had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Behaviour and discipline policy b. Supporting children with medical conditions: subject to the amendment of “parent” to “parent/carer” in the prescribing medicines form. <p>The following policies had been reviewed by committee and ratified by the FGB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Schedule of financial delegation d. Charging and remissions policy e. Staff pay policy f. Work experience policy g. Equality policy and equality action plan h. Staffing structure i. Children looked after j. Communications policy <p>The following policies had been reviewed and approved at committee and were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> k. PE policy l. Homework policy m. Sun protection policy n. Flexible working policy o. Staff appraisal policy p. Computing policy q. PHSE & Citizenship policy r. Remote learning policy s. Restrictive physical intervention policy t. Lettings policy u. Privacy notice v. Bullying and harassment policy 	
	<p>Any other business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Details of how governors could access The Grid had been shared on the agenda. ▪ Committee chairs would add the meeting date to the diary on Governor hub 	
11.	Closing prayer	
12.	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>Thursday 18 May 2023 at 7pm</p> <p>Monday 10 July 2023 at 6.45pm - school council to join meeting</p>	

Meeting closed at 8.40pm

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Summary of actions arising from the meeting			
No	Item	Who	Status
1	DS/RC to review the wording of the vision and values in line with the discussion above.	DS/RC	
2	Request for funding to allow teacher release time for Y6 booster sessions would be considered at the Resources Committee.	Resources	
3	Update on the TLR recruitment process at the next Resources Committee	Resources	
4	School to upload new admissions policy to the website.	RC/office	
5	Admission committee to decide if the form was needed and if yes to ensure it was prominent in the admissions paperwork and complied with GDPR/data protection legislation.	Admissions	
6	Governors to liaise directly with subject leaders to arrange spring and summer term visits.	All governors	
7	RC to re-iterate the purpose of governor visits to staff at the next staff meeting (ie none judgemental but finding out how the curriculum is implemented and what impact that is having).	RC	
8	HL/RC to arrange a GDPR review/DPO visit in Spring 2/Summer term. Investigate whether or not the school could be sued for breach of GDPR/data protection guidance.	HL/RC	
9	Governors to attend collective worship.	All governors	
10	RC and DS would meet to review the school’s business continuity plans	RC/DS	
11	RC to arrange staff governor election in Spring 2 (this was open to all members of staff).	RC	
12	CF to agree the in-house training subject and book.	CF	
13	Update on need to complete a deep-poll check - <i>In response to your query below, the relevant guidance is in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) which asks schools to request that candidates bring along their birth certificate ‘if available’, but the DBS should cover name changes too.</i>	Clerk	Completed