

*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

Thursday 18 June 2025 at 6.45pm held at the school

### MINUTES

FGB ATTENDANCE TRACKER 2024/25					
Name	Governor Type	10 Oct	10 Feb	20 May	18 June
Ken Burgess	Foundation Governor	P	P	A	P
Simon Counce	Foundation Governor	P	N	P	A
Rizelle Crouch	Headteacher	P	P	P	P
Dr Hannah Draeger	Local authority governor	P	A	P	P
Austin Finnegan	Parent Governor	P	P	P	P
Dr Catherine Harvey	Co-opted Governor	P	P	P	P
Marietjie Kennett	Staff governor	P	P	P	P
Sara Longden	Foundation governor		P	P	P
Henry Loweth	Foundation Governor	P	P	P	P
Patrick Moriarty	Foundation Ex-officio governor			P	A
Lucy Parr	Foundation Governor	P	P	P	[
Natalie Pepper	Parent Governor	P	P	P	[
Marie Price	Foundation Governor	A	P	P	A
Mary Jean Pritchard	Foundation governor	P	P	P	P
Charlotte McCrossin	Foundation Governor	A	Resigned 14 October 2024		
<b>In attendance</b>					
Tracey Norris	HFL Education Clerk	P	P	P	P

P	Present
A	Apologies provided
N	Not present

	ITEM	Action
<b>1</b>	<p><b>School Council Presentation</b> Bailey and Arthur joined the meeting to talk about their work on the school council during the summer term, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fund raising for Red Nose Day.</li> <li>▪ Creating rewards (stickers) for displaying the school values.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Playground initiatives to promote kindness and inclusive play.</li> <li>▪ Searching for bible stories which relate to the school values.</li> </ul>	
2.	<p><b>Procedural items</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Apologies and absences</u>: Apologies for absence had been received from Rev'd Moriarty, Simon Counce and Marie Price.</li> <li>b. <u>Conflicts of interest</u>: None relevant for this meeting.</li> <li>c. <u>Notifications of other business</u>: There were three items of other business.</li> <li>d. <u>Minutes</u>: The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 May 2025 were approved as an accurate record and would be signed by the chair and uploaded to the school website.</li> <li>e. <u>Matters arising were reviewed</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PM and AF to have photo taken for governor notice board: completed.</li> <li>▪ Governors to confirm on Governor Hub that they have read the child protection policy: completed.</li> <li>▪ LP to create flow chart for policy approval outside of meetings: completed.</li> <li>▪ Agenda item for June FGB meeting – agree next steps for strategic review and what documentation should be shared with external parties: on agenda.</li> <li>▪ Negotiations with PCC re 2026 hire charge to commence in September/October - the PCC financial year ran from January-December: c/f to September.</li> <li>▪ Governors to review Google document describing the school's vision of spirituality: ongoing.</li> <li>▪ Future SLT analysis of pupil data to monitor ethnicity (progress and attainment) alongside as all other vulnerable groups: ongoing.</li> <li>▪ Governors to attend collective worship/RE visits to support SIAMs evidence folder: ongoing.</li> <li>▪ LP to allocate link role to Sara Longden: on agenda.</li> <li>▪ Policies for next meeting (on agenda): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sustainability policy</li> <li>○ Business continuity plan</li> <li>○ Financial procedures manual</li> <li>○ FGB to develop a debt recovery policy</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ol>	Chair
3	<p><b>Headteacher's Written Report</b></p> <p>RC referred to her written report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting drawing the board's attention to:</p> <p><u>School context</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pupils on roll: 151 with six in-year admission places having been offered.</li> <li>▪ <b>Q Profile of these applications?</b> Ans: Families moving into the area.</li> <li>▪ Reception intake in September was higher than projected at 21 with a new enquiry made earlier this week. This was the first time Reception intake was over 20 pupils for several years.</li> <li>▪ RC thanked governors and staff for their support in promoting the school via social media/open mornings etc.</li> <li>▪ <b>Q Would this impact the split between Garnet and Topas?</b> Ans: No, and curriculum and structure decisions would be easier.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Q Was there a risk to Year 4?</b> Ans: RC was tracking this carefully; Topaz class could not go over 30 pupils.</li> <li>▪ <b>Action: Communicaiton group to analyse which open days had been attended (weekday or weekend) by the new cohort.</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Christian distinctiveness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ See Google document circulated in advance of the meeting for governor input on ways to define spirituality.</li> </ul> <p><u>Staffing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The staffing structure for September 2025 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</li> <li>▪ Governors discussed the comms sent to parents regarding the allocation of teachers for September and how this could be improved in future; some parents had raised concerns about new teachers being allocated to Y5/Y6 and many were upset that their child would not now be taught by Mrs Kennett. Reassurances regarding the experience of the incoming teachers could have been provided in the original comms, for example. RC agreed but noted there was a limit to what information parents needed to know, she had been asked intrusive/inappropriate questions about the new teachers.</li> <li>▪ <b>Q How would the job share work?</b> Ans: The plan was for one teacher to work Mondays and Tuesdays (all day) and Wednesday and Thursday mornings and the other to work Wednesday afternoon, Thursday afternoon and all-day Friday, however this would remain flexible to all for CPD/training etc.</li> <li>▪ Confidentiality: there had been a breach of confidentiality within the school community. A parent had found out about a teacher's personal plans and had asked her for more details.</li> <li>▪ This was not acceptable and for the time being comms to parents and staff were being tracked and where possible published at the same time.</li> </ul> <p><u>Extra curriculum</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eco committee had been working hard to improve the school's eco credentials and practices. They had achieved an Eco Award and this would be promoted on social media/school comms; Eco Flag unveiling event.</li> <li>▪ <b>Q Would orchestra continue in 2025/26?</b> Ans: Yes, this was led by the piano teacher and would continue as long as another member of staff volunteered to support behaviour management.</li> </ul> <p><u>Curriculum developments/quality of teaching</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Area for improvement: Assessment of RE curriculum. RC shared the three characters that would support pupils/staff to have more meaning full discussions about RE. See also posters on display in each classroom: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Livy: the sociologist – how do people live their lives.</li> <li>○ Sophie the philosopher – why are we here, what is the reason for this.</li> <li>○ Theo the theologist – what do people believe and why.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Teachers would ask pupils to suggest which character was relevant for the lesson topic.</li> <li>▪ SDP: good progress had been made against this year's priorities.</li> <li>▪ Whole class reading was in place and embedded and data was showing impact.</li> </ul>	NP
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Phonics testing had been completed, and pupils had performed well. The results would be shared when the nationally agreed pass mark was published (this was subject to change each year).</li> <li>▪ Subject leadership development would continue to be a focus on the SDP, but a huge amount of work had been completed during 2024/25 on progression across the phases/year groups.</li> <li>▪ Subject leaders were working on their actions plans which would be reviewed by SLT.</li> <li>▪ Priorities for 2025/26 would be:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Writing; with a focus on spelling and handwriting.</li> <li>○ Subject leadership; art.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Q Should maths be included in the SDP?</b> Ans: Analysis of data showed that maths and reading were both stronger than writing outcomes. This would be constantly monitored, NB end of term outcomes.</li> <li>▪ <b>Q Had RC been supported by the SEA in the development of the 2025/26 priorities?</b> Ans: The next SEA visit would be in the autumn term. RC would respond to SEA input but was confident that these were the right priorities for the school.</li> </ul> <p><u>Behaviour</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There had been one incident of bullying which had been investigated.</li> <li>▪ One child had been hurt when a Jenga brick had been throw in EYFS, the bricks had been mixed up with soft fabric blocks. The Jenga bricks had been moved to the KS2 playground.</li> </ul> <p><u>OFSTED framework</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The school would be in its OFSTED inspection window in 2025/26.</li> <li>▪ RC had shared the proposed new framework which was under consultation.</li> <li>▪ A self-assessment exercise had been completed, the school was “secure”, SLT would now start collating evidence to demonstrate the school was strong or exemplary.</li> </ul>	
4	<p><b>Attendance update</b></p> <p>The attendance report for 2024/25 (whole school and vulnerable groups) was shared in advance of the meeting. The following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attendance was strong at 97%, this was an improvement on YTD 2023/24 and above national average.</li> <li>▪ Unauthorised absences were low at 0.46%</li> <li>▪ Authorised absences (illness/medical appointments etc) were low at 2.62% (below national).</li> <li>▪ There had been a decline in the number of pupils who were recorded as persistently absent from 4.4% in 2023/24 to 3.4% in 2024/25.</li> <li>▪ <b>Q How did staff support/improve SEN attendance?</b> Ans: All attendance was tracked on an individual basis. When a pupil's attendance fell below 96% they were spoken to by a member of the class team, if it fell below 91% then parents were called in to meet the attendance lead (10 meetings held so far in 2024/25). Attendance was everyone's business.</li> <li>▪ There had been 34 holiday requests to date during 2024/25; three had been approved.</li> </ul>	
5	<p><b>Safeguarding Update</b></p>	

	<p>See headteacher's report for safeguarding update. The annual safeguarding report would be completed at the end of the summer term and shared at the next FGB meeting. The following was discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Child protection register: 0</li> <li>▪ Operation Encompass notifications: 1</li> <li>▪ Staff/pupil accidents and incidents: 1 pupil</li> <li>▪ RM Safety Reporting: 99.3% searched allowed 0.7% searched denied</li> <li>▪ The school's CLA provision was strong. MK was the CLA lead and was supporting one family with a referral for more help. Half termly meetings were offered to this family and other services were being signposted.</li> <li>▪ The link governor for safeguarding, Catherine Harvey, would be standing down in the autumn term and a hand over had already commenced with her replacement, Ken Burgess, beginning with a review of the spring term safeguarding report.</li> <li>▪ Governors had completed an internal and external H&amp;S audit of the school; see reports to Resources Committee.</li> <li>▪ Staff accident: an adult had hit their head on the cross beam of the playground gate; this had now been wrapped in caution tape to alert all adults of its low height.</li> <li>▪ <b>Q Did the school complete all necessary safeguarding checks for hirer?</b> Ans: Yes. Hirers were required to share their own safeguarding policy on an annual basis.</li> </ul>	
6	<p><b>Committee Q&amp;A</b></p> <p>a. <u>Resources Committee</u>: next meeting planned for July. NP highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The year end budget monitor had been posted on Governor Hub.</li> <li>▪ The draft sustainability policy had been shared and the lettings policy reviewed.</li> <li>▪ The final accounts 2024/25 audit certificate had been received.</li> <li>▪ DFC grants and expenditure report 2020-25 had been circulated in advance of the meeting along with the DFC grants and governor fund account report 2025.</li> <li>▪ Governor fund account money would be used to pay the school's 10% contribution to the new boiler.</li> <li>▪ £6,000 would be allocated to the KS2 playground redevelopment; there would be further discussion at next Resource committee meeting.</li> </ul> <p>b. <u>School Effectiveness Committee</u>: no meeting held since last FGB meeting, next meeting planned for July.</p> <p>c. <u>Admissions update</u>: Henry Loweth referred governors to the requirement to consult on the school's admissions criteria every seven years – this was due in 2026 for the 2027/28 academic year. The draft paperwork had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FGB to agree in principle that the admission arrangements would remain unchanged.</li> <li>▪ Draft notice of consultation would be prepared in the autumn term to be sent to local nurseries/libraries and other stakeholders; this would also tie in with school open day/promotional work.</li> <li>▪ <b>Action: NP to check google search: faith school in Harpenden – currently St Nicholas did not come up.</b></li> <li>▪ Governors had discussed in detail and made changes to the admissions criteria during the last consultation process and shared a summary of these discussions with</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Res Com</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NP</p>

	<p>new governors; the long list of categories on previous admission criteria had dissuaded some families from applying, mistakenly thinking that if they were eligible under the 7<sup>th</sup> criteria they would have no chance of getting in. Fewer categories had resulted in more applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HL confirmed that it was the Diocese who had recommended the removal of the church attendance criteria.</li> <li>▪ Governors <b>APPROVED</b> in principle that the admission criteria would remain unchanged.</li> </ul> <p>d. <u>Communication working party</u>: a meeting would be held in preparation of the autumn term induction events for new families with the PTA chair.</p> <p><b>Action: Website audit in September to ensure the school's website was fully compliant for the coming year.</b></p>	NP
7	<p><b>Strategic Direction of the School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ LP had circulated a draft strategic action and invited governors to review this at committee level and add their names to the category they were most interested in. Ideally working parties of three governors for each.</li> <li>▪ Discussions within each category needed to be held prior to the October FGB meeting.</li> <li>▪ Following this, governors would seek information/guidance on pros-cons of academisation vs remaining as a maintained school.</li> <li>▪ <b>Action: Agenda item for committee meetings in July (strategic review).</b></li> <li>▪ Document to be shared with third parties had been agreed by the Resources Chair and would be tabled at the next Resources Committee.</li> </ul>	All
8	<p><b>Governor Business</b></p> <p>a. <u>Composition</u>: Catherine Harvey's term of office would expire in October, and she would not seek to serve for a third term. It was agreed that Natalie Pepper would move into this vacant co-opted slot which would create a parent governor vacancy.</p> <p><b>Action: Parent governor elections to be held in the autumn term.</b></p> <p>b. Governor roles and responsibilities: the following changes to the roles and responsibilities document were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ History link role: Sara Longden</li> <li>▪ Geography: Lucy Parr</li> <li>▪ PE/Art/DT would be covered collectively by all governors.</li> <li>▪ SEND: Marie Price</li> <li>▪ CLA: Hannah Draeger</li> <li>▪ <b>Action: RC to update names of staff subject leaders</b></li> </ul> <p>c. <u>Governor visits</u>: Catherine Harvey had circulated a document in advance of the meeting summarising the governor visits made during 2024/25. The following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There were fewer governor visit reports from the governor day in school than previous years.</li> <li>▪ The link to the blank governor visits report was shared:  <a href="https://app.governorhub.com/document/6855582e8e7f32c16bbd03d0/view">https://app.governorhub.com/document/6855582e8e7f32c16bbd03d0/view</a></li> </ul>	School office



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	<p>d. <u>Sustainability policy</u>: subject to the table of energy usage being moved to an appendix: approved.</p> <p>e. <u>Financial Procedures manual</u>: approved.</p> <p>f. <u>Business continuity plan</u>: approved. A back up tape for the server was regularly made by the IT technician.</p> <p><b>Q: Was the school able to access registers in the event of a cyber-attack?</b> Ans: A printed register was in each room; this was also used as a fire evacuation register. Printed copies of all pupils with medical conditions details were included in their medicine bag. Members of SLT had a paper copy of the business continuity plan.</p> <p>g. Term dates 2026/27: approved.</p> <p>The following policy had been circulated shortly before the meeting and would be approved via Governor Hub by 26 June:</p> <p>a. Maternity leave policy (model policy)</p> <p><b>Action: LP/RC to check if HFL had produced a paternity policy</b></p>	LP/RC
10	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>a. The following annual reports would be shared at the autumn FGB meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CLA report to the virtual school</li> <li>▪ Annual safeguarding report</li> <li>▪ Pupil premium/sports premium reports</li> </ul> <p>b. School meals: The school was currently absorbing the most recent HCL price increase. It was agreed that the Resources Committee should review the current charges ready to introduce new prices for September. Appropriate notice to parents would be given.</p> <p>c. FGB minutes on school website: LP to uploaded February and May minutes.</p> <p>d. Artificial intelligence: Advice from HFL governance briefing: there would be no generic policy on AI; governors should consider AI when reviewing all policies (in particular, cyber security, data security and copyright and safeguarding) – guidance would be shared in due course.</p>	NP LP
11	<p><b>Meeting dates for 2025/26</b></p> <p>Meeting 1: Thursday 9 October 2025</p> <p>Meeting 2: Monday 9 February 2026</p> <p>Meeting 3: Tuesday 12 or Wednesday 13 May 2026: to be confirmed</p> <p>Meeting 4: Monday 22 June 2026</p>	
12	<p><b>Close of meeting prayer</b></p>	

No	Action	Who	Status
1	Negotiations with PCC re 2026 hire charge to commence in September/October - the PCC financial year ran from January-December: c/f to September.	Chair	
2	Communicaiton group to analyse which open days had been attended (weekday or weekend) by the new cohort.	NP	

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3	NP to check google search: faith school in Harpenden – currently St Nicholas did not come up.	NP	
4	SEC to allocation governors to strategic review working parties	SEC	
5	Website audit in September to ensure the school's website was fully compliant for the coming year.	Resources	
6	Parent governor elections to be held in the autumn term.	School office	
7	For governor visit day, paper copies of governor visit forms to be available on the day.	RC/LP	
8	All governors to renew Prevent Training, ideally on an annual basis	All	
9	Policy matters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CH to add final wording to lettings policy.</li> <li>▪ LP/RC to check if HFL had produced a paternity policy</li> <li>▪ All governors to review and approve the maternity policy via GH by 26 June</li> </ul>	CH LP/RC All	
10	Agenda items for resources committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School meal charges</li> <li>▪ Strategic review working party composition</li> <li>▪ Allocation of £6,000 governor fund</li> <li>▪ Debt recovery policy</li> </ul>		