



SUMMER TERM (2) 2025 MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

MINUTES

Date Wednesday 9th July 2025
 Time 18.30
 Place Holmer Green Senior School

PRESENT: Tony Green (TG) – Chair
 Paul Davies (PD) – Vice Chair
 Ed Hillyard (EH) – Headteacher
 Claire Asare-Archer (CAA)
 Jeremy Hunt (JH)
 Paula Myburgh (PM)
 Steve Pilgrim (SP)
 Victoria Strutt (VS) – to 7.20pm

IN ATTENDANCE: Sian Beswick (SB) Director of Finance & Resources
 Laura Foster (LF) Deputy Headteacher
 Lynda Jackson (LJ) Director of Compliance & HR
 Jenny Knight (JK) Governance Professional
 Sarah Lary (SL) Senior Deputy Headteacher
 Sarah Towers (ST) Deputy Headteacher
 Alan Wooller (AW) Deputy Headteacher

APOLOGIES Beccy Roberts, Michelle Edwards, Melissa Miller, Kirsty de Groot, Roy Kamp

NOT PRESENT: Sue Latham-Lewis

Action Support Challenge

Governors' questions are highlighted in *italics* throughout these minutes.

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
1	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TG welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Beccy Roberts, Michelle Edwards, Melissa Miller, Kirsty de Groot and Roy Kamp. Sue Latham-Lewis was not present. 	
2	<p>Notification of Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on Part 2 item from last meeting. School Trips - JH 	
3	<p>Declarations of Interest against this agenda</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest, either new or against items on this agenda.</p>	

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
4	<p>Minutes of the FGB Meeting held 30 April 2025 and Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors approved the Minutes as an accurate record. <p>Actions and Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LJ reported it is unlikely that any recompense will be given from the solar panel company for loss of revenue over the summer, but they are moving panels to the re-roofed area at their own expense. • Expansion plan snagging: Details shared at FPH&S (see papers and minutes). Work is ongoing with Wilmott Dixon and Bucks, who have agreed to make a contribution. Further re-seeding work may be needed as the weather has been so dry. Bucks are paying for a new cat ladder and for the heating in English & Maths. There has been a further issue with the walk-in freezer due to a faulty solenoid which has now been replaced as a maintenance issue. • Catering contract was taken to FPH&S. • All other actions complete. 	
5	<p>Governor Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JH and BR terms of office come to an end in December. JH is keen to stand for a further term; BR TBC. 	
6	<p>Governor Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to TG and PM for logging their Managing Allegations Training on GovernorHub. • Other Governors are encouraged to log all their training in their profile on GovernorHub as this provides evidence that Governors are fulfilling their duties when it comes to inspections. 	Govs
7	STRATEGIC PLANNING	
7.1	<p>Curriculum – External School Improvement Partner Review</p> <p>AW presented on screen and the presentation was provided for circulation via GovernorHub. He highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Improvement Partner has been in for a second time this year (two weeks earlier in the year; back in May). He has considered what subject leads can talk about and evidence in the classroom; what materials are available online. He met with HoDs to do a mock deep dive of their subject and to find out what students know and understand by the time they have finished. • Lessons were visited in most subject areas listed. • Feedback: Subject leaders gave a really good account of themselves: their intended curriculum and how they evaluate it. There is good feedback and modelling, classroom pedagogy. Learning walks: Senior leader judgements on T&L were accurate. SLT know what is going on, what is good & bad. • Key takeaways include: 	

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Raising expectations of what school wants the students to be doing: not just ‘talk and chalk’ but questioning/sharing etc. ○ Excellent examples of modelling and scaffolding, but more of this needed and more consistency. ○ Maths and MFL: Work was paused so that SLT could work with HoDs and subject teachers. One out of four phases for teachers to work on still needed improvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feedback from May was similar. Non-negotiables were seen in every lesson, but Geography was less positive and is an area of focus. AW is taking over as Geography HoD temporarily in September (mat leave) and the Geography team being upskilled. ● Click culture (presenting not teaching) is to be avoided. ● A ‘playbook for teachers’ was shared, designed to help staff understand how SLT want them to work. ● Middle Leaders will be held to account for what happens in the classroom. ● The School Improvement Partner was using the current inspection framework but a new framework is expected in September. <p>Q – Is the School Improvement Partner coming back? A – No further plans for him to return but we have now got a good idea of where we are going and need to ensure consistency across all areas. It has been very useful.</p>	
7.2	<p>Report of Headteacher EH had circulated his report. Mia Barnes had also circulated a Head Student report despite having left following A-Levels. Governors asked School to pass on thanks to Mia for her report and participation when she comes back for her results.</p> <p>EH highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fixed term suspensions plateaued summer 1. ● Attendance: Authorized and unauthorized attendance will be separated out for the next report in October. ● A useful Governor Day was held on behaviour and attendance – report on p20. ● Numbers are 220 for Year 7 – but there are ongoing appeals. Well above 210 PAN. ● Page 8: Homework – parents get frustrated about this. Consistent homework timetable to be introduced in September with a week for students to hand in (KS3). ● Page 12 – CAMHS referrals remains a big issue as these continue to increase. 	EH

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	<p>Q – ImpactEd engagement report: Small cohorts of disengagement in Year 8: What does this mean? Is there an action plan to address this?</p> <p>A – Students completed a survey and asked how well they engaged with learning in school. Summary data based on ethnicity, gender etc. When compared with subgroups they felt this was the group that needed more work. We need to speak to them one-on-one to understand what they are not engaged with.</p> <p>An action plan will be pulled together. Student voice first and look to re-engage students through peer mentoring with sixth form students, plus more positive activities such as space at lunchtime for sport. This will come back to Governors.</p> <p>Q – Page 10: Managing attendance – over 60 letters have been sent KS3. Is this a significant number?</p> <p>A – We are in the middle of the league table of attendance. Our main focus is increasing our attendance to get back to pre-pandemic totals but we are nowhere near that at the moment.</p> <p>Q – Page 9: FT suspensions 1.86 is not a plateau; is this incorrect?</p> <p>A – Yes, that looks incorrect. Corrected table to be circulated.</p> <p>EH confirmed after the meeting that the correct figure is 12.12% (cumulative) to end Summer 1, not 1.86% (the rate for just that half term).</p> <p>EH continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding review: Report received yesterday – will be circulated for the next meeting and an action plan produced. Two external reviewers in (Andrew Hall Safeguarding Specialist) – full review. • Parent survey: Areas for improvement: Dealing with bullying, homework, school environment, comms. Will go back to parents with a one-page response. • Page 19: Working with Challenge Partners on KS5 teaching and improving quality of independent study. <p>Q – Table of questions add up to 111%. Question 8 – ‘I have raised concerns with the school and they have been dealt with satisfactorily’: This has got worse over the years. Is there a strategy for this? Now at 27% disagree/strongly disagree.</p> <p>A – We are considering employing someone to deal with emails coming in. A scattergun approach to lots of staff is hard to track, but if they come through one gateway, it causes backlogs. We have discussed time getting back to parents: meeting this is very difficult. We are experiencing a higher volume of emails coming in and there is always ongoing dialogue, not just one response accepted – it always escalates if they don’t like the response. This is the culture we are in. New school solicitors Browne Jacobson run a complaints course, which could be useful for Governors too.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EH</p>

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	<p>Q – Could you triage the emails? Could parents be directed to find the answer on the website in some cases?</p> <p>A – Mostly emails are about an individual child’s needs. Parents can go to County, but it is even harder to get a response. They can turn up at the school and try to force an answer. A relentless number of emails come in. It is sometimes hard to get to the actual job for answering emails.</p> <p>Q – Because not everything adds up, it is difficult to understand what 27% represents. Does this only go out once a year?</p> <p>A – Yes.</p> <p>Q – Question 14: Disagree/strongly disagree is increasing. Does this mean parents don’t think the new ranking system is working for them? This contradicts what is in the HT Report.</p> <p>A – There are different interpretations. 56% vs 34% feel it has helped them understand their child’s progress better. They might need to see rank order over time to understand fully.</p> <p>The next rank order will go out at the end of the academic year – when parents will see changing rank for the first time. They can compare from 2nd to 1st assessment point.</p> <p>Only Year 11 have had two rank order reports; their parents are a smaller number of the parent responses.</p> <p>Much of this is about KS3 and how the GCSE grade is not as meaningful as it is in Year 11.</p> <p>Q – Are you sending out a questionnaire to Year 8 and upwards? When?</p> <p>A – Last week of term, to get honest feedback. We want engagement across all subjects, even those that children are not taking for GCSE. We want to keep engagement all the way through KS3. If we don’t address this early, at GCSE they find out what they need for their next stage and will disengage from the others. We need to keep them going with all throughout. Grades are about opening up doors. We need to work with both parents and students on this: We need to keep on top of the work ethic.</p> <p>There is also positive feedback from parents about understanding where their student sits within the group.</p> <p>Q – Page 17: 4.3 – second para – 19 of 31 students accessing onsite provision – being scaled back as too much budget has gone on providing this support. It seems contradictory to say something has worked well but we are changing it. I understand the finances. How will we monitor this?</p> <p>A – I wonder if we can serve them better. Spending five periods of the day in the Bridge, I feel they become reliant. I think we could get more out of them and get them more ready for next steps earlier, rather as they have been in too sheltered an environment. In KS5 there isn’t the same provision unless they are at a special school. We will keep an eye on this – we need to support them – but in the right way.</p>	

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	Governors approved the sending of the 'You said, we did' response to parents in Appendix 3.	
7.3	<p>Annual Governors Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EH had circulated the report and thanked all for their input. • Approval was requested to share this on the website and have copies at the Open Evening. • The Report was approved. 	
7.4	<p>Estates Update</p> <p>The report had been circulated. SB highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIF success: Scaffolding has started to go up for roof replacement project to start once term finishes. Timeline to come but finish date is expected to be November. <p>Q – The phishing campaign failure rate seems to be worryingly high?</p> <p>A – There has been a significant improvement in the next quarter. Staff have been told governors are monitoring this. The majority who were caught out this time were new staff – so we are moving in the right direction. Governors will be included in the phishing campaign from September.</p>	
7.5	<p>Management Accounts</p> <p>The May management reports had been circulated. They show a breakeven position and the draft June ones show a similar position.</p>	
7.6	<p>School Development Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan had been circulated. Governors supported creation of this document via a working group. • This is the plan for 2025-2030 which is evaluated annually via the Headteacher's appraisal. • The plan was approved. 	
7.7	<p>Term Dates 2026/27</p> <p>The dates had been circulated. These are Bucks term dates apart from October half term when we try to get two weeks aligned with other schools. Inset days are supplied as well as the open evening.</p> <p>Q – Are the three inset days in September prescribed?</p> <p>A – One is.</p> <p>Term dates were approved.</p>	
8	COMMITTEE REPORTS	
8.1	HR Panels, Complaints Panels, Student Discipline Committees	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One complaint panel was held yesterday – thanks to TG and JH for their time. • The action log from previous panels was circulated. • Changes have been made to the CCTV policy, GDPR policy, Behaviour Policy and IT Policy. • KCSIE has just been updated with technical changes so Behaviour policy needs amending again. • Additional actions arising from panels, including yesterday's, will be added to the complaints action log, which will be a rolling document to be reviewed at each FGB as necessary. • EH to update parents on the completion of actions on the current log (JD complaint). 	<p style="text-align: center;">EH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EH</p>
<p>8.2</p>	<p>FPH&S Committee Budget 2025-26 The budget papers had been shared and SB highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025-26 shows a deficit of £262k for the year but this includes a spend of £220k on refurbishing three science labs. This would only happen if school is successful in a grant application for £100k and this is also based on governor approval of the full cost. • If this work is not done, the deficit would reduce to £42k. There are also possible pension savings of up to £171k. If these were realized at the end of the year it would create a surplus. • Only one budget can be submitted, so the £262k version is proposed. <p>Governors approved this budget for submission.</p> <p>3-year plan The plan had been circulated. SB highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without cap ex, projected deficits would be much smaller. • Proposal is to use some of the reserves to improve the school infrastructure at a time when there is a focus on schools with high levels of reserves. <p>Q – What would reserves be reduced to as a result of this? A – There would be £331k reserves at the end of this, which is below our policy threshold, but we also have the school fund account of a similar value – so we could protect our reserves in this way. The picture could also look very different in 12 months, as there are many variables. With other schools there seems to be a lot of focus on high levels of reserves, which may not help us in the fight for funding.</p> <p>A financial benchmarking process has been undertaken (data is available in the FPH&S meeting folder on GovernorHub.) A School Resource</p>	

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	<p>Management Review has been booked for Monday. This is similar to benchmarking but goes into more detail – analysing where School is spending the money. Suggestions come out of this as to how to improve financial health, which should give some helpful ideas. The report will come out over summer holidays and will be shared with Governors in the autumn.</p> <p>Governors approved the 3-year plan for submission.</p>	
9	GOVERNOR REPORTS	
9.1	<p>Chair Health & Safety visit took place (TG) and was reported to FPH&S Committee.</p>	
9.2	<p>Development Nothing to report.</p>	
9.3	<p>Safeguarding MM met with the safeguarding review team.</p>	
9.4	<p>SEND PD had circulated his report and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of SEND children in England: 1.7 million of school age. £638k of those have EHCPs. Looking at the scale of difference between those with and without identified SEND, is this because the remainder are being let down by the system? • One member of team is retiring after 23 years. A new assistant SENCO has started her qualification in June. <p>A – There are discussions about whether EHCPs will continue to exist. In Bucks only 14% of assessments are met within the statutory time frame. EH has been in touch to apply pressure but there has been no further action.</p>	
9.5	<p>Disadvantage A report had been circulated by BR.</p> <p>AW reported on the ‘Brilliant Club’ which is designed to engage disadvantaged students with life at university. 38 students were signed up to a tutorial with a University tutor. Students were given the opportunity to write a 2000 word essay which was marked on university standards (1st, 2:1 etc). 27 students were taken to Christchurch for graduation. There were lots of 1sts, 50% of whom are disadvantaged. There is a further Jesus College trip to come.</p> <p>PD commented on it being a brilliant report from BR and proposed thanks to BR and AW.</p>	

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9.6	<p>Careers</p> <p>EH reported: Katie Matthews has been appointed as the new careers officer for a September start. She is a qualified and trained careers lead.</p>	
10	POLICY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS	
10.1	<p>SEND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. There were no comments and the policy was approved. 	
10.2	<p>Dog Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated and has been trimmed down with experience of having dogs on site. Names in policies to be replaced with job titles where possible. LJ to check all. One grammar amend from JH. The policy was approved subject to the above. 	LJ
10.3	<p>Health & Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. There were no comments and the policy was approved. 	
10.4	<p>Non-Examination Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. Minor amend circulated by email from JH. The policy was approved subject to the above. 	LJ
10.5	<p>School Travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. Page 3: 5-12 minute walking zone is listed but the map isn't the same. LJ to change the policy to match the map. <p><i>Q – Does the policy apply to staff as well as pupils and is there an e-bike policy?</i></p> <p>A – Yes, staff are included. No-one currently uses an e-bike.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy was approved. 	LJ
10.6	<p>Risk Register</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The register had been circulated. There were no comments and the register was approved. 	
10.7	<p>Behaviour & Bullying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. LJ to use 'School' rather than 'Academy' for consistency. 	LJ

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review dates to be updated. The policy was approved subject to the above. 	U
10.8	Complaints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. Page 7 – ‘insert school name’ to be updated The policy was approved subject to the above. 	
10.9	Mobile Phone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy had been circulated. Parents are happy; some of the children are also happy. PD reported positive feedback from the SEND engagement meeting for the use of lockers and that sanctions should be firmer. Page 2: Para 5 school prefers students don't bring in devices – put this in bold. Proposal is to change the sanction for students breaking the phone policy. Previously it was a 3-day confiscation but now the policy is more bedded in, this will be increased to a confiscation for the remainder of the half term. If the confiscation happens in the last two weeks of term, it will be kept for the whole of the following half term. Everyone understands the policy now, but for some students the number of days is key to following it. There are signs and reminders at the gate. We are also seeing far fewer phones coming into school at all, which is our preference. Students still need a locker if they do not have a phone as by locking it, if it is empty they are indicating they do not have a phone and if one is found in a random search then it is confiscated. Governors were in favour of the stricter sanctions to enforce the policy, in order to create a phone free environment where students can concentrate. <p>Q – Might there be more parental complaints expected as a result of this? A – Perhaps, but confiscation of banned items is allowable. We have been really explicit in our communication of the rules; everyone understands them now. Those who need to access them (e.g. diabetic students for medical checking) know they can get their phone out to do this, e.g. in pastoral managers office.</p> <p>Q – Is the length of confiscation too harsh? A – It is a firm line. Ideally, we do not want phones in school. We have got down to a small number of individuals that test the policy and the 3-day confiscation needs strengthening. With a stronger line we believe all students will follow the policy.</p> <p>Q – If a student doesn't present a pouch, can you screen them?</p>	U

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	<p>A - EH – a metal detector can be used on their bag and blazer. Random checks are done.</p> <p>Governors requested a report on these sanctions and response to them at the next FGB.</p> <p><i>Q – Is the process of locking and unlocking phones quick or are there blockages?</i></p> <p>A – It is very quick. On the first day, all students were off site by 3.30pm. If they are staying for detentions or after school clubs, they unlock phones after these. There are some mobile unlocking units available if needed.</p> <p>The policy was approved.</p>	EH
10.10	<p>ECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy had been circulated. • There were no comments and the policy was approved. 	
10.11	<p>Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy had been circulated. • There were no comments and the policy was approved. 	
10.12	<p>Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy had been circulated later than the others and approval is needed by 1 September. • Changes had been made to page 4, making it explicit how curriculum choices work (as a result of a panel process). • Page 7 wording about management of oversubscriptions was changed. • The policy may need to be reviewed again within the year, subject to the actions log from the recent complaint panel. Policy to be brought back to the December meeting. • It was agreed that presentations to parents put on the website should contain as much information as those delivered face to face, for those parents that are unable to attend. • There was clarification on the fact that EHCP students have priority over SEN-K students when it comes to options. • The policy was approved. 	EH
11	OTHER MATTERS	
12	<p>Dates and Times of Meetings</p> <p>Next FGB meeting: Weds 8 October 2025, 6.30pm</p> <p>Governor Day dates to be amended to include two Fridays and one Wednesday (Friday 10th October instead of the following week). LJ/JK to recirculate the dates.</p>	LJ/JK

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13	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>JH requested School give advance notice on timing and rough cost of larger trips, especially the ski trip? This would help parents with budgeting and planning. One day's notice is not enough. Agreed.</p> <p>TG thanked everyone for their time and wished everyone a good summer holiday.</p>	EH
14	<p>Evaluation of Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors agreed that the meeting had been conducted appropriately and effectively in terms of SIP priorities and student outcomes. 	

The meeting closed at 8.25pm

Minutes approved by the Governing Board:

Signed

Date

Mr T Green – Chairman of the Board