

Minutes of the Meeting of St Matthew's Primary School Full Governing Body (FGB)
at 6.00pm at St Matthew's Primary School on Thursday 20th March 2025

Present: Aditi Vedi (Co-chair and in the chair), Chris Jagger (Co-chair), Ricardo Herbane, Simon Richardson, Katie Hehir, Linda Jones, Ananay Aguilar, Sonia Ingersent, Simon Richardson, Kate Spencer-Allen, Elizabeth Steel, Sophie Waring, Andrew Grieve.

Apologies: John Parkin, Neil Perry.

Attending: Tony Davies (Headteacher, HT).

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting at 6pm and welcomed the new governor, Sophie Waring. CJ agreed to take minutes in the absence of the clerk.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

There were no new specific declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the FGB Meeting on Thursday 13 February 2025

It was noted that KSA was ill for the last meeting, so not present.

A governor raised the issue of minutes not being produced in a timely fashion, and that it was impossible 5 weeks later to accurately confirm whether the minutes were actually a true record of the meeting. He suggested they should be done ideally in a day or two.

Another governor suggested brevity was key, but that they should record key challenges, key decisions and key figures.

4. Head Teacher's Report

Deficit now £56k, due to £36k pay increase handled incorrectly by SBS software, and the change in early years funding of £18k. There was a likely £45k due back to us from the council for SEN, that we would hopefully get back in the next period.

A governor challenged if there was a date for this. HT responded there was not, and indeed it was not even certain we would receive it.

HT reported on the difficulties on the local authority, and a discussion ensued. He had an interesting discussion with the new Finance Advisor, Jonty Holden, who said something along the lines that "if schools cannot produce a budget to eradicate their deficit within three years, it can be presented and reviewed by council officers to decide if it is acceptable", which is something of a departure from the previous stance.

5. Resources for Learning

Schools Financial Value Standard, 2024-25: There was a robust discussion of this standard, and in particular Item 12, following on from the comments in the HT's report. The Co-chair needs to sign this document.

Lettings: This is a pre-existing policy and the prices have been increased by around 10%. The price increase was challenged by the governors, some thinking that our prices are too low, so the increase should be higher. It was agreed that in order not to shock tenants, and in order to support value to the community, that the price rise was sensible.

HT reported that the Greek School were wanting to hire 8 classrooms in a significant booking worth some £15k, so he would be considering this.

6. Raising Standards

Ofsted: HT briefed on what a meeting would be like:

- Informed Monday, inspection Tues / Wed.
- Governors asked to a meeting on the first day, and then a feedback meeting at the end of the second day.
- Probably an ungraded visit, but could be graded. If ungraded, they may come back to grade within next year or two if they think standards have gone up or down.
- HT has circulated notes, and ES reminded governors that they should be aware of the documents within the Safeguarding folder, which includes notes on what a concern would look like, who the DSLs are (ES, KSA and HT).
- She commented that it was important that governors are aware of their responsibilities and up to date in their training, but that in fact the governors have been good at doing this.

Local Authority School Improvement Record: This was a useful and positive report.

Local Authority SEND visit: HT reported that the visit was last Friday and he would share the report with us as it had only just arrived this evening. They were very impressed with it, picking three children from the register and being able to witness and talk to those children.

A governor challenged why Yr 1 phonics is 5% below the national average, and referenced the fact that our results at KS2 are excellent. HT said this might be a combination of the school adding value and thus getting better results later on, but also partly due to having some generations with particular difficulties (in this case, the likely cause for this is Covid, which has left R and Y1 children worse off). Some schools have diverted a lot of resource to sorting this, but HT feels that while we are focussing on it, it would be wrong to drop everything else to fix this problem, and there was general agreement on this point.

7. Safeguarding (SG) Update

ES undertook the Safer Recruitment, and recommended it to governors, RH, AV and SW agreeing to take the training.

She does training of TAs every half term to make sure they are up to date on policies.

8. Governance Matters

RH and AV to do their link governor visits. SR to meet with the new Phonics lead, Marie Bushen, who is covering Fiona's maternity leave.

AV agreed to take on the LAC (Looked After Children) link role. RH agreed to take on a new link role covering mental health and behaviour. ES observed that Equality we do not have a link governor for, but instead we regularly discuss on the governing body.

9. Any Other Business

None.

10. Dates of Future Meetings

Thursday 8th May 2025, 6pm.

Wednesday 9th July 2025, 6pm.

11. Close of meeting

19:50 Meeting ends.

Action points:

- Co-chair signs SFVS and Minutes.
- HT to share SEND visit report.
- HT to ensure link governor document up to date.
- All governors to review link governor document and if interested volunteer for roles.
- AV, SW, RH to do Safer Recruitment training.
- AG agreed to do finance link governor visit before the next meeting.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____