

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 8th May 2025

Present: Aditi Vedi (Co-chair), Chris Jagger (Co-chair, chairing this meeting), Ricardo Herbane, Simon Richardson, Katie Hehir, Linda Jones, Ananay Aguilar, Sonia Ingersent, Kate Spencer-Allen, Elizabeth Steel, Andrew Grieve, John Parkin, Neil Perry.

Apologies: Sophie Waring.

Attending: Tony Davies (Headteacher, HT)

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting at 6pm. The governing body was congratulated on a successful recent Ofsted visit, more details to be discussed in the meeting agenda.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

There were no new specific declarations of interest.

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

Previous minutes agreed upon

Absence of clerk noted, today's minutes taken by AV.

4. Head Teacher's Report

Exclusions – increasing number this year compared with previous years. Reasons noted, challenging behaviour from students, sometimes risks to the child themselves only, and other times risks to other students/staff. Effect on welfare of staff noted, one student now has one-to-one teaching assistant, who is safe in the physical space provided to the student and staff member. There are fewer exclusions in older years, though not zero. It was noted that younger children may need support to settle in to school.

Further discussion about lack of places in special schools and the impact on our school, which have been previously addressed in FGB meetings.

5. Resources for Learning

In year deficit of £9000 for the 2024-25 financial year, which is very good given the context. Budget for new financial year, we are expecting an in-year deficit of £34,000, some carried over from last year (approx. £20,000). Once the expected SEND funding starts, this will improve but it is hard to predict when the local authority will start to meet statutory deadlines for EHCPs. The delay in approval of EHCPs and the associated funding is affecting the school's funding. Still no resolution on whether the funding will be backdated as yet, and is under ongoing discussion.

Other factors that will influence the budget for the next financial year will include teachers' pay scale. This budget is built on the assumption of a 3% pay rise, including NI calculations. The FGB recognised that the current request from the Teacher's Union is currently 4%. The final outcome is awaited, and may significantly affect the budget.

Schools on the minimum per pupil funding (MPPF) level are assuming a 2% increase currently. Per pupil funding levels are determined based on a number of factors including number of pupil premium students. There is an expectation that this MPPF will increase by 1%.

Income spreadsheet was reviewed – there was a minor discrepancy in the income from lettings, which will be reviewed outwith the FGB meeting. Income from trips is balanced against expenditure for trips. The FGB noted that the school is grateful for the ongoing contributions and donations from the PTA, which have a significant impact on the overall school budget.

The budget was discussed and clarified with Stephanie Kirbyshire, financial adviser, who agreed that the budget is sensible and reasonable in its current form.

The FGB unanimously approved the school budget for 2025/26, including the Deficit Business Case as outlined.

6. Raising Standards

Ofsted visit: overall a very positive visit. The report reflected the feedback in general. Both were strong and supportive overall. Areas of focus aligned with the school development plan including introduction of Monster Phonics and SEND pupil standards. The school was commended for having a broad and balanced curriculum.

Attendance was commended as an area of strength for the school, in particular this being a major area of focus for the school. Safeguarding was another particular area of strength, and the rigour with which the school treats this was recognised. Quality of teacher knowledge across subjects, content knowledge was acknowledged, and thereby reflected in the overall very high standard of education and performance at the school.

Governors' interview was very positive, and the challenges that the school faces were recognised by the Ofsted inspectors. Governors agreed that the school had acted in a timely manner to address the need of SEND children in the school, and recognised that more funding is needed to further address the ongoing challenge of the increased needs for this group of children.

The inspectors spent a significant amount of time interviewing children directly, with excellent feedback from these interviews.

SEND and pupil premium attainment was an area identified as needing ongoing attention, which the school is noted to have prioritised already. The inspectors noted the resources that are already being deployed e.g. one-to-one support with particular SEND children.

School development plan:

Pupil premium and SEND - Of the 96 children on SEND/pupil premium, 41 have been identified as having a history of adverse childhood experiences and some open to social and family services. This was based on information collated from teachers and reports made to social services by the school. The FGB recognised that this may be an underestimate as some families may not have disclosed this information as yet. Percentage of pupil premium who are also SEND are higher at St Matthews than the national average.

Next steps – to review the areas of focus in the school in light of the recent Ofsted assessment. Attendance and attainment for SEND pupils are areas that need ongoing attention, and have already been major areas of focus

for the school in previous and current school development plans. Pupil premium and LAC students are widely recognised as having the highest learning needs by the school.

The following two development points were noted from the Ofsted report as areas for attention:

- Children recalling previous learning effectively. Ofsted noted that the experiences were recalled more effectively than the core knowledge. Children were able to recall knowledge with brief prompts, as expected. Suggestion from the governing body to consider “knowledge organisers” at the start of each topic.
- Teachers intervening in a timely and effective manner to help students recap prior learning. Teachers are encouraged to help students to correct errors in a timely manner.

Staff meetings: to be scheduled to address Ofsted feedback and areas for development as outlined above. Action plans from school development plan to be reviewed. Discussion of upcoming development points from the staff body.

7. Safeguarding (SG) Update

Safeguarding noted to be effective the Ofsted report. Strong praise for safeguarding as an area of focus from the school. Highly capable team and excellent DSL leadership commented upon in the Ofsted report.

8. Governance Matters

Next meeting to include draft of new behaviour management policy and key areas for development in the new academic year, including curriculum development. Previous areas to be revisited including phonics, leadership restructuring, SEND pupil needs.

Behaviour link governor visit needed. RH to have an online safety visit and a wellbeing visit. AV to schedule safeguarding governors visit. Early years visit to be scheduled.

9. Any Other Business

None.

10. Dates of Future Meetings

Wednesday 9th July 2025, 6pm.

11. Close of meeting

19:50 Meeting ends.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____