



St John's Church of England VA Primary School

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting Held in St John's Primary School

on
Tuesday 22nd September 2026
at
4:15 pm

Present:

Luke Merchant Vice Chair	Foundation Governor	Health and Safety, GDPR, Cybersecurity <i>SDP – Future Planning</i>
Olly Priestley	Headteacher	
Colin Simpson	Rector (ex-officio)	RE, SIAMS and Church School Distinctiveness <i>SDP – Future Planning</i>
Ruth Knowlman	Foundation Governor	Collective Worship
Jan Jones	Foundation Governor	<i>SDP Sustainability and Writing</i>
Phil Rogers	Local Authority Governor	Finance
Rachael Horan	Parent Governor	SEND, Pupil Premium, Children Looked After
Sarah Daniels	Staff Governor	EYFS, <i>SDP – Curriculum</i>
Tayo Oladipo	Foundation Governor	<i>SDP – SIAMS</i>

Apologies:

Jo Leigh, Chair	Foundation Governor	Safeguarding, Equality Duty
Claire Harding	Parent Governor	<i>SDP – Writing and SIAMS</i>

In Attendance:

Angela Morley – Clerk to Governors

Item	Details
1.	WELCOME & OPENING REFLECTION The Clerk welcomed all present and opened the meeting with a prayer. The Clerk conveys the congratulations of the Governing Board to Sarah Daniels upon her marriage during the summer holiday.
2.	APOLOGIES Apologies received from Jo Leigh and Claire Harding due to illness. Governors accepted the apologies.
3.	DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS/CODE OF CONDUCT There were no declarations of business or pecuniary interest to declare. The Clerk confirmed that all Governors had completed and submitted their Declaration of Interests Forms. Governors further confirmed that they had read and agreed to abide by the Governor Code of Conduct for the 2026/27 academic year.
4.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES • MEETING HELD ON 14th July 2026 The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.
5.	MATTERS ARISING None raised. Outstanding Actions: • The Headteacher (HT) confirmed that the new windows and doors are highly energy efficient. He further advised that reflective film had been added to assist with temperature regulation and provide an additional safeguarding benefit. • A Governor commented that it is not possible to open the roof vents in the hall. The HT stated that he would ask the Premises Manager to explore how this might be resolved. He also confirmed that the Asset Management Group would be exploring ways in which the school could be kept cool in a future heatwave when they next meet. • The HT confirmed that the Curriculum Lead receives 1.25 days per week non-contact time to undertake PPA and Leadership responsibilities. He and the Deputy Headteacher had taken on other aspects of the redundant Deputy Headteacher role and this transition had been quite smooth. • The HT reported that due to the revised Pupil Premium calculations and the loss of one class, the school pupil premium grant had reduced considerably. The Government had announced additional funding to support inclusion. The amount of inclusion funding to be received had not yet been confirmed, although it may partially offset the reduction. Further details will be reported to Governors when available. • The Clerk stated that the Medical and Collective Worship Policies had been updated and would be discussed at item 12. • The Clerk explained that, due to the Summer holiday break, she had not yet Updated Governor training register. Action Clerk • The HT confirmed that he had completed the timetable for school assemblies. He reported that he will be leading the Bible teaching assemblies and the Rector will also share teaching on miracles.

	The task of exploring extending the range of visitors to lead assemblies will be dealt with by the Ethos Group at their next meeting. Action Ethos Group
6.	ELECTION OF OFFICERS ELECTION OF CHAIR Jo Leigh was nominated by Luke Merchant and seconded by Ruth Knowlman. Jo Leigh was absent from the meeting but had previously indicated via email her willingness to stand as Chair. Governors unanimously resolved to appoint Jo Leigh as Chair for the 2026/27 academic year. VICE CHAIR Luke Merchant was nominated by Sarah Daniels and seconded by Phil Rogers. Luke Merchant withdrew from the meeting during the discussion and vote. Governors unanimously resolved to appoint Luke Merchant as Vice Chair for the 2026/27 academic year. The HT thanked both the Chair and Vice Chair for their commitment and valued support to the school and Governing Board.
7.	BOARD MEMBERSHIP MATTERS STANDING ORDERS SEPTEMBER 2026 The Governing Board (GB) reviewed and approved the Standing Orders for 2026/27. INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNANCE The GB reviewed and approved the Instrument of Governance. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME The GB reviewed and agreed the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. TERMS OF REFERENCE The GB reviewed and approved the Terms of Reference for the following committees and groups: - Headteacher Performance Management Committee - Pay Committee - Admissions Committee - Ethos Group - Asset Management Group ALLOCATION OF GOVERNOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: The Vice Chair presented the proposed allocation of Governor monitoring responsibilities and committee memberships for 2026/27. Governors recognised the importance of link Governor visits in providing effective monitoring, support and strategic challenge. The proposed allocations were approved: ➤ Safeguarding/Attendance – <i>Jo Leigh</i> ➤ SEND, Pupil Premium and Children Looked After – <i>Rachael Horan</i> ➤ Equality Duty – <i>Jo Leigh</i> ➤ Health and Safety – <i>Luke Merchant</i>

	➤ GDPR and Cybersecurity – <i>Luke Merchant</i> ➤ Finance/Catering – <i>Phil Rogers</i> ➤ RE, SIAMS and Church School Distinctiveness – <i>Colin Simpson</i> ➤ Collective Worship – <i>Ruth Knowlman</i> ➤ Sustainability - <i>Jan Jones</i> ➤ EYFS - <i>Sarah Daniels</i> ➤ Allergies - <i>Tayo Oladipo</i> • School Development Plan Strands: ➤ Strengthen inclusive approach - <i>Sarah Daniels/Rachael Horan</i> ➤ Enhance reading resources across Key Stage 2 - <i>Claire Harding/Jan Jones</i> ➤ Improve Christian Distinctiveness - <i>Ruth Knowlman/Tayo Oladipo</i> ➤ Enhance monitoring of attendance - <i>Luke Merchant/Jo Leigh</i> • HEADTEACHER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REVIEW PANEL Jo Leigh (Chair of Committee), <i>Luke Merchant</i> and <i>Ruth Knowlman</i>. • PAY COMMITTEE Luke Merchant (Chair of Committee) <i>Tayo Oladipo</i> and <i>Ruth Knowlman</i>. • ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE Jo Leigh (Chair of Committee) <i>Oliver Priestley</i> and <i>Sarah Daniels</i>. • ASSET MANAGEMENT GROUP Luke Merchant (Chair of Committee) <i>Colin Simpson</i>, <i>Jo Leigh</i>, <i>Sarah Daniels</i> and <i>Olly Priestley</i>. • ETHOS GROUP <i>Olly Priestley</i>, <i>Colin Simpson</i>, <i>Ruth Knowlman</i> The above appointments were unanimously agreed.
8.	HEADTEACHER WRITTEN REPORT A report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The report provided updates on: • School Characteristics • Attendance (staff and pupils) • Attainment and Achievement • Teaching • Staff CPD • Pupil Premium • Sports Premium • Educational Enrichment • Exclusions During Summer Term 2026 • Child Protection/Safeguarding

Q: Exclusions have fallen significantly. What has contributed to this improvement?

HT: Stated that there was only one fixed term exclusion (one afternoon) during the whole of the Summer term. He explained that this had reflected the considerable work undertaken to strengthen the school's behaviour culture and the support offered to pupils who may experience dysregulation.

Governors reviewed the published KS2 assessment data and discussed areas where small marginal gains could have resulted in improved outcomes.

Q: Do the children see any of the past assessment papers?

HT: Indicated that paper assessments are reviewed carefully and pupils had been made familiar with the format of the KS2 tests. In several cases, pupils had narrowly missed the next attainment level by one mark. The issue had not been a lack of understanding on the part of pupils but the way in which answers had been articulated.

Q: Who makes the decision to submit an appeal and are the children informed?

HT: Stated that the school reviews individual cases carefully and determines whether an appeal is appropriate. Children are not always informed of the process, particularly when this may create unnecessary anxiety. The purpose of the appeal process had been relevant to school accountability rather than pupils.

Governors noted the importance of ensuring assessment outcomes are considered alongside pupils' wider achievements and progress.

Q: The 'Year on a page' data report includes several abbreviations. Could these be explained for Governors?

HT: Agreed to include a glossary at the next meeting.

Action HT

Governors requested the opportunity to review sample assessment materials to strengthen their understanding of national assessment expectations and the level of challenge presented to pupils.

The **HT** agreed to circulate this material to Governors.

Action HT

Q: Staff welfare? Have we heard from the Deputy Headteacher since her redundancy? How is she adjusting?

HT: Stated that the former Deputy Headteacher had adjusted well and had recently become a volunteer within the school.

Governors thanked the Headteacher for his comprehensive report and recorded their appreciation to staff for their commitment, dedication and **endurance** in supporting pupils and contributing to the continued success of the school.

AWARENESS DAYS AND EDUCATIONAL VISITS

The **HT** reported on planned enrichment opportunities for pupils, including educational visits, sporting activities, extra-curricular clubs and wider community engagement opportunities.

The Board noted that increased transport and fuel costs continue to place financial pressure on the provision of educational visits and enrichment activities. Despite these challenges, Governors remained committed to providing a broad and balanced range of experiences for pupils.

ATTENDANCE REPORT

An attendance report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

	HT advised Governors that, during the first week of term, seven pupils had remained on roll despite having transferred to other schools. Obtaining confirmation of placement from receiving schools had taken longer than anticipated and had temporarily distorted attendance statistics. He reported that this issue had now been resolved. Q: The 25-26 attendance figures had been relatively low, with a final average below 92.5%. What counter measures had been put in place for this academic year? HT: Stated that he had implemented a significant attendance drive at the start of term. Incentives such as additional 'Golden Time' had encouraged positive attendance. In addition, focussed communication with parents appeared to have had a positive effect. Tracking attendance concerns robustly and monitoring every persistent absence closely had resulted in a positive outcome with a number of families already responding well to intervention. Governors acknowledged the challenges faced in improving attendance and welcomed this supportive and proactive approach, recognising the school's commitment to working in partnership and compassion with families to secure a positive outcome for pupils. CURRICULUM UPDATE HT: Provided a verbal update regarding curriculum developments and priorities for the year. He stated that the new Curriculum Lead had been provided with dedicated leadership time and was working with teaching staff to monitor provision, evaluate impact and identify priorities for further improvement. Governors welcomed the continued development of the curriculum and recognised the value of investing leadership time into securing sustained school improvement.
9.	SAFEGUARDING KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION (KCSIE) The HT presented an update on the changes introduced within KCSIE 2026 (including mandatory Part One reading for all staff and removal of Annex A). HT stated that Key updates included a stronger focus on early help, mental health, misogyny, violence against women and girls, AI-related safeguarding considerations, mobile-free schools, revised regulated activity guidance and updated advice for gender-questioning children. Governors were reminded of their responsibility to read and understand Part two of KCSIE and the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The Clerk confirmed that this information had been shared with Governors. Governors confirmed that they had read and understood the details. Governors also confirmed that they had read and understood the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Behaviour Policy. HT Stated that he would deliver Governor Safeguarding training immediately following the next meeting. Action HT STAFF TRAINING HT reported that Safeguarding training had been delivered to all staff and volunteers during the September INSET programme. All staff had signed to confirm that they had read and understood KCSIE 2026 and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

- **BENEDICTS LAW/ALLERGY AWARENESS**

Governors received a detailed update regarding the statutory guidance for allergy management introduced through the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, effective from 1st September 2026.

The Board noted the school's responsibility in relation to:

- Maintaining an up-to-date Allergy Policy;
- Allergy Risk Assessments;
- Staff training;
- Individual Health Care Plans;
- Availability of spare adrenaline auto-injectors; and
- Monitoring and reporting of allergy-related incidents and near misses.

The **HT** informed Governors that the school was already well prepared to meet the new requirements due to existing arrangements in supporting pupils with severe allergies.

HT confirmed that all staff had received allergy awareness training and that appropriate revised procedures had been embedded within school practice. He stated that Individual Healthcare Plans were in place where required and staff were familiar with the specific needs of pupils with allergies.

Governors noted that there is no statutory requirement to appoint a designated Allergy Governor. Following discussion, it was agreed that oversight of allergy safety would be monitored by Dr Tayo Oladipo.

The Board recognised the importance of ensuring that pupils with allergies are fully included and able to participate safely in all aspects of school life, reflecting the school's values of **compassion and respect** for the individual needs of every child.

Q: The school Allergy Safety Policy details action to be taken during an anaphylaxis reaction but not an antihistamine approach. Please could this be added?

HT agreed to examine the policy and amend as necessary. He stated that all appropriate responses were set out in the Individual Health Care plans in consultation with medical professionals.

Q: Who is the designated senior leader responsible for allergy safety?

HT: Informed Governors that responsibility sits with the Deputy Headteacher, Laura Plant and is monitored through safeguarding, medical and health and safety arrangements.

Q: Will staff training be refreshed annually and are different manifestations of allergic reactions referenced?

HT: assured Governors that staff receive regular training and are made aware of the differing presentations of allergic reactions. Early intervention, including the administration of antihistamines where appropriate, forms part of the agreed procedures.

Q: Are all pupils requiring support covered by appropriate IHPs?

HT: Yes. Individualised plans are in place and reviewed regularly in partnership with parents and relevant medical professionals.

Q: Does the school stock and monitor spare adrenaline auto-injectors?

	HT: Yes. Appropriate supplies are maintained and monitored in accordance with statutory guidance. Q: How will allergy incidents and near misses be reported to Governors? HT: Stated that all near misses and incidents will be recorded on the school Health and Safety portal, EEC and included on the termly EEC management report. Governors also noted the robust controls surrounding school meals and the imperative upon parents to identify allergies when ordering meals, ensuring the kitchen and lunchtime staff have immediate access to crucial information. Governors were reassured that allergy awareness is well established throughout the school. Tayo Oladipo, as designated monitoring Governor for allergies, to review the arrangements and provide further assurance to Governors. Action TO
10.	FINANCE MONTH 3 REPORT Governors noted the contents of the Month 3 report and acknowledged that there had been a delay in the receipt of this report due to external circumstances. Governors accepted the report and agreed that detailed financial scrutiny would take place upon receipt of the Month 6 report in November. SFVS The HT reported that there were no further updates to regarding Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS).
11.	PREMISES PREMISES REPORT A report had been circulated prior to the meeting providing updates on: • Health and Safety Compliance Data • Completed Capital Works • Contractors on Site • Premises Manager Site Work • Headteacher Office • New SENCO Office and Meeting Room • Simmonds Classroom • Pankhurst Classroom • KS2 Corridor • New Photocopier Room • Reception Office • Kitchen • Hall/Supplies Cupboard • McCartney Classroom • Mandela Classroom • Attenborough Classroom • Windsor Classroom • Nurture Room • Business Manager Office • KS1 Corridor • Foyer Area • KS2 Boys' Toilets

- KS1 Girls' toilet's
- Additional Items
- IT Items

Governors noted the significant improvements made across the school during the summer holiday period.

The Board formally recorded its appreciation of the work undertaken by the Premises Manager, recognising his dedicated **service** to the school community and the significant contribution made to improving the learning environment for pupils and staff. Governors acknowledged that a considerable amount of maintenance and improvement work had been completed in-house, generating substantial financial savings for the school. It was agreed that a letter of thanks would be sent by Governors. **Action Clerk**

Catering Arrangements

Governors discussed the catering provision and considered the increasing expectations surrounding the future school food standard requirements and allergy management.

Q: How do we monitor the effectiveness of the kitchen and catering arrangements?

HT: Explained that the Somerset Council catering audit was due to take place during early October and future monitoring should include a specific focus upon allergy management and compliance with updated and future regulations.

Following discussion, Governors agreed upon the importance of rigorous monitoring to ensure appropriate compliance. In addition, financial monitoring should take place in order to ensure value for money and continued quality of provision.

Governors agreed to add the monitoring of catering arrangements to the Finance Governor role. **Action Clerk**

Q: How is the new intervention room working out in practice?

HT: Expressed his enthusiasm for the newly converted SENCO office and intervention space. He stated that it had proved to be an excellent resource. It provided an effective meeting space, intervention area and resource base, enabling improved support for pupils and staff.

Governors welcomed the positive impact of the new accommodation and recognised the importance of providing appropriate facilities to support inclusion and SEND provision.

WINDOW/FIRE DOOR REPLACEMENTS AND BOILER REPAIRS - SCA/DFG

The Governing Board received an update on the window and fire door replacements and repairs to the boiler:

Windows & Doors

Total Cost: £64,791.22

Governors 10% Liability: £6,479.12

Boiler

Total Cost: £21,284.38

Governors 10% Liability: £2,128.44

Total Governors contribution: **£8,607.56**

The Business Manager had submitted a paper recommending that the Governing Board meet the full 10% contribution for both projects upon completion, rather than spreading the cost through a loan arrangement. Governors noted that this recommendation was supported by:

	A higher than anticipated revenue Carry Forward at the end of the 2025/26 financial year. Forecast reductions in the future funding resulting from changes to Pupil Premium allocations and declining pupil numbers. Existing financial commitments relating to capital costs of approximately £4,470 per annum until 2029/30. Additional financial commitment in terms of interest in the value of £1,721. Governors discussed the financial implications and recognised the benefit of utilising available reserves to avoid additional long term borrowing commitments. Governors approved the proposal to repay the total Governor contribution during the current financial year.
12.	POLICY REVIEWS: The Governing Board reviewed and approved the following policies: • Whistleblowing (confirmed in place) • Safeguarding and Child Protection • Absconding Pupils • Allergies • Capability – Teaching Staff • Children with Medical Needs • Finance • Freedom of Information (see above) • Sex and Relationships • Collective Worship Policy
13.	GOVERNOR ITEMS ANNUAL PLANNER The GB reviewed and approved the Annual Planner for 2026/27. GOVERNOR VACANCIES Governors noted that one Foundation Governor vacancy remains and agreed that recruitment activity will continue. GOVERNOR TRAINING Governors confirmed receipt of forthcoming training opportunities. The Clerk confirmed that Governors had already booked training sessions, including finance and sustainability. GIAS The Clerk reported that the school's GIAS record had been reviewed and updated. GOVERNOR MONITORING: The Board noted that Governor monitoring responsibilities had been confirmed earlier in the meeting and that monitoring activity would commence during the autumn term.

	Governors recognised that monitoring visits provide independent assurance, supporting school improvement and enable Governors to fulfil their strategic responsibilities whilst maintaining care and respect for the work of staff. IMPACT OF THE MEETING: Governors reflected upon the impact of the meeting and agreed that it had: - Established a clear governance structure and allocation of responsibilities for the 2026/27 academic year. - Strengthened oversight of safeguarding, allergy management and statutory compliance. - Provided scrutiny of pupil outcomes, attendance, behaviour and school improvement priorities. - Confirmed strategic financial decisions regarding capital investments and premises improvements. - Supported the continued development of effective leadership and governance arrangements. - Reinforced the boards commitment to ensuring that every pupil can flourish academically, socially and spiritually within a safe and nurturing church school environment, where compassion, friendship and service are lived out through daily school life. -----S----- HT Invited all Governors to attend the Harvest Festival Service 22nd October at 1:30. Governors were also pleased to note that seven members of staff had qualified for Somerset County Council long-service recognition awards in acknowledgement of more than twenty years of service. The HT reported that certificates and gift vouchers would be presented during the Harvest Festival Service.
14.	CORRESPONDENCE The Clerk reported that no correspondence had been received.
15.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING The next meeting of the Full Governing Body will be held in school on Tuesday 13th October 2026 at 4:15 pm.

Meeting closed at 6 pm

Action points arising from meeting held on 22/09/2026

Minute Ref	Action Point	Responsibility
5	Update Governor training register	Clerk
5.	Explore outside speakers for assemblies	Ethos group
8.	Share glossary of 'Year on a Page'	HT
8.	Circulate previous test paper results	HT
9.	Deliver Basic Safeguarding Awareness training to Governors	HT
9.	Monitor allergy arrangements	TO
10.	Write letter of thanks to the Premises Manager	MC
11.	Add Phil Rogers to monitoring list: Catering	Clerk

Signed.....

Chair of Governors

Date.....