



FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Thursday 22 January 2026 at 7.00pm via Teams

MINUTES OF MEETING

GOVERNORS:

Name	Term expires	Attendance
Co-opted Governors (up to 5):		
Andrew Fenlon (AF)	09.01.2029	Present
Claire Bailey (CB)	07.07.2029	Present
Sally Channing (SC)	30.11.2026	Present
John Goddard (JG)	07.02.2028	Present
Michelle Doherty (MD)	12.05.2029	Present
LA Governor (1 only):		
(vacant)		•
Staff Governor (1 only):		
Ladan James (LJ)	30.11.2026	Present
Parent Governors (up to 4):		
Ami Johnson (AJ)	03.04.2029	Present
Avishka Kumarasinghe (AK)	17.05.2027	Present
Harleen Mattu (HM)	03.04.2029	Present
(vacant)		Present
Headteacher (1 only):		
Bryony Smith (BS)	N/A	Present
Pearly Greenwald (PG)		

OTHER ATTENDEES

Kate Boulter (KB)	n/a	Present
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PART ONE (NON-CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS):

Item	Agenda Item	Action
016/25-26	Apologies for Absence & Welcome There were no apologies.	
017/25-26	Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business Attendance Policy	
018/25-26	Declaration of Interest / Pecuniary Interest None.	

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019/25-26	Minutes of the FGB Meeting held on 16 October 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes were AGREED as an accurate record of the meeting. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minute 007.5 – All governors confirmed they had read KCSIE. Minute 007.5 – Governors who had not yet done so were reminded to complete their Declaration of Interests for 2025/26 on GovernorHub. Minute 009 – BS/PG would circulate details of the new Ofsted framework. 	ALL BS/PG
020/25-26	Chair's Actions / Actions Agreed Between Meetings The Governing Body had agreed the following action by correspondence since the last meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of Co-Headteachers' pay award. 	
021/25-26 021.1	Governance Matters Arising from the recent Chair's Actions required between meetings to agree pay matters, the Governing Body discussed whether to create a separate Pay Committee and considered an example of draft terms of reference. Noting that while it was good practice to have a separate Pay Committee, it was not a requirement, the Governing Body AGREED that: (1) consideration of pay matters would be incorporated into the existing Finance, Personnel & Resources Committee and (2) the scheduling of FP&R meetings in 2026/27 would take into consideration when pay decision were required to be made. The Governing Board noted that, as not all governors were members of the FP&R Committee, this approach meant there would be governors who were not involved in making pay decisions who could hear any pay appeals.	AF/KB
021.2	The Governing Body had agreed at its last meeting to recommend to the LA that Michelle Doherty be appointed as an LA Governor. It was NOTED that the application was with the LA for consideration.	LA/KB
022/25-26	Reports from Committees The Governing Body NOTED the minutes of the Finance, Personnel & Resources Committee held on 20 November 2025.	
023/25-26	Co-Headteacher's Report The Governing Body considered the Co-Headteachers' Report and asked questions. The following points were highlighted: <p>Pupil Information & Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school roll was stable at 185. There were 81 Pupil Premium children. 15 February was the naming day for phase transfer. Two pupils may not have a named secondary school. The LA had not shared all information and there had been lots of changes but it was hoped that everyone would have a place in a maintained school. <p>Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 43 pupils had attendance below 90%. There were no children in the severe category. A holiday penalty had been issued for a family who had taken multiple holidays during term-time in the past 12 months. Whole school attendance was 93.1%. The school was meeting with families to support and encourage improved attendance. The LA's attendance audits had confirmed it was happy with the school's processes. There had been on afternoon exclusion in the autumn term. The school was supporting the child's behaviour, which had improved. 	

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	<p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been no referrals to the LADO or incidents of bullying or racism. • All staff had completed annual safeguarding training, online safety training, ‘four types of abuse’ and domestic abuse training. • Opportunity had been taken to do additional safeguarding training during the closure of the school due to a leak. <p>Building Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A burst water pipe had necessitated a 3.5 day closure of the school. This had affected families but was unavoidable for safety reasons as there was no running water on site. The pipe that burst had been temporarily fixed by the LA in 2022 but no permanent fix was carried out. The water company had advised the pipe was likely to fail again and full replacement was needed. The water company’s advice had been shared with the LA and it was hoped this work could take place at the same time as the work to Turtle and Ladybird classrooms, however, ultimately it was up to the LA. • The school closure due to the leak had been used positively by staff to complete further training. • There had been lots of discussion with the LA regarding Turtle and Ladybird work. The school had withdrawn from discussions due to safety concerns after the contractor indicated it would ignore the advice of structural engineers and add a new roof and additional loading to the existing buildings. After the school raised serious concerns regarding safety and liability, the LA had agreed to replace with brick and timber framed buildings. • The LA had control of the project which was now behind schedule and still needed approval from the planning department. It was anticipated the work would take ten weeks so it would not be possible to complete in the summer holiday. The LA wanted the school to close Turtle and Ladybird classrooms from May half-term, and the school had explained it did not have anywhere else it could move the children to. The children had complex needs and there was no other space that could be used without seriously impacting the children from the affected classes or the other children in the school. The school had proposed the work start at the end of July and that the September intake be reduced until the work was complete. The LA would prefer works to begin in May to ensure no places are reduced in September. They have suggested a temporary satellite provision which the school have declined due to the complexity of needs of the pupils and the health and safety risks. There is also no single site that could host 20 pupils which means they may have been split across two satellite provisions which is unmanageable for the school. The school will continue to liaise with the LA with the intention of starting the build in July when the Summer term finishes. <p>Quality of education & curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality teaching and learning remained a key priority and teachers were actively engaging in their own professional development and educational research. There were high levels of engagement in Friday training sessions. • SLT would be holding drop-in sessions for all teachers to support performance growth and development targets. • The autumn term focus had been on reading and phonics. The spring focus was foundations for learning, maths and online safety. • The school had gained Music Mark status for Dedication and Improvement. • The co-headteachers thanked the Link Governor for Curriculum and Assessment (CB) for her visits to the school. 	BS/PG

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	<p>Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governing Body NOTED the staffing update in the report. <p>Premises Health & Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health & Safety Link Governor had visited the school that week. • Judicium was satisfied with progress made across all areas of concern raised with the school. Any actions which had not been completed were outside of the school's control. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy costs had been lower than anticipated. • Budget planning for 2026/27 had started and should be relatively stable as it was based on this year's pupil numbers. The LA had incorrectly coded support staff and the School Business Manager was re-coding them. The budget included a 3% pay increase which was set by the LA and could not be changed. • The new link from the LA Finance Team had raised concerns regarding how much money the school had. The projected surplus would exceed 8% again. This was due to money being set aside for various planned works which were supposed to happen, but then been blocked, resulting in accrual of funds. <p>Planned works</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned works for Easter and summer holidays 2026 included replacement of ramps to classrooms, new toilets, staffroom refurbishment and new tarmac to entrance walkway, front entrance and some play areas. <p>NAS accreditation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had retained its NAS accreditation and the recommendation was to go forward as a Beacon Status School. • The Governing Body expressed its thanks to the whole school team for this wonderful achievement. <p>Questions from the Governing Body:</p> <p>Q: 43 children had attendance below 90%. How was the school ensuring this was not masking safeguarding concerns?</p> <p>A: Most were related to with medical appointments or medical issues. Some children were on attendance plans. The school was looking closely at the details, such as whether the children were Pupil Premium. There was one incident where a parent did not engage and the school applied its 48-rule plan. Communications were personalised for the different needs of families.</p> <p>Q: There had been no LADo referrals. How confident was the school that staff understood when a concern should be escalated?</p> <p>A: Safeguarding was the first item discussed at every meeting. There was more than one person staff members could go to and they were all aware it was better to report a concern than not. The Co-headteachers were confident all staff understood very well. Understanding was strengthened through training and drip-feeding information throughout the term. Low level concerns were recorded and the school had good communications with the LADO. There was a large team of DSLs and there was always someone available for staff members to speak to. The Link Governor for Safeguarding commented that during their visits they found staff to be very proud of the importance of their role in safeguarding vulnerable children.</p> <p>Q: A staff member had been absent long-term. Had this had any impact on children?</p>	

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	<p>A: No, a new person had been employed so there was no impact on children. The person on long-term absence had been absent for nearly two years and was no longer being paid so there was no financial strain on the school.</p> <p>The Governing Body NOTED the report and commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average absence rate in UK special schools was 12.9%. Hedgewood's was 6.9%. This indicated families felt secure and attendance was carefully managed by the school. • In October 2025 the report of the Health & Safety consultant had 33.9% 'red' rated actions. This had fallen to 5.3% which was tremendous progress and demonstrated how important safety was to the school. 	
024/25-26	<p>Pupil Premium</p> <p>The Governing Body considered the Pupil Premium Strategy 2025/26 which included evaluation of the 2024/25 plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 2025/26, the three areas of focus were approving attainment, physical literacy and access to community. • There would be targeted funding on evidence-based interventions. This would include a PE coach and PE interventions. • Trips and clubs were very important. The take-up of clubs was very high and had a positive impact on attendance. • Staff knew which children were Pupil Premium and targeted them for support but there were benefits for all children, such as the sensory garden. <p>Questions from the Governing Body: Q: How was impact measured? A: Through assessments. Lots of interactions and therapies were embedded in the curriculum. Both small and meaningful gains and big gains were measured. Pupil Premium children were performing in line with their non Pupil Premium peers which indicated funding was being used effectively to reduce gaps.</p> <p>The Governing Body NOTED the report and commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In future reports it would be helpful to see anticipated budget for next year under each area. 	BS/PG
025/25-26	<p>Governor Roles, Training & Visits</p> <p>025.1 It was confirmed that all governors had completed safeguarding training this year. 025.2 AJ had completed comprehensive safeguarding training for Safeguarding Link Governor. 025.3 JG and CB had visited the school and would provide written Link Governor reports for the next meeting.</p>	JG/CB
026/25-26	<p>SEF</p> <p>The Governing Body considered the Strategic Improvement and Evaluation Document 2025/26 and it was noted that the draft SEF has also been circulated to governors between meetings for any comments. The SEF provided a self-assessment of current status linked to the new Ofsted framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding • Inclusion • Curriculum & Teaching • Achievement • Attendance & Behaviour • Personal Development & Wellbeing • Early Years 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership & Governance <p>Questions from the Governing Body:</p> <p>Q: The school was not required to have a SEF but it was helpful. Would the school be adding gradings?</p> <p>A: These were not included. The document had been shared with the Senior Management Team and would be used for continuous evaluation and form part of performance and growth plans.</p> <p>Q: What would the school say was an area of exceptional performance?</p> <p>A: Inclusion was outstanding and underpinned everything the school did.</p> <p>Q: Were Personal Development & Wellbeing outstanding?</p> <p>A: There was a huge amount of strong practice but the school always strived for more.</p> <p>The Governing Body NOTED the report and commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SEF provided a really good reflection of a complex organisation and amplified inclusion and achievement. The school should not be afraid to be positive and recognise where it had outstanding practice. 	
027/25-26	<p>Any Other Urgent Business</p> <p>The Governing Body APPROVED the Attendance Policy. This was a statutory policy and the changes were driven by the LA.</p>	
028/25-26	<p>Date of Next FGB Meeting:</p> <p>Thursday 21 May 2026 at 7pm</p> <p>Thursday 16 July 2026 at 7pm</p>	

AGENDA PART TWO (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS):

Item	Agenda Item	Action
029/25-26	<p>Confidential items</p> <p>None.</p>	

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.