



## Minutes of Governing Board (GB) Meeting 56

Held at St Mary's Hampton CofE Primary School,  
Oldfield Road, Hampton, TW12 2HP on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023

### Present:

Governor Category	Name	Additional Information	End of Term
Principal	Matthew White (MW)	Headteacher	
St Mary's Hampton PCC (7)	Revd. Ben Lovell (BL) Andrew Parish (AP) Timothy Stephens (TS) David Western (DW)	Chair of Governors; Vicar, St Mary's Hampton Church Chair, Resources Committee	Ex-officio 26 May 2026 25 Nov 2024 1 Dec 2025
LDBS (1)	Nicholas Woods (NW)	Chair, T&L	24 Feb 2024
Co-opted (3)	Sophie Tait (ST)	Chair, Personnel & Pastoral	10 July 2023
Staff (1)	Alana Rowlandson (AR)	Year 6 Teacher	22 Nov 2024

**Attended:** Clare Struthers (CS, Clerk to Governors)

**Apologies:** Paul Jeanes (PJ; PCC-nominated governor; 1 Dec 2025)  
Hilary Hart (HH; PCC-nominated governor; 1 April 2024)  
Alexandra Elwood (AE; parent governor; 18 April 2026)  
Robert Hodges (RH; co-opted governor; 18 July 2026)

**Absent:** Jodi Timbou (JT; parent governor; 5 Dec 2026)

Minute	Discussion & Decisions
657	BL <b>welcomed</b> everyone to the meeting at 7.33 pm and opened with a prayer.
658	BL said that <b>apologies for absence</b> had been RECEIVED from HH, PJ, RH and AE. The board ACCEPTED the apologies. JT was ABSENT from the meeting.
659	<b>Declarations of Interest:</b> AR said that there was the potential for the discussion regarding the staff survey feedback to present a conflict of interest.
660a	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023</b> <b>Decision:</b> All governors present at the February meeting AGREED, by a show of hands vote, that the minutes were a TRUE and ACCURATE record. BL signed the minutes after the meeting.
660b	<b>Matters Arising</b>
660b.1	<b>(648)</b> Governors NOTED that the DfE's <b>SEND Provision Improvement Plan</b> would be the focus of AfC's summer Chairs' briefing (29 June), feedback from which would inform AfC's Futures Plans.  <b>ACTION BL/AE:</b> feedback from Chairs' briefing – July FGB
660b.2	<b>(650)</b> Education Funding – letter to parents MW said that he had decided to address the school's ongoing financial challenges by continuing to reference the school fund in the weekly newsletter rather than circulating a separate letter to parents. MW said that he was pleased to report this had been successful with more donations having been received.

660b.3	<p><b>(653a) Admissions</b> – Wording to Publish on Website</p> <p>Governors THANKED MW for the wording to be published on the school website to clarify the meaning of the priority areas:</p> <p><i>‘At St Mary’s Hampton, we do not have a ‘catchment area’, but rather priority areas 1 and 2, which were established for historic reasons. The priority areas should not in any way preclude applications for places from outside of these areas. Indeed, every year, we have welcomed many families from outside of these areas, to the extent that we will be consulting on a change to our admissions policy in the autumn 2023 term to reflect this.’</i></p>
661	<p><b>AOB: Oldfield Meadow</b></p> <p>Governors NOTED their THANKS to John Salisbury (Ecology Policy and Planning Officer, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils) for sharing the proposed consultation with the school and governing board for their comment.</p> <p>While governors expressed their desire to support developing opportunities for the local community to explore and enjoy green spaces and to increase biodiversity in the area, governors also wished to raise the following points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding and security of the school site were the main areas of concern, bearing in mind the proposal to plant hedgerow and the secluded nature of the meadow. Governors proposed that fencing or another form of physical screening would more be effective.</li> <li>• Accessibility. The proposed location of the pedestrian access gate was the furthest possible distance from the school, care home and other local residents. While this might, in part, address governors’ safeguarding concerns, as use could be limited, it also raised the question of who would benefit from the redeveloped space.</li> <li>• Whether the development of the area would provide value-for-money bearing in mind the location of the area. In the event that the development of Oldfield Meadow went ahead, governors suggested an educational focus would enhance its usability.</li> </ul> <p>NW joined at 7.46 pm having apologised beforehand for his expected late arrival.</p> <p><i>(AP’s response to the proposed consultation on behalf of the GB was circulated with the draft approved minutes.)</i></p>
662	<p><b>3-5 Year Strategic Plan &amp; SDP</b></p> <p><i>(As agreed at the meeting, the <b>updated draft strategic plan and 2023-24 SDP</b> were circulated with the draft approved minutes.)</i></p> <p><b>ACTION ALL GOVERNORS:</b> comments on Strategic plan &amp; SDP to CS <b>by 29 June</b></p> <p><b>Action MW:</b> strategic plan &amp; SDP to July FGB</p>
<b>Governance</b>	
663a	<p><b>(MA 635a.2)</b> MW CONFIRMED that the kitchen team had completed the <b>Safeguarding Quiz</b>.</p>
663b	<p><b>Safeguarding Link Governor’s summer visit</b></p> <p>NW THANKED MW for facilitating the visit, as it had been a really useful opportunity to see the school’s safeguarding practices in place. NW said that the conversations with pupils and staff had been particularly positive; the feedback from these groups had been pleasing to note. NW said that he met with three Year 6 children, during which the children had spoken very maturely and confidently about how the school would like children to respond to any</p>

circumstances of bullying or cyber bullying that they might experience. NW said that the children understood the point at which behaviours could be considered bullying.

**In reply to a governor**, NW explained that there had not been an opportunity to review the school's safeguarding training records during the recent meeting; this would form part of a future visit, including the school's follow-up action should, for example, a member of staff not meet the defined threshold on the safeguarding quiz.

NW said that it was important the school had procedures in place to satisfy itself external contractors had necessary safeguarding procedures/documentation in place. NW said that contractors were required to provide a copy of their safeguarding policy. NW said that there were risk mitigations in place at the school when contractors were on site; a further mitigation would be to complete a contractor risk assessment.

NW said that volunteers were provided with written safeguarding information; himself and MW had discussed the importance of supporting this with formal training that was appropriately renewed and a written record retained. NW added that a safeguarding briefing should be in place for all visitors to the school and suggested that a visitors' guide be prepared. NW said that there was a balance to be struck between having the necessary procedures and documentation in place for all members of the school community, while not being overly bureaucratic and arduous; the procedures in place should be manageable for the school, informative for the participant and an effective means of managing safeguarding risks.

**Suggested action:** The visitors' guide should be updated each year in line with the current safeguarding policy and shared with the parent community.

Governors AGREED this would effectively communicate to the school community the importance placed on safeguarding by the school; i.e. that while visitors to the site were very much welcomed, when children were on site, there were certain procedures that all visitors must be mindful of.

Governors AGREED this would be both reassuring for parents and give volunteers confidence in fulfilling their role with the school.

NW stressed the importance of having risk assessments in place for children with challenging behaviour that were reviewed appropriately and the outcomes clearly recorded.

NW said that it had been reassuring to see that CPOMS was being extensively used by staff to record the full range of concerns that could arise, including low level.

NW said that with CPOMS now effectively introduced into the school's way of managing safeguarding, the next step was to determine the threshold and required evidence to enable the closure of a case, as this would ensure the number of active cases was maintained at a sustainable level.

NW said that safeguarding was demonstrably an important factor in the life of the school through its inclusion as a standing item of discussion at the weekly staff meetings. NW suggested that keeping a written record would be good evidence of the monitoring in place.


MW said that in this way all staff members were aware of the children to look out for. MW took on board the feedback that it would be beneficial to keep written notes of the points discussed at the weekly staff meetings.

	<p>NW said that it was important for the school to have an effective system in place for staff members to be able to raise concerns about other staff members, including matters that were below the threshold to be a low level concern. NW explained that by having a system in place to record such concerns, however insignificant they might appear in isolation, this provided the ability to identify whether a pattern of behaviour was being exhibited over a period of time.</p> <p>A governor asked whether the school had an obligation to enforce that children at St Mary’s were under the legal age for using WhatsApp.</p> <p>NW said that it had been very reassuring to hear that the children were very clear that they were not allowed to use WhatsApp in school and that they were aware of the legal age for using WhatsApp.</p> <p>AR (Year 6 teacher) said that an email was sent to Year 6 parents explaining the inappropriateness of certain Apps, including WhatsApp.</p> <p>Governors discussed the importance of the school supporting the school community, both children and their parents, in navigating the appropriate use of devices and group chat etiquette to prepare the children for the future.</p> <p>MW CONFIRMED an online safety briefing (led by Peter Cowley, London Grid for Learning) was organised each year for parents.</p> <p>In reply to a governor, MW said that with the introduction of CPOMS the transfer of safeguarding information to secondary schools would be digital.</p> <p>BL THANKED NW for both conducting the visit and for following with a thorough report detailing logical actions that would further improve the school’s safeguarding procedures; this was really useful for governors' reassurance of the procedures already in place.</p>
663c	<p><b>Chair, Personnel &amp; Pastoral Committee and Chair, HTPR</b></p> <p>With this being ST’s last governors’ meeting, BL THANKED her for her contribution to the board during her term of office.</p> <p>BL asked governors to consider both of these important roles to which appointments would be made at the autumn FGB.</p>
663d	<p><b>Collecting &amp; publishing GB diversity data</b></p> <p>CS said that the DfE had not provided guidance on the specific data to be collected, possibly because the aim was for boards to reflect their individual school community and for the data collected, and published, to reflect this. CS referred governors to the NGA Diversity Indicator form that had been circulated with the papers for the meeting and suggested data that could be collected from governors, such as gender identity, age group and ethnicity. CS stressed that the publication of such data was a DfE recommendation and that should a board decide to do so, individual members of the board should not be identifiable.</p> <p><b>Decisions:</b> Governors AGREED that with the small size of the board, it could be possible that members would be identifiable and therefore such data should not be published on the school’s website.</p> <p>Governors did, however, acknowledge that as diversity brought a range of perspectives to support robust decision making, it would be good practice to collect diversity data for internal</p>

	<p>use to inform future recruitment and training needs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION CS:</b> GB diversity data collection - autumn P&amp;P</p>
663e	<p><b>Sport – Equal Access</b></p> <p>Governors NOTED that the DfE had recently announced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PE &amp; Sport Premium funding would continue for the next 2 academic years</li> <li>• Updated guidance would be issued during the summer 2023 term setting out how schools should spend the funding to best advantage their pupils</li> <li>• A new digital tool would be introduced for schools to report on their spending of the PE and Sport Premium; this would allow the DfE to understand where further guidance was needed.</li> </ul>
	<b>Summer 1 Committee Updates</b>
664a	<p><b>Personnel &amp; Pastoral</b></p> <p>Governors had been advised the draft approved minutes of the summer meeting were available on Governor Hub for their review.</p>
664b	<p><b>(P&amp;P minute 366a) Governor’s Visit report – subject leadership SDP target</b></p> <p>Governors NOTED their THANKS to RH for the detailed report, demonstrating that progress had been made with further embedding the curriculum intent across all subject areas.</p> <p><i>In reply to a governor</i>, MW explained that the implementation of the revised curriculum must be completed in its entirety in order to effectively measure the impact, therefore, the SDP for the next academic year would necessarily include a priority to monitor this progress.</p>
664c	<p><b>(minute 367a)</b> ST said that the committee was pleased to learn the <b>staff</b> team had engaged with the survey, providing <b>useful constructive feedback, as well as positive feedback</b>. ST said that the feedback would be discussed with the staff team, including the development of an action plan to implement agreed changes appropriately.</p> <p>ST said that the committee had THANKED MW, and the senior leadership team, for their responsiveness to the staff survey feedback each year, as this was supported the positive engagement with the process by the staff team.</p> <p>ST said that as the same format had been used as previously, year-on-year comparison would be made.</p>
664d	<p><b>(minute 370a)</b> ST said that the <b>updates to safeguarding governor’s audit</b> report had been discussed.</p> <p><i>A governor asked whether any random telephone calls had been made to confirm the authenticity of referees.</i></p> <p>MW said that this had not been possible yet, as no recruitment processes had taken place.</p>
664e	<p><b>(minute 370c) Summer single central register report</b></p> <p>ST said that it was pleasing to note the majority of necessary, documentary evidence had been provided by relevant parties.</p> <p>ST said that to provide an audit trail of any missing documentation, the date on which the information had been requested would be recorded along with the deadline by which the individual had been advised it should be provided.</p>
664f	<p><b>Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School &amp; Whistleblowing Policies</b></p> <p><i>A governor asked whether the school had systems in place to monitor the completion of work sent home to children who were unable to attend school.</i></p>

	<p>MW said that teachers could ask for the work to be sent into school at certain points in time; the level of monitoring would vary according to the circumstances therefore stringent procedures had not been outlined in the policy.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged that this was an appropriate approach, as long as the school ensured it fully engaged with families.</p> <p>A governor asked whether the work sent home included physical activity.</p> <p>MW said that it tended to be academic work.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> Governors AGREED <b>Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School</b> and <b>Whistleblowing Policies</b> by a show of hands vote.</p>
665a	<p><b>Resources</b></p> <p>Governors had been advised the draft approved minutes of the summer 1 meeting were available on Governor Hub for their review.</p> <p>On behalf of the committee, AP THANKED Helen Vernon (HV; School Business Manager) for both the <b>timeliness of the financial reporting</b> and <b>the accompanying detailed commentary</b> that enabled effective governor monitoring.</p> <p>AP said that the focus of the recent committee meeting had been a long and rigorous discussion of the draft 2023-24 budget that currently projected a £41,737K (forty-one thousand, seven hundred and thirty seven pounds) deficit. AP said that the main reason for this projected deficit was increased staffing costs due to a combination of the forecast teacher pay increase and an increase in the employer contribution to the Teacher Pension Scheme. AP said that the draft budget assumed additional funding would not be provided for either increase and therefore would have to be accounted for by the known budget allocation.</p> <p>AP said that the ESFA had extended the submission deadline for the budget to 31 August 2023. Bearing in mind this was during the summer holiday period, a budget would be presented to the July FGB for approval. AP said that HV was preparing three versions of an updated draft budget for the committee’s consideration at its next meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfunded staffing cost increases (teachers’ pay and TPS), both of which would be individually reported to clearly demonstrate their impact on the overall bottom line; i.e., a projected deficit budget.</li> <li>• A balanced budget, which would inevitably involve significant, structural changes, as staffing costs accounted for the majority of the school’s expenditure.</li> <li>• Additional funding being received to cover:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ increase in employer contribution to the TPS</li> <li>○ increase in teacher pay above a given percentage (i.e. four percent funded by the school and the remaining percentage negotiated with the union covered by additional funding).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>AP said that as an academy trust, a deficit budget could not be submitted to the ESFA. However, as the identified reason was unfunded staffing costs rather than structural, both of which were determined by an external body, HV was investigating the potential consequence</p>

	<p>of submitting a deficit budget.</p> <p>AP said that the committee had discussed the option of using the school’s reserves to cover the deficit. AP said that this was deemed to be inappropriate, as the projected deficit was based on increased staffing costs and the external auditor had advised that the current level of reserves held by the school (representing three months’ operating costs) was appropriate.</p> <p>In reply to a governor, BL said that St Mary’s financial challenges were not unique, they were representative of those faced across the education sector.</p> <p>Governors <b>ACKNOWLEDGED</b> the importance of investigating the potential consequence of submitting a deficit budget, as by not doing so, meant that the cause (increased staffing costs) was not being accepted and appropriate action was not being taken to rectify its impact.</p>
665b	<p><b>Auditing</b> <b>Spring Internal Audit – SEND focus</b></p> <p>AP said that as was characteristic of the reports received to date, the report of the spring audit was extremely brief, although it was to be NOTED that the outcome was positive.</p> <p><b>Review of Internal Auditing</b></p> <p>AP said that the committee had expressed their frustration and displeasure with the brevity of the reports consistently received and therefore, a review of internal auditing was taking place.</p> <p>AP said that potential alternative internal auditors had been contacted from those listed as part of the government framework agreement, a number, only three of which replied and none of which would consider provision of the service as St Mary’s Hampton was a small academy trust. AP said that an alternative approach was therefore being considered: this could involve appointing an independent auditor to focus on the financial accounts, alongside which independent, internal audits led by experts in the field (such as, health and safety, and safeguarding) would continue to be conducted. AP said that compliance of the alternative approach with the Academies Trust Handbook would be discussed with ESFA.</p> <p><b>ACTION AP:</b> internal auditing in 2023-24 - update to July FGB</p>
665c	<p><b>Review of Photocopier SLA (minute 767b)</b></p> <p>AP said that with the current contract due to expire in August, quotations had been sourced from three companies: In line with the current Finance Manual (para 2.4.2), with the estimated life cost being £21,364 (twenty-one thousand, three hundred and sixty-four pounds), i.e. in excess of £20K (twenty thousand pounds), the board must determine whether the decision could be based on the quotations received or a tender process should take place. AP said that for the reasons outlined in the minutes of the committee meeting, KJL provided the best value for money, but not the cheapest. AP <b>PROPOSED</b> that KJL be awarded the photocopier contract.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> Governors <b>AGREED</b> that the contract should be awarded to KJL, as this provided the best value for money, and that a tender process was not necessary, as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the lifetime cost was fractionally over the £20K threshold and was an estimation,</li> <li>• it was not likely to provide better value for money.</li> </ul>
666	<p><b>Any other Business:</b> No other matters were raised.</p>

667	<p><b>Developing Partnerships with Local Schools</b>          Governors CONFIRMED having READ and UNDERSTOOD the LDBS presentation on formal collaborations (May 2023) and CONFIRMED receipt of the Academies Regulatory &amp; Commissioning Review (March 2023).</p>
668	<p><b>Meetings</b>          BL said that the dates of the governors’ meetings for the remainder of the summer term were detailed on the agenda and were as follows:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Summer 2</b>  <b>Resources: Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June at 9am</b>  <b>T&amp;L: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm</b>  <b>FGB: Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30 pm</b></p>
	AR left the meeting at 8.42pm
<b>Part 2 Confidential Item</b>	
669	<p><b>Developing Partnerships with Local Schools:</b> <i>Discussion recorded as separate minute.</i></p>
670	<p>BL CLOSED the meeting at 9.35pm THANKING governors for their contributions.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The board formally AGREED these minutes to be a TRUE and ACCURATE record at the next meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Signed by the Chair .....</p>