



Minutes of Governing Board (GB) Meeting 55

Held at St Mary's Hampton CofE Primary School,
Oldfield Road, Hampton, TW12 2HP on Thursday 30th March 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)	Chair of Governors; Vicar, St Mary's Hampton Church	Ex-officio
	Andrew Parish (AP)	Chair, Resources Committee	26 May 2026
	Timothy Stephens (TS)		25 Nov 2024
	David Western (DW)	Chair, Teaching & Learning	1 Dec 2025
	Hilary Hart (HH)		1 April 2024
LDBS (1)	Nicholas Woods (NW)	Chair, T&L	24 Feb 2024
Parent (2)	Alexandra Elwood (AE)		18 April 2026
Co-opted (3)	Robert Hodges (RH)	Vice Chair of Governors; Vice Chair, P&P; Vice Chair, Resources	18 July 2026
Staff (1)	Alana Rowlandson (AR)	Year 6 Teacher	22 Nov 2024

Also Attended: Penny Roberts (PR; Diocesan Director of Education)

Clare Struthers (CS, Clerk to Governors)

Apologies: Paul Jeanes (PJ; PCC-nominated governor; 1 Dec 2025)

Sophie Tait (ST; co-opted governor; Chair, Personnel & Pastoral; 10 July 2023)

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

Minute	Discussion & Decisions
642	BL welcomed everyone to the meeting at 7.33 pm, in particular PR, and opened with a prayer.
643	BL said that apologies for absence had been RECEIVED from PJ and ST. The board ACCEPTED the apologies. JT was ABSENT from the meeting.
644	Declarations of Interest: Governors CONFIRMED there were none relevant to the matters for discussion.
	TS joined the meeting at 7.35pm, apologising for his late arrival.
645	Governors CONFIRMED there were no matters of AOB to be raised.
646	Developing Partnerships with Local Schools BL THANKED PR for joining the meeting for this item to explain the Diocesan approach. PR said that following the publication of the 'Opportunities for All' White Paper, discussions with headteachers and clergy commenced to explore the implication of the aim for all schools to part of a large multi-academy trust for the London diocese. PR explained that even though the government's drive and commitment for all schools to join a large MAT had dissipated, the underlying principles remained and therefore, there was an appetite for schools to consider forming families of schools. PR said that LDBS board of trustees' resolution would be shared with schools after Easter, but essentially, LDBS would support Church schools in developing collaborations appropriate for their setting; whether that was to join a MAT or form a

partnership or federation, which could be more appropriate for small schools. BL said that following the LDBS conference in the autumn term, the Board's intention had been to be at the fore front of the change. BL said that the Board had been encouraged by the LDBS plan, which would have been for St Mary's to be part of a MAT covering the Kensington episcopal area. BL said that the Chairs of governors of local Church schools recognised the importance of building trust between the governing boards and therefore the intention had been to meet intermittently. BL said that for St Mary's Hampton as a one-form entry school joining a MAT seemed to be a logical progressive step, however for bigger schools, there were not the same drivers for change. BL said that since the change in the government's position, St Mary's did not have an externally imposed deadline to promote pursuing the change or the financial drive. BL said despite this, the options available would be researched and considered. BL THANKED PR for sharing the outline of LDBS approach.

[A governor asked whether LDBS would have been the driver for the implementation of the White Paper, if this had been implemented as intended.](#)

PR said that if the government had legislated the MAT approach outlined in the White Paper, it (the government) would have had financial responsibility to implement the change. PR said that LDBS would have had a responsibility to steer the change for Church schools. PR said LDBS' current approach was based on fostering collaboration between schools; for any change to be enacted, permission must be granted by the governing board, the members (which included LDBS), and the government.

[A governor asked whether the government was required to give permission for a school to enter into a federation.](#)

PR explained that partnerships and federations were usually driven by LDBS and usually happened as a result of financial constraints or the resignation of the headteacher. PR said that the school adviser would broker the process and LDBS would help to identify appropriate partner schools. PR said that a partnership would usually be set up for a fixed, two-year period initially, towards the end of which the school adviser would support the review of the partnership. PR said that when successful, the schools would complete the necessary process to either become a federation (maintained schools) or a MAT.

[A governor asked whether LDBS would act as an introduction intermediary for suitable partner schools, as well as providing the expertise and support to form the partnership.](#)

PR said that a federation was the coming together of two maintained schools under one, shared governing board and therefore was not an option for St Mary's Hampton as a free school. PR said that LDBS did hold a database of schools willing to investigate a formal collaboration with other school(s) and said that St Mary's could either form a partnership with a maintained school or, establish or join a MAT.

[A governor asked whether a partnership involved sharing services.](#)

PR said that in a partnership, shared leadership achieved economies. PR said that therefore the matter for consideration was whether the headteacher of a small school would like to be considered for an executive headteacher role; PR said that LDBS held a database of headteachers willing to be considered for executive headteacher vacancies. PR said that when headteacher vacancies arose for small schools, invariably LDBS advice was for the school to enter into a formal collaboration with other schools led by an executive headteacher and

	<p>therefore to not appoint a headteacher.</p> <p>BL THANKED PR for advising the Board on this significant matter. PR left the meeting at 7.47pm.</p> <p>BL said that a school with which St Mary’s could investigate forming a partnership was Bishop Wand (secondary school, currently a single academy trust).</p> <p>Conclusion of discussion: Governors AGREED the options available to St Mary’s should be investigated, particularly in the current climate, where the risks were low and therefore, a change was not required quickly and time could be taken to consider all options. A governor suggested this should consider the services that could be shared with the financial advantages of doing so.</p>
647	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 2nd February 2023</p> <p>Decision: 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.</p>
648	<p>Headteacher’s Spring Term Report</p> <p>MW THANKED governors for their questions submitted in advance of the meeting, responses to which had been circulated with the papers.</p> <p>MW said that there had been a significant drop in the number of first-choice applications for the 2023 intake. MW said that a significant matter for consideration was therefore the sustainability and financial viability of the school, as this current projection for pupil numbers demonstrated the need for prudent financial planning.</p> <p>A governor asked whether attracting more children with an EHCP would attract more funding enabling the school to be better structured to provide the necessary support.</p> <p>MW said that this was not an option; the challenge was that insufficient funds were provided to fully meet the needs of the children already attending the school, in addition to which, St Mary’s as a one-form, nurturing school was considered attractive by parents of children with identified need(s).</p> <p>A governor asked whether there was a more sustainable approach that would also better meet the needs of the children, bearing in mind the projection that the 2023 intake would not be full and therefore the number of EHCP children would form a bigger percentage of the school cohort.</p> <p>MW explained that for in-year admissions, if there was capacity in a class, the school invariably had to accept the child, irrespective of their need(s), although there had been occasions when children had been refused a place based on St Mary’s not being the most appropriate setting. MW stressed that the approach taken was always to consider whether the needs of the child could be appropriately supported.</p> <p>In raising these questions, governors recognised that the consideration might seem contrary to the school’s vision, ‘<i>flourishing through faith, hope and love</i>’, but pointed out that to be loving towards all children attending the school, sustainability must be achieved and therefore, this was a balancing act that must be carefully considered.</p> <p>A governor asked whether EHCP funding was readily received once the process completed.</p>

	<p>MW said that the entire process was lengthy and was exacerbated by the lack of relevant professionals to provide the necessary assessments to support EHCP applications. MW said that therefore the school had, for example, recently commissioned private educational psychologist reports to try to expediate the process.</p> <p>A governor suggested that the governing board should support the school by holding the Director of Education Services, AfC (Charis Penfold) to account for the service being received by the school.</p> <p>MW said that this would be helpful support.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACTION AE (SEND Link Governor): draft letter to Charis Penfold – BL to sign</p> <p>A governor referred to ‘most systems and policies are thorough’ (headteacher’s report, page 2; safeguarding section) and asked those which were not.</p> <p>MW said that the wording had been taken from LDBS safeguarding audit report (December 2022); the systems and policies not considered sufficiently thorough would be included in the action plan to be reported to the summer Personnel & Pastoral committee meeting.</p> <p>BL THANKED MW for the thorough report and encouraged all governors to submit questions on future termly reports in advance of the meeting.</p>
649	<p>3-5 Year Strategic Plan</p> <p>RH said that the aim in updating the Plan had been to move from aspirational language to measurable targets. RH explained that the 3-5 year plan would provide the framework for formulating the annual school development plan (SDP) and intermediate 2-3 year plan. RH said that the annual SDP targets would continue to be assigned to the committees for monitoring.</p> <p>In reply to governors’ questions, RH said that the strategic plans would be budgeted and costed, and the staged plans would detail the criteria to ensure the targets were achieved in the most effective ways.</p> <p>Conclusion of discussion: Governors SUPPORTED the 3-5 year strategic plan and looked forward to receiving the staggered plans for the forthcoming periods.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACTION MW: 2023-24 SDP; 2-3 Year Plan – July FGB</p>
650	<p>Education Funding: MW referred governors to the letters circulated with the papers for the meeting, which were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emailed to the local MP by the headteacher of one of the seven local LDBS schools; MW said that the headteachers in the group had been copied into the email for their information. • A draft letter to be sent to parents/families of St Mary’s Hampton expressing the financial challenges faced by the school. <p>Outcome of Discussion: Governors expressed their support for sending a letter to parents and AGREED to give feedback on the contents.</p>
651a	<p>Safeguarding Matters Arising from Previous Meeting</p> <p>(MA 635a.2) Number of Kitchen Staff Completed/Passed Safeguarding Quiz</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACTION MW: kitchen team – safeguarding quiz – update to summer 1 FGB</p>

651b	<p>Link Governor’s Audit Report</p> <p>MW explained that the format was based on the Richmond borough safeguarding audit template. MW said that a detailed safeguarding action plan would be presented to the summer term Personnel & Pastoral committee meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION MW: action plan – summer P&P meeting</p>
Spring 2 Committee Updates	
652a	<p>Teaching & Learning</p> <p>NW said that AR had given a comprehensive update on the Maths leadership activities, the main points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feedback had been received from a parent questionnaire regarding the further support that would be helpful to support children at home. • Peer-on-peer Maths teaching had taken place, which the committee had been pleased to hear. • Children’s feedback on Maths was being gathered. <p>NW said that overall a range of approaches were in place to achieve consistent, effective implementation across the year groups; the next step was to ensure effective assessment was in place to monitor the impact.</p> <p>In reply to a governor regarding the Ofsted legacy target, AR said that across all year groups, the target for the number of children to achieve the GDS (greater depth standard) was on track to be achieved, except in one year group. To address the identified reasons, AR was working with the teacher of this year group.</p> <p>NW said that Writing continued to be an area of focus; the teaching team had identified quite significant knowledge gaps in national curriculum requirements; this was being addressed. NW said that the Writing book scrutiny report had been reviewed, from which the leadership team had identified the areas of focus for individual year groups.</p> <p>NW said that as a small school, year group data could be skewed by a small number of children; despite this, the school appropriately set high expectations for the children’s progress and attainment.</p> <p>NW said that the four-day-a-week intervention groups that had been operating since the start of the academic year were unlikely to continue after the May half term, due to financial pressures. This was disappointing to hear.</p> <p>In reply to a governor, MW said that the intervention groups were funded by the school’s budget and even though the desirable approach would be for the intervention groups to continue until the end of the academic year, this was not financially possible.</p> <p>NW said that the school had been reviewing the curriculum offered to ensure all elements of the national curriculum were covered in every year group. NW said that the planned opportunities for subject leaders to collaborate and share best practice approaches would support the effective implementation of the reviewed curriculum.</p> <p>NW said that overall it had therefore been a productive meeting and THANKED the senior leadership team for the update reports presented.</p>

652b

SEND Governors' Spring Visit Report

HH recorded THANKS to SC for meeting with herself and AE, providing a useful update to the school's SEND provision. HH said that it had been pleasing to learn, classroom management of more challenging children was improving, as teachers had been supported in using effective techniques. HH said that children with identified mental health issues were a concern, as this affected the child's attendance, which meant lost learning.

A governor NOTED 20% (twenty percent) of children at St Mary's were on the SEND register, higher than the national average, and asked whether this increase was mirrored across most schools.

MW CONFIRMED, explaining that it was a legacy of the pandemic.

AE explained that the increase in the number of children on the SEND register impacted teacher workload and wellbeing in terms of the further in-class differentiation required to effectively meet the children's needs.

HH added that the behaviour of really challenging children had the potential to affect the whole school community. HH said despite the challenges, the school's staff was doing an extremely good job at nurturing and educating all children. This had been achieved by TAs being assigned to work with children according to their skills and experience, as well as the teaching team having been upskilled to effectively manage challenging behaviour.

Governors NOTED their THANKS to Sarah Creegan for effectively managing the school's SEND provision in these ways.

A governor asked whether the need for the nurture space had been overcome this academic year by a change in the children's behaviour or by staff being better trained in the management of the children's behaviour.

MW said that it was a combination of both factors and THANKED Sarah Creegan for her mentoring and support of the teaching team to upskill them in the management of challenging behaviour.

A trustee suggested that budget was allocated to upskilling staff in managing challenging behaviour.

In reply to a governor, MW said that the number of SEND children at the school did not meet the threshold for funding for a special provision.


Governors acknowledged the challenge; with spaces available at the school, in-year joiners would invariably have to be accepted almost irrespective of need.

HH explained that with the appropriate EHCP, children received the necessary support, but when this was for one-to-one TA support the capacity of the school to accommodate more staff became increasingly stretched.

Outcome of Discussion: Governors AGREED SEND provision should be added as a new risk to the register; while the school had an element of control, there was a significant element over which the school did not have control and therefore presented a risk. As the school had spaces, more children with SEND might join the school, which would have further financial impact.

(After the meeting, NW advised that the new risk had been added to the register.)

652c	<p>Decision: Governors AGREED Looked After Children Policy by a show of hands vote.</p>
653a	<p>Resources</p> <p>Governors had been advised the draft approved minutes of the spring 2 meeting were available on Governor Hub for their review.</p> <p>AP said that the financial points of note were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-24 budget assumptions: specifically, that the school’s main income, GAG (general annual grant) was based on the October census of the previous academic year, which in October 2022 had reported a school roll of 189 pupils. The school roll was therefore the main driver for income and spending ability. The October census 2023 was predicted to be 184, which would impact the GAG income for 2024-25. • Quarter 2 (Sept 22-Feb 23) Expenditure Report: the accompanying commentary was useful to understand budgetary movements. • School Resource Management Self-Assessment (SRMSAT) had been submitted by the required date. <p>AP said that the school’s admissions data had been reviewed with particular reference to the priority areas of the current policy. AP said that when the school was founded (in 2013), there had been a lack of school places in Hampton with families south of Station Road having difficulty in securing a place at a local school.</p> <p>AP said that for the 2021 and 2022 intakes the pupils were broadly one third from each of the priority areas and one third from elsewhere, demonstrating that there were spaces available after the families living in the priority areas had been assigned a place; this suggested the priority areas were no longer required. AP said that in addition, there was anecdotal evidence some parents found the priority areas confusing and could even deter parents from applying.</p> <p>AP said that given the abundance of school places available in the borough and the observation that places were available after families living in either of the priority areas had received an offer, the proposal was to base admissions on distance with the school being the seed point.</p> <p>Decision: Governors AGREED the statutory six-week consultation process should commence in autumn 2023 to remove the priority areas from the school’s admissions criteria and include a criterion based on distance from the school as the seed point.</p> <p>Bearing in mind the potential confusion created by the priority areas that would remain in force for 2024 admissions, governors suggested wording was included on the website to explain the priority areas were not catchment areas.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACTION MW: admissions – priority areas not catchment areas – publish on website</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACTION MW: admissions consultation – autumn 2023</p>
653b	<p>Auditing</p> <p>AP said that the focus of the spring internal audit was SEND; the report would be reviewed at the summer term meeting.</p> <p>AP proposed that the internal auditor, Moore Kingston Smith, be reviewed based on the committee’s frustration and displeasure at the lack of detail provided in the audit reports that</p>

	<p>did not reflect the cost of the service.</p> <p>Decision: Governors AGREED the school’s internal auditor should be reviewed in preparation for the 2023-24 academic year.</p>
653c	Decision: Governors AGREED the Charging & Remissions Policy by a show of hands vote.
654	Any other Business: There was none.
655	<p>Meetings</p> <p>BL said that the dates of the governors’ meetings for the summer term were detailed on the agenda and were as follows:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Summer 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">P&P: Thursday 4th May at 4.30pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Resources: Thursday 18th May at 9am</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Next FGB: Thursday 25th May at 7.30 pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Summer 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T&L: Thursday 6th July at 5.30pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Resources: Thursday 29th June at 9am</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FGB: Thursday 13th July at 7.30 pm</p>
656	BL CLOSED the meeting at 8.45pm THANKING governors for their contributions.
	<p style="text-align: center;">The board formally AGREED these minutes to be a TRUE and ACCURATE record at the next meeting on 25th May 2023.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Signed by the Chair</p>