



Minutes of Governing Board (GB) Meeting 61

Held at St Mary's Hampton CofE Primary School,
Oldfield Road, Hampton, TW12 2HP on Monday 4th March 2024

Present:

Governor Category	Name	Additional Information	End of Term
Principal (1)	Matthew White (MW)	Headteacher	Ex-officio
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, Teaching & Learning Committee	24 Feb 2028
Parent (2)	Jodi Timbou (JT) Jennifer Yiend (JY)	Vice Chair, Personnel & Pastoral committee	5 Dec 2026 29 Oct 2027
Co-opted (3)	Robert Hodges (RH)	Vice Chair of Governors; Chair, Personnel & Pastoral Committee; Vice Chair, Resources committee	18 July 2026
Staff (1)	Alana Rowlandson (AR)	Year 6 Teacher	22 Nov 2024

In attendance: Penny Roberts (PR; Director of Education, London Diocesan Board for Schools)
Clare Struthers (CS, Clerk to Governors)

Apologies: Hilary Hart (HH; PCC-nominated governor; Vice Chair, Teaching & Learning committee;
End of term 1 April 2024)

Minute	Discussion & Decisions
724	BL welcomed everyone to the meeting at 7.33 pm, thanking PR for her attendance, and opened with a prayer.
725	BL said that apologies for absence had been RECEIVED from HH. The board ACCEPTED the apologies.
726	Declarations of Interest: The following declarations were DECLARED in respect of Bishop Wand school; BL and RH have a child attending the school, DW's eldest child had been offered a place to start at the school in September 2024, and JT DECLARED it was her wish for her eldest child (currently in Year 7) to join the school, should a place become available. AR declared an interest as a member of staff employed at St Mary's Hampton CE Primary School.
727	Part 2 Confidential Minutes of the Previous meeting held on 1st February 2024 Decision: All governors present at the meeting AGREED, by a show of hands vote, that the minutes were a TRUE and ACCURATE record. BL SIGNED the minutes after the meeting.
728	Implications of Joining a MAT PR said for a school to join a MAT there was significant planning involved. Two key areas, requiring the earliest attention if governors support the submission of the application for St Mary's Hampton to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust, were the implications for staff and

<p>728a</p>	<p>budget setting.</p> <p>TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment Rights): PR said that TUPE was the legislative framework that would govern the transfer of staff currently employed by Hampton St Mary Academy Trust to the Bishop Wand Learning Trust (MAT), as their new employer. PR said that there would be a presentation to staff explaining the implications and a formal consultation, following which the formalities of, for example, the necessary payroll changes would be actioned in readiness for the transfer date. PR said that employment terms and conditions would be discussed as part of the consultation process. As both Bishop Wand and St Mary’s Hampton followed the STPCD (School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document), there was consistency across the schools for teaching staff terms and conditions; however, for support staff, there could be differences.</p> <p>A governor said that their understanding was the TUPE regulations provided legislative protection, such that employees’ terms and conditions should be equivalent or improved, as a result of the transfer taking place.</p> <p>PR said that LDBS HR would support the process, ensuring any consultation on future changes to employees’ terms and conditions were in line with the TUPE regulations.</p>
<p>728b</p>	<p>Budget Setting: PR said that school budget setting started in the spring term. PR said that for the next academic year, the trust board would have responsibility for the Bishop Wand Learning Trust budget, as the trustee board would be accountable to the ESFA for the financial performance of the MAT. PR said that in future academic years the CFO (Chief Financial Officer) would be responsible for submitting one budget to the ESFA for the whole trust. PR said that discussions were taking place to determine whether, the same process would apply in July 2024, should St Mary’s Hampton CE Primary school joining the MAT be agreed by the board and subsequently the regional director.</p> <p>A governor asked whether a separate budget should be prepared by St Mary’s Hampton CE Primary School for the eventuality that the school did not join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust in September 2024.</p> <p>PR said that the intention was for the application to be submitted to the regional director’s meeting taking place mid-March 2024; in which case, the board would be advised whether the application to join the MAT had been approved by the end of March 2024. Therefore, allowing sufficient time to prepare a budget for St Mary’s Hampton school should the application not be supported by the regional director.</p>
<p>728c</p>	<p>Application Process</p> <p>PR said that Bishop Wand and St Mary’s Hampton were in different regions, therefore the applications from each school to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust (MAT) were considered by separate regional directors. PR said that if the board passed the resolution to submit the application for St Mary’s Hampton to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust, the application (comprising the resolution and a letter from the Chair of Governors) would be submitted to the London regional director’s office. PR said that as the sponsor body, Bishop Wand school had been responsible for submitting the necessary due diligence and business case, from which the regional director had given approval for the Bishop Wand Learning Trust (MAT) to be operational with effect from 1 September 2024.</p>

	<p>A governor asked for clarification regarding the staff consultation process, as the change was likely to cause some anxiety, therefore anything that could be done to ameliorate that would be helpful.</p> <p>PR clarified that the consultation was not to discuss whether St Mary’s Hampton joined the MAT; that was a matter for the governing board. PR said that the consultation process would involve explaining the process and be an opportunity to ask questions about the implications for staff members. PR said that staff feedback could be helpful, when considering the impact of any differences in terms and conditions. PR said that in essence, the consultation process involved explaining the way in which the transfer of staff employment was operationalised and the individual impact.</p> <p>BL said that staff savings were not the driver for the change and it was important this message was communicated as part of the consultation process. BL said that the driver was to secure St Mary’s Hampton’s future, as a viable school, and the change presented exciting opportunities for staff employed at both schools (St Mary’s Hampton and Bishop Wand).</p> <p>PR said that members of the Bishop Wand Learning Trust shadow board would agree the new Articles of Association and Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education. PR said that following the transfer of St Mary’s Hampton to the Bishop Wand Learning Trust, the members of Hampton St Mary Academy Trust would wind up the single academy trust. PR said that MW should liaise with Rachel Webster to determine the date on which to wind up Hampton St Mary Academy Trust; it might be necessary for the trust to remain open until a date later than the transfer of the school to the MAT to enable the 2023-24 audit to be completed.</p>
729	<p>Discussion</p> <p>BL said that the proposal for St Mary’s Hampton to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust provided the opportunity to make a real difference to the education of children in the local area. BL said that the proposal involved equally exciting opportunities for staff at both schools, working together with a new senior leadership team in place. BL said that the effective management of the Bishop Wand Learning Trust would be dependent, in large part, on communication between the Executive Head of the new MAT and the heads of each of the schools in the MAT. BL said that these senior leadership roles would form the primary communication channel to the trust board and local academy committees respectively, ensuring the different levels of governance received timely, accurate and relevant information. BL pointed out that there was not an un-risky option for St Mary’s Hampton. BL said that remaining as a single academy trust was a possibility, but, for example, the falling school roll presented a distinct risk. On the other hand, joining the Bishop Wand Learning Trust presented a risk inasmuch as this was a new MAT, but the opportunities involved were exciting for the enhancement of the children’s education.</p> <p>A governor suggested that an important consideration was the reason for joining a MAT now; this should be clearly communicated to stakeholders to avoid any change being perceived as a desperate measure, should the decision of the board be to support the school joining the new MAT. Communication regarding the change should clearly explain the implications for pupils,</p>

<p>729a</p>	<p>staff and parents.</p> <p>A governor added that it would be important to present carefully balanced communications, outlining both the short-term and long-term benefits. The governor said that the communication should not over promise in the short term; it should clearly explain the full potential benefits would be realised in the longer term. The governor said that circulated communications should honestly present any identified, potential negatives. These communications should be entirely separate for staff and parents.</p> <p>PR said that it would also be useful to explain to parents those aspects unaffected by the school joining the MAT, such as the school uniform and the teaching team.</p> <p>A governor pointed out, without an understanding of the education system, parents might struggle to fully understand the reason and benefits of St Mary’s Hampton joining a MAT; therefore, this should be central to the communication circulated to parents.</p> <p>A governor pointed out that in the absence of having an alternative to joining the Bishop Wand Learning Trust, the Bishop Wand due diligence documents (circulated with the papers for the meeting) provided a useful benchmark to consider whether the Bishop Wand Learning Trust was considered to be the ‘right’ MAT for St Mary’s Hampton to join.</p> <p>In terms of whether this was the ‘right’ MAT for St Mary’s Hampton to consider, a governor said a matter of consideration was the reason for not joining LAT2 (LDBS Academies Trust 2), as this included two primary schools (Stanwell Fields and St Richard’s Hanworth) local to St Mary’s Hampton.</p> <p>BL said that based on the schools in LAT2 facing different long-term challenges to St Mary’s Hampton, this was not an appropriate MAT for St Mary’s Hampton to consider joining.</p> <p>PR added that Bishop Wand was part of the same community with some children moving from St Mary’s Hampton to Bishop Wand; in addition, the MAT could provide St Mary’s Hampton with greater stability.</p> <p>Opportunities for a deeper, richer curriculum at St Mary’s Hampton.</p> <p>BL said that Bishop Wand had recently supported two local primary schools to develop the curriculum they delivered; a similar approach could be taken with St Mary’s Hampton. BL said that the MAT provided the opportunity to maximise capacity to ensure staff time was used effectively and therefore to the full benefit of the children attending the schools in the MAT.</p> <p>PR added that in primary schools, it was extremely challenging to deliver specialist teaching. PR said that the MAT could provide Bishop Wand Learning Trust with the opportunity to, for example, invest in modern foreign languages, so that specialist teachers could cover PPA time at St Mary’s Hampton to deliver language lessons. PR said that another example could be for all primary schools in the MAT to invest in music teaching support that could be shared across the trust.</p> <p>A governor suggested that the benefits of the partnerships would be more evident with multiple primary schools in the trust, in regards to teaching; cross-phase CPD opportunities would be more easily realised.</p>
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729b	<p>Access to Staffing Expertise; the opportunity to share SEND provision</p> <p>BL said that the opportunity to centralise resources across primary schools had the potential to provide a real long-term gain.</p> <p><i>A governor asked the current views of the staff team; whether there was any apprehension.</i></p> <p>MW said that there was informal positivity amongst the team.</p> <p>AR expressed the view that with staff having been provided with very limited detail to date, she did not consider their general understanding to be sufficient to express strong views either way (whether in support or opposing); essentially the change needed to be explained in more detail.</p> <p><i>Governors expressed the desire to build a positive working environment across the MAT and hoped that any concern expressed by staff would be dispelled with more detailed communications.</i></p>
729c	<p>Long-term Security of St Mary’s Hampton School</p> <p>Governors discussed the importance of stakeholder communications clearly explaining that St Mary’s Hampton faced significant financial challenges, as a single academy trust.</p> <p>In terms of the budget assigned to St Mary’s Hampton should the school join the new MAT, BL said this would be assigned by the trust board; there could not be a guarantee that St Mary’s Hampton would receive at least the same as it currently received as a single academy trust.</p> <p><i>A governor asked whether the trust board would have a statutory responsibility to fund all schools in the MAT in a fair and proportional manner.</i></p> <p>PR explained that all schools in a MAT were incentivised for all schools to succeed; Bishop Wand would be incentivised for St Mary’s Hampton to succeed as much as its own success; the future interests of all schools in the MAT would be completely tied together. PR said that the viability of the trust relied on all schools in the MAT thriving.</p> <p><i>Governors THANKED PR for this insight.</i></p>
729d	<p>Representation on the Trust Board</p> <p><i>A governor expressed the importance of having appropriate representation of all key stakeholders across all levels of governance, including parents and all schools in the MAT. The governor asked for clarification regarding the membership at the trust board level.</i></p> <p>PR explained that the constitution of the board was determined by the DfE’s new Church model Articles of Association, which were fairly prescriptive. PR said that the constitution outlined in the model Articles did not accommodate parents being elected to the trustee board. PR explained that the model Articles of Association did not require MATs to include local academy committees (LACs) in its governance structure, but the LDBS consistently insisted on their inclusion. PR said that LACs could be constituted to include elected parent trustee, elected staff and local parish trustee appointments, in order that their views were heard.</p> <p>BL said that the constitution of the St Mary’s Hampton LAC was to be determined, should the board’s decision be to support the application for St Mary’s Hampton to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust.</p>

A governor asked the communication channel between the trust board and LACs.

BL said that this would be achieved through the Executive Head's communication with the Heads of Schools. The Executive Head would report to the trust board and would share relevant information with the Heads of School, who would then communicate this to the LACs, as appropriate.

PR added that the Heads of School would be accountable to the Executive Head, rather than the governing board (as was currently the case). PR said that the scheme of delegation was key to achieving effective communication across the trust, such that the 'voices' of all schools in the trust were heard by the trust board.

PR said that the scheme of delegation should effectively balance hearing parents' and staff views from local communities, while also having the structure and decision making in place to share best practice across the MAT. Governors should caution against the expectation that it was always effective for decisions to be taken locally; for some decisions, a MAT-wide approach would be most effective.

In reply to a governor, PR explained that the board's decision was whether to apply to the regional director for St Mary's Hampton to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust. PR explained that the regional director had been consulted on the scheme of delegation through Bishop Wand's application to form the Bishop Wand Learning Trust. The next stage was for the shadow trust board to approve the scheme of delegation in readiness for the Bishop Wand Learning Trust to start operating in September 2024.

A governor sought reassurance that the scheme of delegation incorporated appropriate levels of authority and sufficient delegated spend for the head of school for St Mary's Hampton.

BL explained that in the absence of holding the appropriate level of authority, there would be an open channel of communication with the Executive Headteacher for the trust to ensure spend requests were appropriately presented to the trust board.


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A governor said that with any change, there was always an element of the unknown, but the proposal to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust 'felt' like a positive, unique opportunity, as St Mary's Hampton would be the first primary school to join the trust and would have fifty percent representation on the trust board constituted at the time the MAT started operating in September 2024.

MW said at the heart of governors' decision making should be the opportunity to deliver the best educational experience for all children from four to eighteen years of age, potentially broadening this to zero to eighteen years in the future. This was the opportunity presented by the Bishop Wand Learning Trust.

A governor said that the benefits for the children had been evident from the presentation given by Dan Aldridge, headteacher, Bishop Wand, at the February FGB. The governor reiterated that the unique opportunity to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust, in their opinion, presented a positively weighted risk.

A governor expressed the view that the Bishop Wand Learning Trust provided the opportunity

<p>729f</p> <p>729g</p>	<p>for St Mary’s Hampton to secure its future, as a one-form entry school; there was an element of investing a level of ‘trust’, but the opportunity provided a considered risk.</p> <p>A governor asked the reason for submitting the application for St Mary’s Hampton to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust to the next available regional director’s meeting.</p> <p>PR explained that when permission was granted for the Bishop Wand Learning Trust to be created, this involved an expectation from the DfE for schools to join the MAT as soon as reasonably practicable.</p> <p>BL said that the Bishop Wand board had passed a resolution to support St Mary’s Hampton joining the Bishop Wand Learning Trust.</p>
<p>730</p>	<p>Governors voted on the resolution circulated on the agenda for the meeting:</p> <p><i>The governing board resolves that the application for St Mary’s Hampton CE Primary School to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust with effect from 1 September 2024 be submitted to the next available meeting of the regional director</i></p> <p>Decision: Governors unanimously RESOLVED that the application for St Mary’s Hampton CE Primary School to join the Bishop Wand Learning Trust with effect from 1 September 2024 should be submitted for consideration at the London regional director’s next available meeting.</p>
<p>731</p>	<p>Any other business There was none.</p>
<p>732</p>	<p>Governors NOTED the meeting dates:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thursday 14 March – AGM at 7.15 pm & FGB at 7.30 pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Resources: Thursday 21 March at 9am</p>
<p>733</p>	<p>BL CLOSED the meeting at 9.24pm THANKING governors for their contribution to the discussion.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">The board formally AGREED these minutes to be a TRUE and ACCURATE record at the next meeting on 14th March 2024.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Signed by the Chair</p>