ST JAMES PRIMARY SCHOOL
CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED)

Full Governing Body Meeting

Minutes

Thurs 25 June 2026, 5.00-7.00pm

Present: Sarah Barnes, Victoria Beadle, Charlotte Brew (Vice Chairman), Charlotte Fincken, Lizzie Geffen (Chairman), Katie Glass, George Frater

In attendance: Rachel Dunnage, Clerk

Quorate: 7/10

	TOPIC	ACTION *Who & when*
1.	**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Chris Carlier, Valerie Elliott (Headteacher), Rev Hannah Moore The Chairman confirmed that they had sent best wishes and a card to the Headteacher on behalf of the Governing Body. The Governing Body agreed that further communication with parents should be guided by the Headteacher's family and the advice of the Local Authority. **Due to operational pressures, the Chairman and Acting Headteacher had cancelled the Monitoring session on** Self Evaluation Form (SEF) & School Development Plan (SDP) 2026-27 which had been planned for immediately prior to this meeting.	
2.	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** *(statutory)* Governors confirmed that there were no changes to their general declaration of interests and they had no potential conflict of interests in specific agenda items at this meeting.	
3.	**CHAIR'S REPORT** **a. Any emergency action taken** Schools Alliance for Excellence (SAfE) had provided a mentor, Anthony Marsh (HT), for our Acting/incoming Headteacher. He was currently supporting the Acting Headteacher for 2 days a week during this challenging period. The Chairman was due to meet with him the following day. SAfE had also provided a specialist governor, Trevor Hood, Chairman at large primary school in Epsom, to support the Governing Body. **b. Strategic direction** The key element of the Strategic aims is ensuing the financial viability of the school. The positive financial impact of staffing changes would begin to be seen in the coming financial year. Two external specialists, the Headteacher's mentor and governance mentor had been chosen for their financial management skills and experience and so could support school leaders with this. **c. Academisation** The Chairman reported that she had reached out to the Good Shepherd Trust CEO to ascertain the outcome of their meeting with Diocese and DfE but received no response. The Governing Body considered that it was unlikely that St James Primary would be joining the Trust in the medium term.	

The Governing Body considered whether to announce this assessment to parents and staff and decided that the record in these minutes would suffice at this stage.

d. Response to red alert temperatures

The Acting Headteacher reported that staff had implemented a range of measures to keep children cool enough to learn including:

- **i.** Drinking water available at all times with regular encouragement to drink.
- **ii.** Swimming sessions to cool down.
- **iii.** Calm play activities in the shade.

Once the red alert was received, the Acting Headteacher took the difficult decision to close the school early. The Governing Body supported the Acting Headteacher's stance and noted that:

- **iv.** All children could go home early. The previous day, careful deliberation and consultation meant that the decision had been made late in the morning; one child could not be collected until 2pm.
- **v.** Parents had been incredibly supportive.
- **vi.** Alice Early, Diocesan Deputy Director of Education, had endorsed the Acting Headteacher's decision.

4. FINANCE AND RESOURCES 2025-2026

a. Financial Monitoring (FMR)

The Finance Governor presented a verbal report to the Governing Body and responded to the governors' questions. The Governing Body noted that:

- **i.** It was unable to review any Financial Monitoring Reports (FMRs). The contracted consultant was on leave for a fortnight and the budget was not yet approved by the Local Authority (LA).
- **ii.** Any budget variance was likely to be small at this point in the financial year.
- **iii.** The SMS financial consultant cost £75 per hour on top of the SMS engagement fee and the school had been required to purchase new software. The new software meant that data was not being manually transferred between spreadsheets and so the capacity for error was reduced. The changes made to coding items to different cost centres did not affect the overall financial position but had made direct comparisons difficult.
- **iv.** Senior leaders had decided not to recruit a School Business Manager (SBM) until the coming school year.
- **v.** The lack of teaching staff insurance meant the budget would bear the full cost of covering the Acting Headteacher's teaching time.
- **vi.** The LA had confirmed its insurance would continue to cover one employee's phased return to work as it was an on-going claim.

b. Financial Monitoring Group

The Finance Governor presented a verbal report of their finance monitoring meeting with the SMS financial consultant and responded to the governors' questions. The Governing Body noted that the consultant had highlighted:

- **i.** The school-run Superstars afterschool club had a deficit when it closed.
- **ii.** The significant PTA money that was being absorbed by running and maintaining the swimming pool. Although the pool incurred no direct cost to the school, it prevented those PTA funds from being used elsewhere.
- **iii.** Several other opportunities to make changes that could save money.

The Finance Governor and Chairman confirmed their faith in the SMS consultant's skills to manage the school's finances effectively. They also noted the plan to go out to the wider village community regarding financial support for the school's resources.

c. 3-year Budget

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	The Governing Body did not receive the 3-year Budget Plan due to several difficulties in sourcing the accurate input data required to generate the 3 years' financial information. **d. School Fund** The Governing Body did not receive an update on progress towards completing the St Mary's unofficial fund disbursement or St James school fund audit. **e. Contracts** The Chairman updated the Governing Body on progress with engaging Caterlink who are the catering providers for The Good Shepherd Trust. The Governing Body noted that: **i.** The Caterlink contract had been sent to the LA legal department for their view and advice. **ii.** The SMS finance consultant had raised a couple of questions on the Caterlink contract and satisfactory answers had been provided to the Acting Headteacher on all. **iii.** The contract had been signed. **iv.** Caterlink had talked with the Twelve15 catering staff whose employment would be transferred (TUPE) to Caterlink. **v.** Marketing materials for parents had been provided and issued. Whilst Caterlink had matched the Twelve15 lunch costs, the school would highlight to parents that the parent would have to pay every day even if there was an emergency school closure. **vi.** Caterlink meals were likely to cost more than the school received in funding from the DfE for Free School Meals (FSM). All children in the early years and KS1 were eligible for FSM (known as the Universal FSM offer) and from September 2026, the FSM eligibility criteria were being expanded to cover many more families receiving specific benefits. The shortfall between Caterlink meal cost and DfE funding would have to be covered by the school budget; it may reach several thousands of pounds. The Governing Body considered the other contracts which required review at this meeting, namely teaching staff cover insurance. The Governing Body considered the relative merits of the quotes from two companies and agreed, with one governor abstaining, to opt for SAS, covering existing conditions, and 30-day stress cover with no maternity leave provision. The cost for this level of cover would be £5.4k. **Clerk to action purchase of SAS insurance as agreed by the Governing Body.** **f. Using community to provide resources or service**s The Governing Body noted and appreciated the suggestion from a member of staff that a system be put in place to seek support for resources or services from the local community e.g. compost for growing area, help to install posts in the Forest School area. The Governing Body agreed that it was a reasonable approach for the senior leaders to take to approach local individuals and organisations about supporting, sponsoring or helping to fund projects as well as reaching out to the local community for specific resources. The Acting Headteacher highlighted that: i. The Billmeir Trust had indicated its interest in donating towards a project this coming year. Senior Leaders would put together potential options. ii. The Mubarak Mosque (local Ahmadiyya community) had invited the school to identify a project for which they can fundraise and senior leaders had chosen a new Nursery building. The school would need to submit a bid to the Diocese for the remainder of the funds and was looking for support to help write the bid. The Chairman informed the Governing Body that the Surrey County Council local government reorganisation was about to enter the Section 24 phase when all spending over a certain amount of money must be fully authorised.	**R Dunnage** 21 Jul
5.	**EDUCATION PERFORMANCE MONITORING** **a. Leadership Report**	

The Governing Body received the Headteacher's report on education performance which had been part written by Valerie Elliott before her sickness absence and part by the Acting Headteacher, Charlotte Fincken. The Acting Headteacher responded to the governors' questions received both before and at the meeting. The Governing Body noted that:

i. Extended transition arrangements had been introduced to support pupils who struggle with change.

ii. Persistent absence remained a priority and the staff were working closely with all affected families and seeing positive engagement e.g. One new pupil had successfully moved from part-time to full-time attendance; one pupil with anxiety had returned to full-time attendance and was undergoing medical assessments.

iii. The racist incidents involved one pupil and were being managed with parental support.

iv. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had successfully recruited an experienced Yr 2 teacher and a Nursery Teaching Assistant (TA).

v. The Local Authority moderation of our Yr 6 writing fully validated the teachers' assessments.

vi. Staff wellbeing remained a concern, with support from colleagues helping staff manage current challenges.

vii. Strong KS1 outcomes had been celebrated, including a 97% phonics pass rate.

viii. New progress tracking systems were being prepared for implementation from September 2026.

ix. The Yr4 Multiplication Check results improved to 80% (up from 70% last year).

x. Early Years Good Level of Development (GLD) reached 69% (slightly above national averages of 68.3%) despite significant challenges.

xi. School Development Plan (SDP) priorities for 2026-27 were likely to include improving KS2 writing, increasing Greater Depth attainment, and strengthening tracking of disadvantaged pupils.

xii. The would be increased focus in the coming year on strengthening transition from KS1 to KS2.

xiii. The number of children with an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) would rise from 11 to 14 in September 2026; one current pupil has secured a specialist placement.

xiv. The school had been allocated £100,000 to develop a nurture provision for EYFS and Yr1 children.

xv. Nursery occupancy was currently 94%; autumn projections were lower (54%), with birth rates potentially impacting numbers. Nursery recruitment trends were being explored with local settings; further open mornings were planned.

xvi. The Nursery wraparound care survey showed insufficient demand to proceed for 2026-27.

xvii. Reception Special Educational Needs (SEND) levels (approx. 10%) remained significantly above the national average, making the 69% GLD outcome particularly positive.

xviii. Staff had been reminded of available wellbeing support contacts.

xix. The Puttenham nursery proposal was currently on hold.

xx. Collective worship arrangements were being covered internally during the absence of Rev Hannah and the Headteacher.

b. School Development Plan (SDP)

The Governing Body received a verbal update on progress towards meeting the SDP priorities from the Acting Headteacher. The Acting Headteacher responded to the governors' questions and the Governing Body noted that:

i. Due to the exceptional operational challenges of having no SBM and the Headteacher absent on long-term sick leave, 6 areas within the proprieties had not been completed this year. They would all be brought forward into the 2026-27 SDP.

ii. Additional priorities would include:

- Reducing the deficit.
- Reviewing and updating the school website.
- Updating policies.

6. SAFEGUARDING

Advice given by governors at this school is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity.

	A: VE to send VB direct email contact for the admin team member who has taken on the management of the SCR. **Completed**. The Governing Body received a safeguarding update from the Acting Headteacher and Lead Governor. The Governing Body noted that: i. The Headteacher had prepared a useful safeguarding update. The Lead Governor had reviewed the proforma spreadsheet and checked it against the Headteacher's report and considered that safeguarding practice remained strong. ii. The Single Central Record had been checked and that some gaps had been identified. The Acting Headteacher had issued a request for all staff and governor DBS information to be rechecked. iii. Assurance arrangements for contractors were that the school received bridging letters, but these were understood to be temporary measures; the school would therefore check the relevant DBS information. iv. An additional senior leader was undertaking training to become a Designated Safeguarding Lead. The LA biennial safeguarding audit was due that week. As it had not been possible for the Headteacher to complete the audit in full before her absence, the Acting Headteacher would request an extension from the Local Authority. The office staff and Acting Headteacher were working through the Single Central Record to ensure that the requirements were fully understood and that the necessary checks were completed. **Governors would provide their DBS documentation to the school the following week.**	**All Govs** 02 July
7.	**GOVERNOR MONITORING** **A:** Assistant Headteacher, Abi Bradbury, would ensure the audit recommendations were implemented so that the website was up-to-date by September 2026. **Underway**. **a. Monitoring reports** The Governing Body accepted that carrying out additional monitoring under the current operational circumstances had not been appropriate. It noted that the following would be completed either before the end of term or in autumn term 2026. The Governing Body thanked the Safeguarding Lead Governor for providing assurance that the school's that safeguarding practice remained strong (agenda item 6.). The monitoring to be completed was agreed as: **i.** Writing in KS2, specifically looking at disadvantaged children (CB) **ii.** Maths (LG) **iii.** Health and Safety update (GF) – school contact Caretaker Ann Lowry **iv.** Equalities and Diversity (SB) – school contact Acting Headteacher Charlotte Fincken **v.** Data Assessment (KG) – school contact: Assessment Lead Kate Cleaver. **b. Monitoring plan – summer term** The Governing Body agreed that the lead governor monitoring would be as listed in the items in 7.a., to take place either in summer 2 or autumn 1. **c. Full Governing Body Monitoring** **i.** The Governing Body agreed that it was not appropriate to carry out the Governor Monitoring July date in the current circumstances. **ii.** The Governing Body agreed the lead governors for 2026-27. *See Appendix 1.* **iii.** The Governing Body agreed that it would cover the 2026-27 SDP and SEF during the 4.30pm monitoring/training session prior to GB1 on 24 September 2026. This review would put governors in a good position to agree the priorities at the GB1 meeting.	
8.	**POLICIES & DOCUMENTS** **a. Policies** The Governing Body reviewed the school or governor policies that required consideration or approval at this meeting:	

	Approval **i.** *Governor School Visits* The Governing Body approved the policy without amendment. **ii.** *Data Protection* The whole suite of Data Protection policies and documents would be issued in the coming week. Policies would need to come to the FGB1 in September for approval. *Information* **i.** *Charging & remissions (to include clarification of section 8)* **ii.** *Finance (to include the changes requested at GB2)* **CB to locate and re-share the changes requested.** **b. Documents** The Governing Body noted the school or governor documents that required consideration or approval at this meeting: **i.** *Data Protection Complaint procedure* The new Data Protection Complaint procedure which became a statutory requirement in June 2026 had been published on the new school Data and its Protection webpage. **ii.** *Privacy Notices for pupil, parents, staff & governors* These notices would be updated in time to be issued in September 2026.	**C Brew** 02 Jul
9.	**TERMS of REFERENCE & PROCEDURAL MATTERS** **a. Terms of Reference** The Governing Body agreed the Terms of Reference, Standing Orders and Delegations and confirmed: **i.** The delegations to the Finance Governor. **ii.** The limit up to which the Headteacher may make miscellaneous financial decisions/enter into contracts, currently set at £2,000 should be reduced to £1,000. **a. Alternative Participation & Voting Arrangements** The Governing Body considered its approach to alternative participation and voting arrangements, in line with The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013. The Governing Body agreed to continue the approach proposed which allows for online only or hybrid meetings to be held. **b. Code of Conduct** The Governing Body agreed its Code of Conduct, as included in the revised Terms of Reference and Standing Orders document. **c. Open or Closed Meetings** The Governing Body considered whether meetings should be open to the public or closed and agreed that they should remain closed. **d. Professional Negligence Statement** The Governing Body agreed to record the following professional negligence statement on each set of minutes: *Advice given by governors at this school is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity*. **e. Confidentiality Statement** The Governing Body agreed to respect the confidence of those items of business which the Governing Body decided were confidential and to record the following statement on their minutes and other Governing Body papers: *Governors respect the confidential nature of discussions and do not disclose governor business or decisions. When minutes of Governing Body meetings, Part 1, are approved they are made available to any member of the public who requests sight of them*.	

	f. Publication of minutes The Governing Body agreed that minutes would be made available to the public once approved by the full Governing Body. The Part 1 approved minutes would be published on the school website.	
10.	**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (Statutory)** **b. Membership of the Headteacher's Performance Management Review (PMR) Panel** The Governing Body agreed the membership for the coming year of 3 governors plus the external consultant, with at least one governor being a Foundation governor, as: • Lizzie Geffen (Chair) • Sarah Barnes • Rev Hannah Moore. **c. Membership of Pay Committee** The Governing Body agreed membership for this coming year of 3 governors, including the Finance Governor as. • Charlotte Brew (Chair & Finance Governor) • Lizzie Geffen • Victoria Beadle. **d. Membership Governor Panel** The Governing Body agreed that the governor panel to review complaints, grievances and disciplinary issues would be established when required, to include any 3 governors who were suitably skilled and not already compromised by involvement in the matter under review.	
11.	**GOVERNORS' DETAILS: contact information and publication of data** **Contact Information for Governors** The Governing Body verified that their contact details were correct and that they may be circulated amongst all governors, the school, the Diocese, the National Governance Association, Strictly Education4S and Schools Alliance for Excellence (SAfE), who run the Local Authority (LA) governance database. **National Governors' Database (Get Information About Schools - GIAS)** The Governing Body noted that all maintained school governing bodies are under a duty to provide the information required on GIAS and that this must be kept up to date as those involved in governance changed. The Governing Body noted that governors are not required by law to provide the additional personal information requested. However, the LA had asked SAfE to collect additional home address and phone details and once these were provided, the Clerk was duty bound to record them on GIAS. Governors confirmed that they did not wish the school to routinely collect their date of birth and nationality to be stored on GIAS along with the rest of their contact information.	
12.	**GOVERNOR TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT** **A:** Clerk to share KG's Interpreting Data training write-up with all governors. **COMPLETED**. **a. Feedback from training completed** The Governing Body noted that no training had been undertaken since the last meeting. **b. Training plan for autumn 2** The Governing Body considered its training and development needs and agreed the training modules it would undertake prior to September 2026 as the following: • NGA Safeguarding and Prevent update training • NGA Assessment • Finance	

	• Reading KCSIE 2026 in its entirety (there would be substantial changes). **Clerk to send out a training-only email with what governors must undertake and what would be good for them to undertake.**	**R Dunnage** 21 Jul
13.	**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING & MATTERS ARISING** **a. Minutes** The Governing Body agreed the following minutes as accurate records: **i.** Part 2 draft minutes of the 17 April 2026 Extraordinary FGB3. **ii.** Parts 1 and 2 draft minutes of the 30 April 2026 FGB5. **iii.** Part 2 draft minutes of the 05 June 2026 Extraordinary FGB4. The minutes would be signed digitally by the Chairman and Part 1 minutes posted on the school website. **b. Matters arising** The Governing Body noted that all matters arising were included in this agenda.	
14.	**CONSTITUTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY** **a. Appointments & resignations** The Governing Body noted that there had been no appointments to or resignations from the Governing Body since the last meeting. **b. Vacancies** The Governing Body received an update on recruitment of candidates to the following governor vacancies: **i.** Local Authority **ii.** Foundation Diocese The Governing Body agreed with the Chairman's recommendation that: • New governors should be interviewed to ensure we recruit the people the Governing Body needed. • The local village news and social media sites could be used to promote the search for new governors and invite applications.	
15.	**CONFIDENTIAL PART 2 BUSINESS** The Governing Body agreed no items need be considered confidential, Part 2, business.	
16.	**DATES FOR 2026-27** **a. Meetings 2026-27** The Governing Body approved the dates of meetings for the coming year as below:	

Agenda Setting	**FGB Meetings Thurs 4.30-7.00pm** Hybrid	**Key Topics & *related documents***	**Notes & *Key documents***
Via email	**4.30-5.00pm**	SDP priority lead presentation/ learning walk or governor training	Relate to SDP or governor priorities
	SEPT TBC	Strategy meeting	
10-SEP	**GB1 08-Oct**		*FMR* *SEF* *Proposed SDP* Governor Lead & SDP *monitoring reports*
15-OCT	**GB2 12-Nov**	Agree *draft budget*	*FMR & draft budget*

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		Review *SFVS* *Education Performance report* Parent voice survey	*Education Performance report* *School SDP progress update* Governor Lead & SDP *monitoring reports*
10-DEC	**GB3 21-Jan**	Agree *SFVS* Monitoring meeting Review SDP progress Determine *Admissions criteria*	*FMR* *SEF* Governor *monitoring reports* *School SDP progress update*
11-FEB	**GB4 11-Mar**	Review *revised draft budgets* *Executive Headteacher report* Staff voice survey	*FMR* *Education Performance report* *School SDP progress update* Governor Lead & SDP *monitoring reports*
25-MAR	**GB5 29-Apr**	Agree *Budgets* Monitoring meeting Review SDP progress	*FMR & budget* *SEF* *School SDP progress update* Governor Lead & SDP *monitoring reports*
03-JUN	**GB6 24-Jun**	Agree governance arrangements for coming year *Executive Headteacher report* Indicative SDP priorities for coming year Pupil voice survey	*FMR* *Education Performance report* *School SDP progress analysis* Governor Lead & SDP *monitoring reports* *Terms of Reference & delegations*

b. Additional dates to note

i. Assemblies: The Governing Body noted the open invitation to attend St James Primary's celebration assemblies on Fridays at 10.30 KS2 and 2.30pm KS1 and EYFS.

ii. Open School dates:

- Thu 15 Oct 2026, 9.15-10.45am
- Tue 24 Nov 2026, 9.15-10.45am
- Potentially Thu 07 Jan 2027 9.15-10.45am

iii. Wizard of OZ production

- 08 July, 9.15am Dress rehearsal
- 08 and 09 July, 6.00pm

Meeting closed 6.50pm

Chairman's signature: Lizzie Geffen **Date: 12.11.2026**

Report from the Clerk

Purpose of report

Lead Governors play an important role in the governance of schools, by focusing on particular aspects of the Governing Body's responsibilities and/or priority topics on behalf of the whole Governing Body. It is important that energies are directed in the areas governors will have the most impact, namely identified areas for school development, governance development and achieving strategic aims.

A single governor may be appointed as Lead Governor for more than one topic, and a significant topic may be split or shared by more than one Lead Governor. Governors should use the **Monitoring Report template** to make explicit the area of school improvement or statutory duty their monitoring covers.

The Governing Body agreed the Lead Governor responsibilities detailed below.

Required roles

The Governing Body appointed a named governor for each of the following Lead governor roles:

Lead Role	*Topic areas*	*Lead governor 25-26*	*Lead governor 26-27*
Safeguarding	Overview of safeguarding and child protection	**Victoria Beadle**	**Victoria Beadle**
SEND	Overview of welfare and outcomes for SEND students	**Sarah Barnes**	**Sarah Barnes**
Finance (incl Honorary Treasurer)	Overview of budget and resources matters (Must be member of Governing Body Pay Committee)	**Charlotte Brew**	**Charlotte Brew**
Standards	Overview of educational standards, assessment, academic & non-academic outcomes	**Katie Glass**	**Katie Glass**
Behaviour and attendance	Overview of behaviour and attendance		
Performance Management	Overview of HR and PMR matters (Must be member of Governing Body PMR Committee)	**Lizzie Geffen**	**Lizzie Geffen**
Equalities	Overview of equalities practice and progress towards Equality Objectives plan	**Sarah Barnes**	**Sarah Barnes**

Recommended roles

The Governing Body appointed the recommended Lead Governor roles as laid out below:

Lead Role	*Topic areas*	*Lead Governor 24-25*	*Lead governor 26-27*
Premises	As applicable: - maintenance, H&S, building work, sports facilities	**George Frater**	**George Frater**
Admissions	Admissions arrangements & consultation, admissions appeals	**Sarah Barnes**	**Sarah Barnes**
EYFS	Overview of standards, assessment & outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Nursery and Reception classes	**Charlotte Brew Sarah Barnes**	**Charlotte Brew Sarah Barnes**

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