



Full Governors Meeting – Wednesday 21st January starting at 5.30pm – Chestnut Classroom

Minutes

Present: Louise Melia (Chair), Kate Nester (Headteacher), Lucy Shakesby, Neil Howiantz (Vice Chair), Linda Monaghan, Ben Amos, Helen Clark,

Absent: Michelle Heap (apologies sent and accepted), Sue Court (apologies sent after the meeting)

In attendance: Jenny Warrington (Clerk to Governors), Kat Glover (observer), Mike Sales (Business Manager)

The meeting started at 5:32pm.

1. (33/2526) Welcome (including observers) to meeting and apologies received

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting including one observer. The governing body accepted apologies from Michelle Heap, who has resigned as governor as of today. With 7 of the 8 governors present, the meeting was quorate.

2. (34/2526) Opportunity to declare Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

3. (35/2526) Headteacher update report including attendance and safeguarding

The Headteacher's report was shared with governors before the meeting and from this the governors asked questions.

A governor asked for more detail on the Early Years project for phonics.

The Local Authority advisory team visited the school earlier in the year to work with Early Years teachers. Following on from a pilot project in Wellington, the Headteacher has since been in contact with the Community Learning Partnership (CLP) schools in relation to an Early Years project for the September 2026 intake, where prospective parents are invited into school for workshops, run by the school, earlier than usual in the summer term, covering topics such as school readiness, toileting and attachment and phonics and early reading. Five of the CLP schools have shown interest in joining in with this project.

A governor asked about the Encompass Training?

Up until this point, when an incident happened at a child's home, the report used to go to county and then the school, which meant the school often found out about the issue formally a long time (months) after the event. The Government has now changed its view of children in this situation and now sees them as victims of domestic abuse. Now the school will be contacted by the police directly and the Designated Safeguarding Leads need to be trained for the Encompass project.

L. Melia

A governor asked for more information on Domestic Violence (DV) on the Headteacher's report.

There was one incident of Domestic Violence reported so far this academic year. The issues relating to the Encompass Project and the law change has been discussed in the staff meeting and on a newsletter to parents to let them know there is support should families need it.

A governor remarked that it was good that the Parent and Family Support Advisor was helping the Headteacher with attendance letters. A governor queried whether there needed to be a link governor for attendance; the Headteacher said this was covered by the link governor for safeguarding. A governor noted the Headteacher's request to the Local Authority from Somerset Association of Primary Headteachers (SAPH) for training on misogyny and incel, which was mentioned as part of the PREVENT training.

A governor asked if the school could explain Talkboost?

Talkboost is an early intervention for a group of 4 children for up to 10 weeks following a set programme, with activities that can transfer back into the whole class setting. The aim of the group is to plug the gap for listening and attention, where this is a primary need. A governor asked how much of a difference Talkboost was making? The Deputy Head said that there was a clear impact – one child had more capability than the assessment showed so was swapped out and another child given the opportunity. The course is 4-5 weeks in; the Deputy Head will review with the teacher to decide whether the impact is positive enough to continue with. The school also wants to review the Good Level of Development data, in relation to speaking and listening skills in Early Years and Year 1. The assessment score identifies children who may benefit from speaking and listening group support. There is alternative system called Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI). Hindhayes has the training and resources for Talkboost and sees no reason to change to the NELI system at this time. Talkboost needs to be seen to make a difference and this would continue to be monitored. There is also a focus on high quality interactions between adults and children and there is training support in this area.

The school continues to make the most of Forest School to promote cross-curricular learning and this feeds into playtimes as well.

A governor asked if there was more purposeful play in the quadrangle space?

The Headteacher said it was becoming more purposeful. The Timetable has been moved around so all the adults from the reception classes are outside for playtime at the same time. The challenge is the number of children and not enough adults to help scaffold and talk to all of them every playtime.

A governor asked for the definition of MHST (Mental Health Support Team).

A governor asked about the Specialist Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) questionnaire?

The questionnaire went to the whole teaching and learning team and there was a positive response. 50% of teachers and some teaching assistants responded.

A governor remarked that there had been no complaints so far, this academic year. It was felt this may be due to the school's relational approach, which tries to work with families.

L. Mullin

The school talked to governors about the drawing club in Early Years which is showing exciting results. The drawing club happens daily, for half an hour, there is a book or short animation as stimuli and a series of key vocabulary. Children draw a different element of the story each time for example a character. The drawings are recorded in little books and sometimes there is a magic code with a number or symbol, which the child presses and something happens in their imaginations, which they can talk about and explain. All levels can put information down on paper and remember what it means. It's joyful and fantastic to see children doing this activity and developing their early writing. There is Curious Quest for Year 1s, which may be explored if needed; it depends on getting the Good Level of Development in the writing strand.

The governors noted that redundancy is on the report still whilst there is a deficit budget. It is important to have the required training and engage with the local authority processes and restructuring meeting. The school is still looking for ways to bring the budget into balance.

A governor asked about the situation regarding Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL)

The school is considering whether it is able to continue with the OPAL membership, weighing up what that would mean for the play environment at the school. The annual cost of the membership is approximately £2000, which is a notable figure in the budget. The school appreciates the framework and support that the OPAL membership provides. A link governor will be arranged once a decision has been made.

4. (36/2526) School development plan

The Curriculum for Hope School Development Plan (SDP) was shared with governors before the meeting and some questions were asked about this.

A governor asked whether there had been an increase in Priority 9: To introduce teaching and learning team to EBSA – Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)?

There are a few tears in the mornings. The Mental Health Support Team (MHST) provided a workshop for children who were struggling to come to school. Eight sets of parents attended for the first hour and the second hour they worked with the children, focusing on attachment issues. MHST also provided a self-help workbook for families that couldn't make the workshop. A couple of families have asked for help. The workshop was suggested to a couple of families. This is not specifically a Parent and Family Support Advisor issue. How a child comes into school in the morning can have a massive impact on the classroom. The free workshop is a quick and effective tool to deal with these issues.

A governor asked about the baselines for Priority 15: To continue to close the gap in the % of pupils attaining the phonics screening at the end of Year 1 and Year 2

The Headteacher said the baselines for the Good Level of Development in Early Years and phonics in Year 1 were on page 4 of the Headteachers report. The Year 2 baseline data would follow after the meeting. Data questions should be emailed to the Deputy Headteacher.

A. Metia

A governor asked about Priority 17: To embed the recommendations from the most recent Department for Education writing framework

The school is up to date with a lot of the writing framework and is increasing dictation as a vehicle for early writing. The teaching assistants have received handwriting training to ensure all adults are teaching the correct letter formation. Cursive writing is not encouraged for early years writing as it can slow progress in this age group.

5. (37/2526) Urgent Concerns regarding road safety outside Hindhayes Infants School

Before Christmas, there was an email from a parent who was concerned road safety outside the school and had experienced a near miss. There have been of concerns raised about this previously. Someone has been knocked by a car, there have been concerns about cars parking on yellow lines. There is no Lollipop Person as there is no specific funding for this currently, the role has unsocial hours, and Lollipop People are subjected to anti-social comments at times. The parish council is looking into cross hatching outside the school. The School Council is being reinstated and will meet fortnightly and one of the first community tasks is for them to write to the parish council. The school is grateful to the presence of the police officer Higgins who has designed a road safety poster for the school among other activities, alongside his Police Community Support Officers. Road safety is an ongoing issue affecting many schools.

6. (38/2526) Finance update and proposal to form a new Finance sub-committee (Membership and Terms of Reference).

The Business Manager shared his report before the meeting and governors asked questions. The governors thanked the Business Manager for the context in his report, which highlighted how important staff are as the biggest cost but biggest asset. The school aims to continue to be the school of choice for the right reasons and the ability to support individuals.

A governor asked for an update on the SEN Hub proposal.

The final decision is expected in March. The school is hopeful the proposal will be approved. After that the leadership team can look at the structure and recruitment for the service.

The governors discussed the projected pupil numbers for September 2027. The school is looking for strategic ways to address the budget and is doing all that it can to improve the budget.

A governor asked for an update on the Summer 2026 building works project.

The Asbestos survey was completed last week. The benefits can be seen in terms of lower heating costs and reduced staff and pupil absence in the side of school where improvements have taken place.

The governors discussed creating a Finance Committee to support the work of the Business Manager.

Action: Finance Committee Terms of Reference to be brought to the next meeting

7. (39/2526) Skills Audit

The clerk shared the Skills Audit results with governors before the meeting.

Action: Clerk to share the guidance on Equality and Diversity with governors

L. Mellis

8. (40/2526) Governors Handbook

The Governors Handbook was shared with governors before the meeting.

The Governors approved the handbook.

9. (41/2526) Climate Action Plan

The governors discussed the introduction of a new Climate Action Plan for Hindhayes Infants School and believe in its importance for consideration of the needs of future generations.

10. (42/2526) Sounds Write Learning Walk feedback - NH

The Vice Chair shared his learning walk with the governing body before the meeting and said he was impressed with the work of the school in this area.

11. (43/2526) Leave of absence form and wellbeing letter

This issue would be brought to the next meeting.

12. (44/2526) Policies to be agreed:

The governors approved the Pay Policy.

13. (45/2526) Minutes of the last Meeting (19th November 2025) to be approved

The Minutes of the Meeting of Governors on 19th November 2025 were approved without amendment.

14. (46/2526) Action points from previous meeting

The action points were reviewed and updated.

15. (47/2526) Clerk's Briefing papers

The clerk shared the clerk's briefing papers with the governing body before the meeting for information.

Action: The clerk will check with the Headteacher regarding records for the PREVENT training and resend the link to governors if needed.

16. (48/2526) Any other Urgent Business - To be emailed to the chair before the meeting.

The governors looked at the copy of a new Ofsted infant school report which was shared with them before the meeting.

17. (49/2526) Governor School Visits and Training

The Chair – completed Ofsted update training for governors

Action: Clerk to share list of local authority training for governors

18. (50/2526) Governance – appointment of new governors

The governing body discussed and approved a new Parent Governor. After further discussion, they did not appoint a prospective co-opted governor.

19. (51/2526) Date of next meeting

The next meeting of governors will be on Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 5:30pm. Room to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 7:27pm

Agenda item	Action by	Agreed Action	Update for next meeting
5/2526	Headteacher	School Development Plan to be on next governing body agenda.	21.01.26 - Done
19/2526	Chair/Vice- Chair/Head	Governor Visit schedule and report template to be brought to next meeting	May 2026
19/2526	Chair/Vice-Chair	Proposal to form a Finance Committee and Terms of Office for next meeting	March 2026
19/2526	All governors/Clerk	Return Declaration of Interests if not already done. Return the confirmation that you have read KCSIE signature sheets to Headteacher if not done. Send PREVENT certificates to Clerk.	Training Record to go to March meeting.
20/2526	Headteacher	Send the SIP report to governors	Done
22/2526	Headteacher/Business Manager	Headteacher to share Wellbeing Day's letter with Chair of Governors	March 2026 – Done
22/2526	Leadership Team / Chair/Vice-Chair/Clerk	Leave of Absence form to be reviewed and policy to be shared with staff and Chair of Governors.	March 2026 - Done
38/2526	Clerk/ Chair and Vice Chair	Finance Committee Terms of Reference to be brought to the next meeting	March 2026
39/2526	Clerk	Share Equality and Diversity guidance	January 2026 - Done
47/2526	School/ Clerk	Check records for PREVENT training and resend the link to governors if needed.	Spring 2026 – Done

Signed by Chair of Governors

Date: 11.03.26

L. Newing