



**Fairfield Road, New Romney Kent TN28 8BP**

*St Nicholas provides a welcoming and inclusive learning environment at the heart of its community. We nurture, encourage and support all children, adults and their families to be the best as God intended. Following God's example of love and trust, we develop resilience and creativity in all we do. Learning, loving and encouraging through Christ*

**Local Governing Body Meeting**

**MINUTES**

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 1000AM**

**To be held at the school**

**Present:**

Christopher Dale – *Headteacher (HT)*  
Lyn Edwards – *Chair (CoG)*  
Victoria Turner – *Deputy Headteacher (Staff Governor)*  
James Bader – *Parent Governor*  
Claire Seiver – *Advisor*  
Father Chris Hodgkins – *Foundation*  
Sarah Webb – *Co-opted Governor*  
Sam Dennison – *Appointed Governor arrived at 10.20am*

**Also, In Attendance:**

**Clerk:** – Lynne Bright

**Apologies accepted:**

Penelope Mackrell – *Foundation Governor*  
Emily Hayday – *Appointed Governor*  
Kathleen Webb – *Appointed Governor*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary Description</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>Procedural:</b>		
1.	<b>Welcome, Apologies &amp; Prayer</b> a) Chair's welcome	

	<p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting</p> <p>b) Receive and accept or decline apologies offered Apologies received from Penelope Mackrell, Emily Hayday Kathleen Webb</p> <p>c) Prayer The prayer was said by Father Chris</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Quorum</b> The meeting was quorate	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Declaration of Business Interests</b> Any business or conflicts of interest relevant to the agenda • <b>None declared</b>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Governing Body Business/Membership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Governing body update Areas covered by Governors on GH will check and reply to JL - <b>ACTION</b></li> <li>b) Governor Training Riskmate has been postponed</li> <li>c) Update from Clerk there will be some policies to come to be ratified</li> </ul>	
5.	Minutes of the last meeting held on 11/12/2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To approve the minutes of the LGB Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024 AGREED</li> <li>b) To approve confidential minutes of the LGB Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024 (both sets) Both AGREED</li> </ul>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Actions/Matters arising from Minutes of day/month/year</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Governing Body actions and matters arising None</li> </ul>	
<b>School Improvement:</b>		
<b>7.</b>	<b>Headteacher's Report:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Admissions</b> The school currently have 411 children on role with 12 families who have children on the waiting list for a place should any become available. There is one parent who will be viewing the school for their child who is a current Year 1.</li> </ul>	

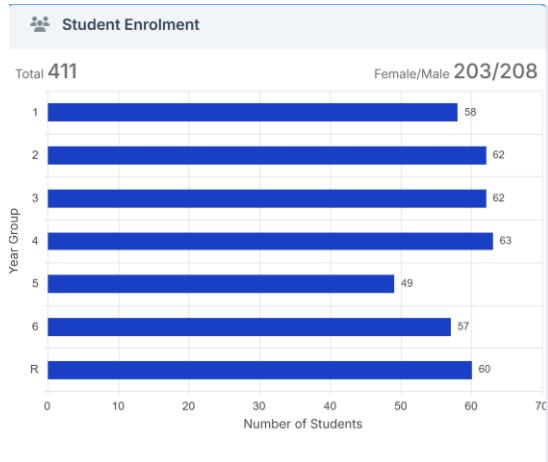
#### Pupil Details

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	All years
Pupils of this School	100.00%	60	100.00%	58	100.00%	62	100.00%	63
Female	56.67%	34	34.48%	20	58.06%	36	45.16%	28
Male	43.33%	26	65.52%	38	41.94%	26	54.84%	34
Current Single	100.00%	60	100.00%	58	100.00%	62	100.00%	63
Female	56.67%	34	34.48%	20	58.06%	36	45.16%	28
Male	43.33%	26	65.52%	38	41.94%	26	54.84%	34
Total Pupils		60		58		62		63
Female	56.67%	34	34.48%	20	58.06%	36	45.16%	28
Male	43.33%	26	65.52%	38	41.94%	26	54.84%	34

#### Key Pastoral Data

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	All Years
English Add'l Lang	1.67%	1		4.84%	3	3.23%	2	4.76%
Free School Meals	26.67%	16	50.00%	29	30.65%	19	45.16%	28
Looked after Children								1.75%
Medical Condition	43.33%	26	53.45%	31	51.61%	32	35.48%	22
Pupil Premium	28.33%	17	50.00%	29	33.87%	21	45.16%	28
SEN Needs	6.67%	4	34.48%	20	20.97%	13	17.74%	11
SEN Provision	6.67%	4	32.78%	19	17.74%	11	14.52%	9
Service Children								0.24%

#### Student Enrolment



Admissions is a trust policy and the school have 60 PAN; there have been 97 places requested for September so once again in September Year R will be full. Across the rest of the marsh the birth rate has dropped more this year compared to last year and as a school we are working hard to ensure the faith people are putting in us is well placed.

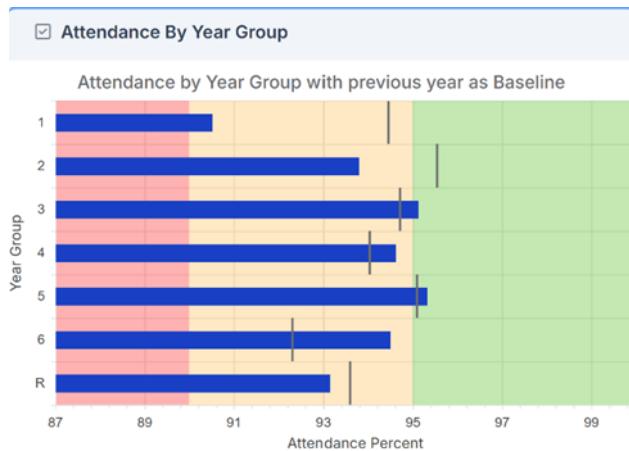
#### **Q: Governors asked is there many siblings?**

Headteacher responded 31 so this works out 50/50 for siblings and new children. The school has decided to hold an open day in July and we are also going to flood the nursery with that date in order that new potential parents come and see us and when they return in November, they will see the school again; we need to keep looking at how we market the school to maintain the school roll that is essential for funding.

#### • Attendance

Persistent absence which is for those children whose absence is below 10% or more; 12 of these children are in Year R.

## Attendance by Year Group



Year 1 also has low on attendance – see table below

Session Attendance Summary, 04/09/2024 - 04/02/2025

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	All Years
Attendance	93.13%	90.53%	93.74%	95.13%	94.60%	96.24%	94.47%	93.93%
Authorised	6.09%	7.96%	5.14%	3.43%	4.43%	2.47%	4.14%	4.85%
Unauthorised	0.78%	1.51%	1.12%	1.45%	0.96%	1.30%	1.39%	1.21%
Pers. Absence ≥=10%	12 20.00%	16 27.59%	10 16.13%	11 17.74%	11 17.46%	4 8.16%	10 17.54%	74 18.00%
Educational Activity	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.69%	0.64%	1.12%	3.64%	0.85%
Present	93.13%	90.53%	93.74%	94.44%	93.96%	95.11%	90.83%	93.09%
Late	0.44%	0.48%	0.28%	0.35%	0.32%	0.33%	0.23%	0.35%

In four year groups the attendance is good, the picture for attendance is improving and the school will keep impressing upon parents the importance of regular attendance.

In the last academic year as a Governing body we focused on the low attendance of the Year 6, however we can already see the current Year 6's attendance is higher than the previous Year 6.

Session Attendance Summary for Attendance, 04/09/2024 - 04/02/2025

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	All Years
All	93.13%	90.53%	93.74%	95.13%	94.60%	96.24%	94.47%	93.93%
EAL: No	93.07%	90.53%	93.01%	95.14%	94.47%	95.99%	94.36%	93.86%
EAL: Yes	96.79%		90.12%	94.68%	97.16%	98.94%	97.34%	95.99%
FSM: No	94.58%	93.32%	96.59%	96.46%	95.42%	97.26%	95.71%	95.62%
FSM: Yes	88.97%	87.73%	87.18%	93.50%	93.11%	94.73%	92.98%	91.28%
Gender: Female	94.32%	90.05%	94.20%	94.95%	93.73%	96.74%	94.38%	94.14%
Gender: Male	91.62%	90.78%	93.11%	95.28%	95.57%	95.81%	94.58%	93.74%
LAC or FSM: No	94.58%	93.32%	96.59%	96.46%	95.42%	97.26%	95.57%	95.60%
LAC or FSM: Yes	88.97%	87.73%	87.18%	93.50%	93.11%	94.73%	93.24%	91.33%
LAC: No	93.13%	90.53%	93.74%	95.13%	94.60%	96.24%	94.37%	93.92%
LAC: Yes							100.00%	100.00%
Pupil Premium: No	94.51%	93.32%	96.53%	96.46%	95.30%	97.26%	95.57%	95.56%
Pupil Premium: Yes	89.49%	87.73%	88.23%	93.50%	93.41%	94.73%	93.24%	91.50%
SEN: No	94.39%	93.15%	95.58%	95.23%	95.31%	95.54%	95.43%	94.97%
SEN: Yes	72.42%	85.13%	84.91%	94.56%	90.90%	98.35%	91.99%	89.71%

Attendance in years 1 and 2 is lower than the other year groups and this is being monitored; one of the incentives the school has arranged for after half term is an Attendance League, hopefully this will encourage children to attend and seeing their class attendance may promote more regular attendance from the ones whose attendance is 'not as it should be'.

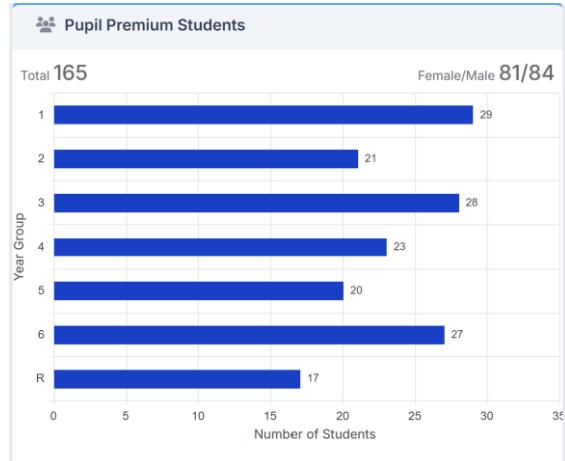
	<p>It is a concern the lower two year groups have the lowest attendance which is why the school needs to address this now.</p> <p><b><i>Q: Governors asked are we, as a school set up to support these children during the time they are here?</i></b></p> <p>Headteacher responded that by putting in additional adult support within the class will help with some of the academic challenges the children may face and which may be preventing them from attending, however this is not the case for all the children so we need to work with the families to address issues with them which may be preventing their child from attending on a regular basis.</p> <p>Currently there are two full time equivalent members of staff in Year R and Year 1 together with 2 TA; this will help the PP and less able to achieve.</p> <p>Also, within these year groups there are two families that are right at the heart of CP; they are not the only children and the issues we have as a school is over 20% of the children have a social worker.</p> <p>One of the questions which was raised during the Judicium audit was do you know all of your vulnerable children? Headteacher stated normally the answer would be yes but when you have over 20% of children with Social Workers it is difficult to remember them all.</p> <p>During the period October (2023) to October (2024) the Headteacher looked at the number of conversations that were made with outside agencies regarding the pupils and this was very high; the school have also seen the highest number of CP cases with children being removed from families, with other families under review. It has been an extremely difficult term since Xmas with lots of section 47 and CP meetings.</p> <p><b><i>Q: Governors asked what further support do the staff have?</i></b></p> <p>Headteacher stated as a school we are good at talking about situations which arise; I also encourage staff to make use of the wellbeing line which is very good as they are fully trained counsellors; staff receive 8 free sessions. At the end of the 8 sessions the Lead Counsellor will contact the Headteacher if they believe staff want or need more and if this happens it has never been refused. DSL's also meet and discuss the situations and this helps the staff to deal and process these situations</p> <p><b><i>Q: Governors stated as a DSL/Teacher it must be horrible to go from one situation i.e., CP into a class to teach</i></b></p> <p>Yes, it is but this is something the staff do, however if they feel they need more time to process the situation they have been dealing with then they will be given the time.</p> <p>The table below shows the Safeguarding that has been dealt with:</p>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pupils with SEN and LAC</b></li> <li>• <b>DATA</b></li> </ul>		<p>Links of reports from subject leads are below.</p> <p>Subject leads have made it very clear what is required from each year group, some of the changes is to make the subject less rather than more. Currently we are 'in the dip' this happens nearly every year however, at Easter it will improve.</p> <p>Please see report below for science:</p> <p><a href="https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a275fd7e161f2c2473b6de/view">https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a275fd7e161f2c2473b6de/view</a></p> <p>Science - subject leads and staff have worked very hard in this area. Governors have asked to come in so when EH comes in she will be asked to look at this area.</p> <p>Please see report below for Reading:</p> <p><a href="https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a275fdd5b89be6765bd81f/view">https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a275fdd5b89be6765bd81f/view</a></p> <p>Please see report below for Maths:</p> <p><a href="https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a275fd39ae83bc8c33a1cf/view">https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a275fd39ae83bc8c33a1cf/view</a></p> <p>Gareth Metcalf is coming back in and will work with staff he didn't see last time and in the pm he will work with the TAS then have a parent workshop.</p> <p>Stay and read and stay and count with Year R and Year 1, whilst this has been positive at the moment, the parents we would like most to attend have not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Behavioural Reports</b></li> </ul>
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- **Pupil Premium**

Children on Pupil premium has now risen above the 40% mark which means the level of need is rising and this is the highest the school have ever known.

Year 1 has 50% PP children with Year 6 the next highest cohort.



- **Details of interventions and innovations using the PP**

- **School performance and standards**

- **Impact of PE & other Funding**

- **Finance and Premises**

The school are still looking at the replacement of laptops to completely remodel our IT structure for the next few years.

LENOVO computers would be the best however these also cost the most so we need to relook at other computers and see what would be best for the school.

***Q: Governors asked is the WIFI sufficient to support this?***

Yes, we are level 6 so this is the top we can have; wi-fi infrastructure is the best and is on par to the secondary school across the road see under H&S and Finance

- **Staffing information**

The school are holding interviews next week for midday supervisors. We currently have a midday supervisor who has just finished her history degree and has stepped into Year 6 as the member of staff in this Year is currently of sick, we also appointed an additional TA.

	<p>Staffing remains secure.</p> <p>At the end of next term, the school has a member of staff back from maternity, it has been agreed she will not be going back into her class until September as this will ensure continuity within Year 4.</p> <p>Currently there are 3 people on maternity and one is due to go at Easter.</p> <p>During our previous Governors meetings there has been discussion around employing someone as a Safeguarding Support Officer. Two members of the Governing body came in to look at the Job Description, if the school should decide to employ. Both Governors reported it is a very good job description and agree the post is extremely necessary as it will relieve some of the pressure on the DSL's. However, it has an impact to the salary on Payroll.</p> <p>The Job description will also need to go through scooping to ensure no one across the trust is doing the same or similar role.</p> <p>Job description below:</p> <p><a href="https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a271eeee22281659cad051/view">https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a271eeee22281659cad051/view</a></p> <p>Headteacher had envisaged it would be more a secretarial role with some 1:1 contact with children with the person being employed 0845-1600 term time only, however, this has been returned on PayScale D. If we looked at this, we would then need to look at restructuring our office staff</p> <p>There were various discussions around the position, however it was felt it is a necessary role as teachers who deal with this constantly it could affect their Mental health.</p> <p><b><i>Q: Governors asked would employing an extra part time office person be more beneficial?</i></b></p> <p>Yes, it would and perhaps they could swap between roles as in admin for SG and SEN, however it would mean rejigging the office staff.</p> <p><b><i>Q: Governors asked is this something you are looking at having in place for September?</i></b></p> <p>Headteacher stated I was looking at summer term, but think realistically it is now September</p> <p><b>Teaching staff</b></p> <p>There was also a discussion regarding the Trusts pay policy and Governors felt it needed to be reviewed.</p> <p>The school currently have 19 staff that will be entitled to go onto UPS, at present we already have 6 on this scale. UPS can no longer be capped</p>	
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	<p>this then means there is a significant cost for these 13 staff to move onto UPS, as UPS Grade 1 starts at 45K+ and Grade 3 is almost 50K. Please follow link for PayScale's:</p> <p><a href="https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a271ce7a2184a399a85082/view">https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a271ce7a2184a399a85082/view</a></p> <p>UPS teachers have to take on another responsibility which the current 6 MPS staff already do.</p> <p>Some of the jumps in responsibility from M6 to UPS 1 is large with only an increase in wage of approximately 2k. In order for staff to be considered there is a long form to complete.</p> <p>Another issue the school will face if those 13 decide to go up to UPS the challenge, then is how do the school fill those obligations, they will not automatically be entitled to UPS it will be evidence based and staff will have to be highly competent in all areas</p> <p>Headteacher stated UPS teachers work extremely hard and have senior responsibility in the school.</p> <p><b>Q: Governors asked how does this compare with other schools locally?</b> Headteacher responded this is something I need to speak to the trust about on Friday at the HT meeting</p> <p>Governors have noticed that elements of the appendices need to be updated in relation to the difficulties we are facing with teachers possibly moving to UPS</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>School Improvement Plan:</b> Captured in subject leads reports please see links above in DATA</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Governor Monitoring and other Reports &amp; Visits:</b></p> <p>a) Monitoring visits undertaken; subjects and governor/s  Chair to come in on days of interview and this will cover H&amp;S and HR then following week for single central and all reports will be put on GH.  JB stated he needs to come in also and hopefully will work alongside EH</p> <p>b) Monitoring visits for next term</p> <p>c) Other Reports or notes of visits</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>Finance:</b></p> <p>a) Governor Report month/year</p>	

	<p>Auditors final amount has been confirmed and the school remain in a healthy position, however this needs to be carefully monitored in order to retain this position.</p> <p>b) Consolidated cash flow</p> <p>c) <b>Financial Report month/year</b></p>	
11.	<p><b>Safeguarding:</b></p> <p>a) Issues or concerns:</p> <p>Please see part of Headteachers report.</p> <p>The school underwent their Judicium Inspection – please see link to the report:</p> <p><a href="https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a273d9ee22281659cb98cd/view">https://app.governorhub.com/document/67a273d9ee22281659cb98cd/view</a></p> <p>b) Safeguarding outcomes:</p>	
12.	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety:</b></p> <p>a) Issues or concerns:</p> <p>The air source heat pump still a problem, and whilst trying to resolve one problem another part has been found that was broken. This has now been fixed and Aquila have been sent another bill to be paid.</p> <p>Having spoken to the contractors regarding the air pump they believe they have managed to vacuum out most of the moisture; once the moisture reading is under 2 torr a pressure test can be redone. Currently the reading is 3 torr.</p> <p>Once pressure test has been carried out and there are no problems with it, they can then start replacing the broken parts and once they are replaced contractors can undertake another pressure test.</p> <p>They are potentially fixing a system that isn't worth fixing. Headteacher has written to Aquila to ask if the system can be removed and an alternative installed, to get to this point of repair so far, the costs have gone over 30K.</p> <p>The school are currently looking at an RPA claim; there is a two year warranty on the pump (it is a swegon device). The pump was delivered two and a half years ago, and another company installed it so has only been in commission for 18 months. The company is arguing that warranty starts from the day it is delivered rather than the day it started working!</p>	

	<p>Kent boiler care are in the process of taking out the old immersion heater and installing a new one that will be independent of any heating pump which mean we will rely on this for all the hot water in school. There are still some parts of the school running on portable heaters.</p> <p>Electrician will be in to upgrade the installation board and the audit for H&amp;S is in May.</p> <p>Pavilion had an archaeological dig and two archaeological ditches were found one was a stream, due to this it may mean we have to go back to planning. The school have spoken to the architect who has spoken to planning and it may be that we have to scale back our plans.</p> <p><b><i>Q: Governors asked is the concern preserving the history or the actual building?</i></b></p> <p>Headteacher responded it is more about how deep the finding of the stream is; if they think our raft will have no impact then we can go ahead but we need to wait and see</p> <p>KCC are looking at removing the far end of the field and it needs to be decided where the boundary will go.</p> <p><b><i>Q: Governors asked is there any funding the school can get?</i></b></p> <p>Headteacher responded we already have 170K but may need to look at other grants and see if we can apply for any of them.</p> <p>The school have received the refund from KCC without any problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) Premises update:</li> <li>c) Review of Health &amp; Safety and report on incidents recorded:</li> <li>d) Progress towards General Risk Assessment priorities:</li> </ul>	
13.	<p><b>Riskmate Risk Register</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Update from Headteacher regarding Riskmate Register</li> <li>b) Assess Riskmate return for current strategic risks and ensure appropriate mitigations are considered</li> <li>c) GDPR</li> </ul>	
14.	<p><b>Compliance (including website):</b> Items for consideration:</p>	

15.	<p><b>Policy Review:</b>  <b>To ratify/adopt the following policies due for review:</b>  <b>Aquila Trust Policies: (Adopt only)</b></p> <p><b>School Based Policies: (Ratify)</b></p>	
16.	<p><b>Any other business:</b>  Urgent Business to be notified to the Clerk and Chair in advance of the meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<b>Other:</b>		
17.	<p><b>Confidentiality:</b>  Governors to decide which items, if any, should be regarded as confidential and recorded within the confidential minutes for this meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
18.	<p><b>Confirmation date of next meeting:</b>  26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 – JB will not be attending in May</p>	
19.	<p><b>Closing Reflections &amp; Meeting Summary</b></p> <p>a) What was the theme of the key discussion during the meeting?  The employment of a Safeguarding Support Officer.  Teacher salaries and possibly moving to UPS PayScale  Portacabin regarding the archaeological findings</p> <p>b) What was the key challenge facing the School/Trust during this discussion?  All from section A.  Air pump and the rising cost of this</p> <p>c) What are the areas for celebration in this discussion?  18 children were confirmed and baptised on 4/2/2025  From the Judicium inspection the school received no reds  The school once again has a full PAN for next academic year</p>	
<b>Summary of Identified Actions</b>		
Item	Action	Action owner
4	Areas covered by Governors on GH will check and reply to JL	Chair