



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
TUESDAY 3rd February 2026
To be held at the school**

Present:

Christopher Dale – Headteacher (HT)
 Victoria Turner – Deputy Headteacher (Staff Governor)
 Lyn Edwards – Chair (CoG)
 Hannah Stanford-Weeks – Parent Governor
 James Bader – Parent Governor
 Claire Seiver – Advisor
 Penelope Mackrell – Foundation Governor
 Sarah Webb – Co - opted Governor
 Hannah Lees – Assistant Headteacher
 Emily Hayday – Appointed Governor
 Paul Fadin – Observer
 Samantha Dennison – Appointed Governor via TEAMS left at 11.15am

Also, In Attendance:

Clerk: – Lynne Bright

Apologies accepted:

Father Chris Hodgkins – Foundation – NO APOLOGIES

Item:	Summary Description	Action
Procedural:		
1.	Welcome, Apologies & Prayer a) Chair's welcome The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting	

	b) Receive and accept or decline apologies offered None received – Sam Dennison was dialling in via TEAMS due to Uni commitments c) Prayer Penelope Mackrell opened the meeting with the prayer	
2.	Quorum The meeting was quorate	
3.	Declaration of Business Interests Any business or conflicts of interest relevant to the agenda - CD sits as Chair at St Clements - JB wife teaches at school	
4.	Governing Body Business/Membership a) Governing body update <i>Q: Chair asked has anybody given any thoughts to vice chair as this vacancy needs to be filled?</i> Emily stated she is happy to undertake this role – this was voted on and agreed A volunteer at the school has been approached to be a member of the LGB who is not a parent, which is the category the school requires Governors' website page is now updated and completed, this includes the last 5 sets of minutes and the attendance register for 2024/2025. CD reminded PF and HSW he still required their pen portrait for inclusion on the website. ACTION b) Governor Training Bitesize video – OFSTED UPDATE Bitesize video – Budget setting The Clerk advised that the videos had not been circulated and would instead be uploaded to GH. Governors will be notified when this has been completed and are expected to watch the videos in their own time c) Update from Clerk	
5.	Minutes of the last meeting held on 11th December 2025 a) To approve the minutes of the LGB Meeting held on 11th December 2025 Agreed b) To approve confidential minutes of the LGB Meeting held on 11th December 2025 None	
6.	Actions/Matters arising from Minutes of 11th December 2025 a) Governing Body actions and matters arising	

	9	Ensure all monitoring reports are completed and uploaded onto GH	Governor s
	11	Feedback on SG review by Judicium – meeting to be held 25/02/2026	Chair & SD
	13	Riskmate to be completed ready for a discussion at the next meeting	HT

School Improvement:

7.

Headteacher's T3 Report:

Maths - HL attended the meeting and delivered an overview on the Maths curriculum and a summary of what has been done since the start of this term. Please see link below:

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/6984617f3fc5faa6766baca8/view>

Q: Governors asked have you got any methods where one of the resources could be given to the parents during a parents evening? Even if it is how the questions are formulated in a test situation?

HL responded the school has dojo where teachers upload maths and other curriculum areas, Yr. 2 are now also having homework and there will be some parent workshops coming up for KS1 children which we are hoping will be before Easter so will begin sometime next term. HL advised at times parents have a block when it comes to maths and this is not helpful with the children. As discussed previously HL stated she would still like to start using children to make a video which can then be uploaded onto dojo and parents hopefully will be able to assist their children more in their homework

Q: Governors asked the Year 4 children how have their results dropped but GD has increased?

HL stated the class teacher agreed the children were accessing that level in class and this was under test condition; some children may not have hit a standardised score but when you are in a position with a test, we need to be looking at that as a way forward which is why the score isn't over inflated. The children have more tests this week.

HL and VT meet on a regular basis to ensure everything marries up, HL stated there will always be occasions where children don't perform in tests. Core teams meetings have been held every Monday and as a leadership team we sit and discuss key pupils who we may have concerns about.

Year 5 remain the better year group in Pixel; they are in line with the pixel score. HL has received data back from Pixel which needs to be unpicked and looked at more closely; SLT will also look at intervention groups where required.

HL stated it makes more sense to follow white rose booklet and how this programme show multiplication, it also ensures the teachers look at the problem as a 'whole' with different options and how to use them alongside the knowledge the teacher already has. Aquila also

	has a version of a maths lead who visits schools and was very pleased with what he saw at St Nicholas; he is due for another visit next term and will be leading teachers in some CPD. <i>Q: Governors asked LBQ what is this?</i> Learning by question <i>Q: Governors asked when you are seeing potential gaps is this something to do with teachers and their confidence or the testing or is it different for each class?</i> It varies from class to class and it can be all of the above, teachers don't want to push the children too far ahead. Is it also linked to the confidence of the teachers which is something we need to look at? <i>Q: Governors asked is it about slowing the high performers down in order for the children that are struggling to catch up?</i> No, it is about bringing the bottom up rather than slowing the top down, future development is to look at the children and will be about the ability to keep up rather than catch up; teachers are aware where to find this information and the children that need it are being challenged. More able children haven't been pushed for greater depth when you look at national standards there is some way to go but we are making significant progress <i>Q: Governors asked the children that are doing well are they being stretched?</i> We have the booklets which work at a similar level however it is the teacher's discretion as to where the child starts as they know the child, normally the final question in the level is really challenging and when they can answer this they can move on; the children also have their old blue books with open ended questions some of the children find challenging. <i>Q: Governors asked regarding the homework, the children are told to only go as far as they are told to within the class and not go any further whether they are capable or not is this correct?</i> Yes, this can be discussed at parents evening and see if there is more they can access <i>Q: Governors asked is bodmaths a tool?</i> Yes, this is being used with Year 6 pupils Maths covers a huge area of our school improvement plan and is something which as Governors you can see is being worked on. Staff must be more thorough as attainment remains below expectations At the meetings held with staff at the start of term (no children due to heating issues within the school) CD spoke to all staff and they were informed they needed to improve and be more confident with their delivery and assessment of maths.	
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Whilst writing HT report CD realised most of his job now has nothing to do with what goes on in the classroom but more about reports and what is required in the senior leaders of the school, he believes this leads to him not seeing what is going on in the classroom and this is something he needs to look at more closely.

- **Admissions**

Pupil Details

	R		1		2		3		4		5		6		All years	
Pupils of this School	100.00%	61	100.00%	59	100.00%	54	100.00%	59	100.00%	61	100.00%	62	100.00%	52	100.00%	40
Female	44.26%	27	55.93%	33	37.04%	20	57.63%	34	44.26%	27	50.00%	31	48.08%	25	48.28%	19
Male	55.74%	34	44.07%	26	62.96%	34	42.37%	25	55.74%	34	50.00%	31	51.92%	27	51.72%	21

No. on roll: 408

No. of in-year admissions since January 2026 – 2 have joined us this academic term.

No. pupils left since January 2026: 2 (both from the SRP, with another to potentially have a specialist/ alternative placement offer before the end of this term.) This totals 9 since the start of the academic year with all pupils having moved out of area.

Projected admissions for September 2026

Total number of applications

Total number of applications – 84

1st choice applications – 43

2nd choice applications – 30

3rd choice applications – 11

Deprivation and Disadvantage

The school serves a community with high levels of social deprivation and economic disadvantage, with over a third of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. This indicates that the school's admissions policies and practises are effective in ensuring access for disadvantaged families in the local area

Key Pastoral Data

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	All Years								
English Add'l Lang	1.64%	1	1.69%	1	5.08%	3	3.28%	2	4.84%	3	7.69%	4	3.43%	1		
Free School Meals	24.59%	15	32.20%	19	50.00%	27	38.98%	23	47.54%	29	35.48%	22	44.23%	23	38.73%	15
Looked after Children			1.69%	1											0.25%	
Medical Condition	49.18%	30	47.46%	28	57.41%	31	52.54%	31	40.98%	25	40.32%	25	34.62%	18	46.08%	18
Pupil Premium	24.59%	15	35.59%	21	50.00%	27	42.37%	25	47.54%	29	37.10%	23	44.23%	23	39.95%	16
SEN Needs	8.20%	5	13.56%	8	37.04%	20	20.34%	12	26.23%	16	17.74%	11	32.69%	17	21.81%	8
SEN Provision	6.56%	4	13.56%	8	35.19%	19	13.56%	8	21.31%	13	16.13%	10	30.77%	16	19.12%	7
Service Children					1.69%	1									0.25%	

Our overview of vulnerable data is as follows:

- Number of children entitled to PP – 163 (39.95%) – significantly above national average

	• Number of pupils on SEN register – 89 (21.81%) – above national average • Number of pupils with an EHCP – 20 (4.91%) – In line with national average (5%) • Number of pupils with medical conditions – 188 (46.08%) • Number of EAL pupils – 14 (3.43%) – below county average • Number of LAC – 1 (0.25%) Specialist Provision The school operates a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) for up to 14 pupils with an ASD designation. One pupil has moved from EYFS to the SRP this term, giving a total of 13 pupils in the SRP, accounting for the admission changes as described. The Local Authority and Academy have agreed an increase in numbers to the SRP from September 2026 for its admission to rise to 20 pupils. Oversubscription The school continues to see a high level of pupils on our waiting list. We currently have 20 children on our overall list. This term, as a school we will be contacting all those families to see if they wish to remain on our waiting lists. Currently we have spaces in our Year 1, 2, 3, and 6 cohorts. <i>Q: Governors asked regarding the admissions are the numbers may be less than you are hoping for?</i> CD responded yes, it is less, however there is a website you can access to see the birth rate and the birth rate has declined for our next intake. Whilst we will have no redundancies and will still keep a 2-form entry other schools have not been so fortunate. With the birth rate that has plummeted it will be interesting to see what happens with the schools in the other areas; CD convinced that come September once people know there are spaces they will be filled. St Nicholas will be looking at 2 classes of 25 going forward. CD wants to keep two classes as this has a positive impact on parents as they see us still running with the same number of children! CD will be given the numbers at the end of March and this is when the budget can be finalised, it is then he will know the position of the school and what it will look like. <i>Q: Governors asked do we know the schools that have chosen us as second as to what their first choice is?</i> No, we are not given this information, so we need to approach the parents who visited us and see what they liked about the tours, and informing them that due to a low birth year it could be there is a possibility of us being able to offer their child a place if they are interested. We must also remember that some parents, will not have	
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	applied and will be looking when they realise, they should have had a school placement offer for their child. <i>Q: Governors asked for those that have chosen us as either first or second choice do you know where they live geographically?</i> CD responded he will know eventually but all he is told by the LA is what the first, second and third choice is. <i>Q: Governors asked do the parents ask about OFSTED?</i> CD replied less than 20% looked at the website; they didn't look at Ofsted it appears they knew about the reputation of the school and it seems more about the word of mouth One thing we have to put out there more is the wraparound care the school offers this we believe will encourage more parents to apply. <i>Q: Governors asked can you promote that we offer opportunities for free school uniform and how we support vulnerable children?</i> As a school, we have to be very careful how we promote this and how we include all children. We will also be looking at perhaps advertising in the Looker which is a magazine a lot of local people read and this will also promote the school. Discussion took place around visiting nurseries in September, rather than waiting or inviting them into school, in order to engage parents and demonstrate what the school has to offer <i>Q: Governors asked can we do marketing?</i> As a school we used to in the family centre who invited in the local schools but this has now stopped, so we are still a lot of word of mouth, but it should be noted all the parents that came were incredibly positive with their feedback. Governors also need to remember the school still have over 20 children on the waiting list and we have a new housing development behind the school. As a summary governors should consider the following: What's Going Well • Roll remains stable, with admissions and leavers balancing naturally and departures linked to families moving out of the area rather than school factors. • Admissions continue to prioritise inclusion, with strong access for disadvantaged families reflected in the high proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium. • SRP is operating effectively, close to full capacity, and able to support internal movement (EYFS to SRP), showing flexible provision aligned to need. • High demand for places, evidenced by a significant waiting list, reflects strong community confidence in the school. Key messages for Governors	
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- SRP placement changes: Ongoing movement and a likely further SRP leaver will need careful monitoring to ensure stability, appropriate resourcing, and continuity for pupils.
- Waiting list review: Ensuring families confirm continued interest is essential to maintaining accurate numbers and planning ahead.
- Impact of deprivation: With sustained high levels of disadvantage, governors should continue to monitor whether admissions, support systems, and funding deployment are meeting the evolving needs of the community.
- Long-term roll planning: While numbers are stable now, the school's oversubscription status and local demographic pressures should continue to inform future staffing and budget projections.

Attendance

Session Attendance Summary, 03/09/2025 - 28/01/2026

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	All Years
Attendance	95.35%	95.21%	93.02%	95.09%	95.65%	94.73%	93.54%	94.7
Authorised	4.29%	3.65%	5.55%	3.87%	3.49%	4.16%	4.01%	4.1
Unauthorised	0.35%	1.14%	1.43%	1.05%	0.86%	1.11%	2.45%	1.1
Pers Absence ≥10%	7 11.48%	7 12.07%	16 29.63%	10 16.95%	9 14.75%	9 14.52%	10 19.23%	68 16.7

The current overall picture is as follows:

Whole-school attendance stands at 94.70%, which is below the national benchmark (~95.8% for primary schools).

Persistent absence (PA) is high at 16.71%, well above the national threshold of concern (10%).

This represents 68 pupils missing 10% or more of school.

Strengths / Positive Areas

Most year groups are achieving attendance around or above 95%, including:

Reception, Years 1, 4, and 5 (all 95%+)

Unauthorised absence is relatively low overall (1.17%), indicating parents generally communicate absence.

Areas of Concern / Focus

Year 2 and Year 6 attendance is notably low:

Year 2: 93.02%

Year 6: 93.54%

Persistent absence is extremely high in Years 2, 3 and 6, with:

Year 2: 29.63%

Year 3: 16.95%

Year 6: 19.23%

These year groups are likely to have the greatest impact on whole-school attendance figures

	Key Messages for Governors Attendance is below national average, with certain year groups pulling the overall figure down. Persistent absence is the biggest driver of low attendance, especially in Years 2, 3 and 6. Year 2 requires urgent focus, with almost one-third of pupils classed as persistently absent. Strengthen targeted interventions, with clear monitoring of: pupils with medical-related authorised absence families where attendance is trending downward Continue whole-school messaging on attendance, ensuring early intervention and escalation processes are being followed Up to half term we had the school's attendance up to 95.6% but had an abnormal amount of chickenpox in year 1 – and also sickness which means it has now dipped again. Attendance has slipped for Year 2 and Year 6 and this is something that needs to be monitored. Persistent absence of more than 10% is incredibly high in Year 2; however, Governors should also remember this has the highest involvement of outside agencies compared to any other year group. <i>Q: Governors asked what interventions are you planning for that year group?</i> The Attendance team is working with the parents but they are challenged and asked what we can do to support. There are a couple of children who are persistent absentees and they are now having a 'soft' start which means they are met at the school gate and not put straight into class they have breakfast and a chat and we find this is helping. Anxiety is a big problem and this could be with the children or their parents. <i>Q: Governors asked is any work being done with the social worker regarding attendance etc?</i> Yes, VT works with the social workers but there are issues which may affect the child attending school, however CD will often email the social worker and explain the attendance needs to improve. <i>Q: Governors asked ss there any patterns that you have seen in the downward trends?</i> Always the Marsh academy having two weeks off at October half term when parents take advantage and remove the siblings from St Nicholas to have a cheaper holiday. The only other pattern this year is the amount of chickenpox cases we have experienced.	
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- **Pupils with SEN and LAC**

Overview of SEND Profile

The school currently has 89 pupils on the SEND register, representing 21.81% of the school population, which is above the national average. Within this group, 20 pupils (4.91%) hold an EHCP, placing the school in line with the national EHCP average of approximately 5%. The distribution of primary and secondary needs across the SEND cohort reflects a broad and complex range of needs within the school. Please see the table below - governors should note the following key insights:

Code	Description	Primary Need	Secondary Need
SPLD	Specific Learning Difficulty	5	0
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty	9	0
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulty	0	0
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty	0	0
SEMH	Social, emotional and mental health	11	2
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs	6	3
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment	0	0
HI	Hearing Impairment	1	0
VI	Vision Impairment	0	0
PD	Physical Disability	2	0
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	30	1
DS	Down Syndrome	0	0
NSA	SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need	2	0
OTH	Other Difficulty / Disability	13	2

Tables key insights:

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is the largest SEND category, with the highest number of pupils requiring support.

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs form the next most significant group, including a small number with SEMH as a secondary need.
- There are notable numbers of pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), as well as pupils requiring support for Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD).
- The school also supports pupils with Hearing Impairment (HI), Physical Disabilities (PD), and a small number without a clearly defined primary need but requiring SEN Support (NSA).

This profile underlines the high diversity of need across the SEND cohort and the necessity of a range of targeted interventions, specialist input, and classroom adaptations.

Implications for Provision

	Given the school's above-average SEND register and significantly above-average PP numbers, the following implications arise: • Resource allocation and staffing must remain responsive to the high level and diversity of needs. • Quality First Teaching, alongside specialist SEND interventions, is essential to support pupils with ASD, SEMH, SLCN, and other learning difficulties. • The school should continue to strengthen its graduated approach, ensuring early identification, timely adjustments, and clear evidence of impact. • The high number of pupils with SEMH needs emphasises the ongoing importance of pastoral support, emotional regulation strategies, and externally commissioned services where needed. • With EHCP numbers in line with national averages, the school's identification processes appear appropriate; however, governors should be aware of increasing national expectations and rising thresholds for assessment. Key Governor Considerations Governors are recommended to: 1. Monitor progress and attainment of SEND and PP pupils, especially those who fall into both categories. 2. Scrutinise how SEND and PP funding is deployed to ensure it is targeting the most significant barriers to learning. 3. Continue oversight of the graduated response, ensuring appropriate adaptations, interventions, and staff training. 4. Evaluate whether the school's capacity (staffing, specialist support, resources) remains sufficient for the complexity of need. 5. Ensure pupil voice, parental engagement, and multi-agency collaboration remain central to SEND practice. EAL - English as First Language • English (ENG): 397 pupils This represents 96% of the school population. English as an Additional Language (EAL) 16 pupils (4%) speak a first language other than English. These pupils represent 11 distinct languages, highlighting a broad linguistic spread but very small numbers per language – see table below.	
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Language Code	Description	Number of Pupils
ARA	Arabic	1
CHIM	Chinese (Mandarin/Putonghua)	1
CZE	Czech	2
ENG	English	397
EWE	Ewe	1
HGR	Hungarian	2
LIT	Lithuanian	1
MLM	Malayalam	3
POL	Polish	1
RMN	Romanian	1
RUS	Russian	1
TAM	Tamil	1

Key Observations for Governors

Diversity

Although the overall EAL cohort is small, the range of languages is wide. No single language predominates within the EAL population.

Implications for Provision

Given the small number of pupils per language, support is likely to be individualised rather than group-based.

Staff understanding of EAL needs remains important to ensure:

- Appropriate classroom support,
- Effective communication with families,
- Inclusive practice

Opportunities

The school's linguistic diversity can enrich:

- Cultural curriculum elements,
- Assemblies and celebrations,
- Community engagement initiatives.

Recommended Governor Considerations

- Monitor the effectiveness of targeted EAL support for individual pupils.
- Ensure staff development continues to include training related to cultural and linguistic inclusion.
- Review whether current communication systems effectively support families where English is not the home language.
- **Behavioural Reports and pupil mental health and wellbeing**

Number of fixed-term exclusions - 0

Number of permanent exclusions – 0

Behaviour across the school remains highly positive, with very few incidents of poor conduct recorded during the term. The vast majority

	of pupils demonstrate strong engagement in learning, follow expectations consistently, and contribute to a calm and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school day. This reflects the continued impact of the school's behaviour policy, classroom routines, and the high expectations upheld by all staff. Although overall behaviour is excellent, the leadership team is currently providing enhanced support for a small number of pupils across Years 2 and 6, who require additional guidance to help them manage their behaviour successfully. These cases represent only a tiny proportion of the whole school population, and their needs are being addressed through targeted interventions, personalised support plans, and close collaboration with families. The focus remains on helping these pupils develop the skills and emotional regulation they need to engage positively in school life. Importantly, these individual challenges do not reflect wider behaviour issues and should instead be seen as part of the school's ongoing commitment to inclusion. The leadership team's proactive approach ensures that these pupils receive early and effective support, while maintaining the strong behaviour culture experienced by the overwhelming majority of children. • Pupil Premium • Details of interventions and innovations using the PP School performance and standards (review end of T2 data analysis for current year group) Please follow the links below: https://app.governorhub.com/document/697c8aef5c383503b6a0291c/view https://app.governorhub.com/document/697c8aef8909a03689083b3b/view https://app.governorhub.com/document/697c8a306b3d4c0cffdc6704/view • Christian Distinctiveness/SIAMS • Impact of PE & other Funding This term, PE and Sports Premium funding has continued to make a strong contribution to pupils' physical development, confidence and participation in competitive sport. The school has remained actively involved in the Folkestone School Games Partnership, which has broadened opportunities for pupils across multiple year groups.	
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	• As part of this partnership, pupils in Years 5 and 6—all of whom regularly attend the school’s basketball after-school club—took part in the Sports Trust Basketball Competition at The Marsh Academy. Their performance was exceptional, securing 1st and 3rd place overall. This represents a significant achievement for the school and demonstrates the impact of regular coaching, sustained engagement, and competitive experience. • Pupils in Year 2 also had the opportunity to attend a Multi-Activity Events Day at The Marsh Academy. Feedback on this event was extremely positive; pupils engaged enthusiastically in all activities and won every category in the day’s events. This reflects both their skills development and their confidence in representing the school. • Children in EYFS have also benefited from participation in age-appropriate sports events this term, supporting the development of early physical skills, teamwork and enjoyment of physical activity. • Sports Premium funding has also enabled all year groups to continue accessing high-quality coaching from Kavan, our specialist sports coach, who works across the school. His provision enhances curriculum PE, supports staff development, and gives pupils consistent, expert-led sessions that contribute to improved fitness, skill acquisition and engagement. • Overall, the impact of the funding this term has been highly positive, reflected in high participation rates, strong competitive outcomes, and increased opportunities for pupils across all phases. Key messages for Governors • Funding is having clear, measurable impact on pupil participation, performance and confidence in sport across all phases and within swimming. • Competitive outcomes have been exceptional, with Year 5/6 pupils placing 1st and 3rd in a regional basketball competition, demonstrating strong coaching and sustained engagement. • Early years and younger pupils are benefitting equally, with Year 2 winning all categories at their Multi-Activity Event and EYFS accessing tailored sports opportunities. • The continued employment of Kavan, the specialist sports coach, is providing consistent, high-quality PE provision for all year groups and supporting staff skill development. • Use of funding aligns well with DfE expectations, ensuring broad participation, skill development and increased activity levels rather than one-off events or specialist equipment alone. • The school is offering inclusive and equitable access to sports experiences for all pupils, including those who may not participate in extracurricular sports outside school Q: Governors asked is this around genders/religion/weather? Not really as a school we are very switched onto girls’ sports – we always ask if we can put in a girl’s football or basketball team or a	
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	mixed gender team. So far this year we have won the basketball at every level whether it was a girl's teams mixed team or boys' team. The school asked if someone would sponsor the girls football team as we were unable to do so and they were wearing the boys old team wear. The school have been incredibly lucky and Top Banana on the industrial estate now sponsor our girls football team, they will also be our new uniform supplier. • Staffing information, including mental health and wellbeing There have been several staffing changes this term, particularly relating to maternity-leave returns and adjustments within the teaching team. Danielle Phillips and Emilie Judge have both confirmed that they will not be returning to their posts following maternity leave, and their positions have therefore moved into formal vacancy processes. In the SRP Samantha Wagland is due to start her maternity in Term 4 and we wish her and her partner all the very best with their new arrival. Within the teaching team, Chantelle McHaffie, currently teaching in Year 2, will be leaving at the end of the current term. As part of our established job-share arrangements, Mrs Sarlota Finch will take over full responsibility for the class, ensuring continuity for pupils for the remainder of the academic year. A number of recruitment processes are underway or planned. The temporary 1:1 post held by Abigale Small from Jan 2026 will continue until the end of the academic year, at which point the role will be reviewed in line with pupil need and funding. A lunchtime assistant will be appointed to replace Ms Judge, who has stepped down from this role. Further staffing needs have also been identified and will shortly be advertised, including a SEND administrative assistant post and an HLTA role providing 1:1 EHCP-related support. These appointments are intended to strengthen SEND provision and ensure appropriate capacity for pupils requiring enhanced levels of support. In addition, we are pleased to confirm the appointment of an additional Learning Mentor, Kirsty Smith, who will work alongside Claire Gunn and increase the overall capacity of our safeguarding team. To support this change, Leanne Etherington will join the classroom team, bringing previous TA experience and stepping into the role being vacated by Kirsty. After a discussion on absence and wellbeing last term – there has been an improvement this term on the level of staff absence and illness.	
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	<i>Q: Governors stated last meeting was about wellbeing of staff and it was noticed in the HT report things have been taken onboard and incentives offered has this proved positive?</i> It was, however last week staff attendance was awful. Staff got a day out of class and this has been taken away from the staff as this did not improve or help in any way; this will be reviewed, however SLT were not seeing an impact on children's outcomes, their outcomes were actually better when staff didn't get the extra day. <i>Q: Governors asked are you still finding staff absence is still high as this was bought in to improve it?</i> HT still protect significant members of staff that require it but to those staff who wasn't using the time for the good of the school and were still continuing to be off this day has been removed. As a school we have return to work interviews for everyone who has time off – one of the biggest reasons is a migraine which appears to be a popular excuse. Absence has been so bad, by end of January the budget for supply had been spent so we find ourselves in the position where if we need to undertake CPD for staff etc we have to 'hope' that no staff will be absent <i>Q: Governors asked if a member of staff is off with a MH issue what are you offering?</i> The school have counsellors, phone line support etc and the school also pay for this. As we pay, we can see how many people have accessed this, we fund so many sessions and if the member of staff requires to have more, we as a school will pay for this, after consultation with the counsellors and this is something, we never refuse. The school also have OH referrals and these are good for staff although staff feels these are detrimental to them. Wellbeing strategies at school include; • Free tea fund • Wellbeing days for teachers via a SDD and additional day for Tas to use as they wish. • Teachers now have dedicated release time from the class 1 day every week. This is not offered as the norm in most schools • Ongoing CPD opportunities	
8.	School Improvement Plan: • Identify, in priority order, focus areas for this year	
9.	Governor Monitoring and other Reports & Visits: a) Update of monitoring visits undertaken; subjects and governor/s	

	b) Agree monitoring visits for next term c) Receive any other Reports or notes of visits	
10.	Finance: a) To review Governor Report month/year The trust took over the running of the school budget as from yesterday but CD is still in charge of it; staff have all been prepared for the handover and all the finance team has been agreeable for everything that CD wants to remain or stay in place b) Consolidated cash flow c) To review Financial Report month/year	
11.	Safeguarding: a) Issues or concerns: Overview This report summarises safeguarding patterns across the school over the current academic year to date, drawing on the categories illustrated in the safeguarding timeline. The data reflects a broad spectrum of concerns raised by staff, ranging from attendance, emotional wellbeing, and mental health through to more serious issues such as domestic violence concerns, neglect, sexualised behaviour, and physical harm. The volume and range of concerns demonstrates that safeguarding continues to be a high-demand, high-intensity area of school life, requiring sustained DSL vigilance, multi-agency collaboration, and significant time commitments to ensure children are protected and well-supported. Key Safeguarding Themes and Trends Across the five reporting points shown (August, September, October, November, December, and January), several consistent themes emerge: a. High volume of safeguarding activity Each period shows a substantial number of recorded concerns across multiple categories. Emotional needs, family-related issues, mental health, neglect, physical concerns, and online safety issues all appear frequently, reflecting the complexity of family circumstances in the school community. b. Increased intensity during the autumn term The safeguarding load is highest in: • Late September • Late October • Late November	

	with each period showing a broad stack of concerns across 20+ categories. These months appear to be safeguarding peak points, potentially linked to seasonal pressures, attendance patterns, and increased visibility of children following summer break. c. Reduced but still significant activity in December December shows a dip in the overall volume of concerns, but still includes multiple serious categories, suggesting safeguarding needs do not fall away entirely even at the end of term. d. Rising activity again in January January shows safeguarding volume increasing again, indicating a high-needs cohort requiring ongoing monitoring and timely intervention after the holiday period. Social Services Meetings and DSL Workload A key feature visible in the data is the recurring presence of Social Services meetings, which appear in every reporting period in the chart. Although precise numerical labels are not included in the visual, the consistent height of the Social Services Meeting segment in each time period shows: • DSLs are attending multiple Social Services meetings every month, • This involvement is sustained across the whole academic year, • It forms one of the most time-intensive safeguarding responsibilities undertaken by the DSL team. These meetings typically include: • Child in Need (CiN) reviews • Child Protection (CP) conferences • Looked-After Child (LAC) reviews • Multi-agency planning meetings • Strategy meetings This level of involvement strongly indicates that the school is supporting a significant number of children who are open to Social Care, reflecting a vulnerable community and the critical role DSLs play in case management. Governor note: DSL attendance at these meetings often requires: • preparation of detailed reports, • liaison with external professionals, • direct communication with families, and • follow-up on agreed actions. This workload has a direct impact on DSL capacity and should be factored into staffing, workload allocation, and leadership support planning.	
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	Multi-Agency Patterns The chart shows ongoing concerns in the following categories, each of which typically involves dialogue with external partners: • Domestic violence concerns • Neglect • Mental health • Family substance misuse • Sexualised behaviour • Housing and financial hardship • Operation Encompass notifications (police-linked domestic abuse alerts) • Physical harm The breadth of these categories highlights the wide safeguarding landscape the school is operating within and the need for continuous professional judgment from the DSL team. . Implications for School Leadership and Governance a. DSL capacity Given the volume of concerns and the regularity of Social Services meetings, it is essential that the DSL team is: • Adequately staffed, • Given sufficient time away from teaching duties (if applicable), • Provided with time /administrative support for paperwork and record-keeping, • Supported through ongoing supervision and training. b. Staff training The range of concerns indicates the need for: • Regular whole-school safeguarding training, • Targeted updates on issues such as mental health, domestic abuse, and online safety, • Continued emphasis on early identification and timely reporting. c. Support for pupils and families High levels of family-related issues and emotional needs point toward: • The importance of pastoral interventions, • Strong partnerships with Early Help, Social Care, CAMHS, and community services, • Continued investment in early intervention and family-support pathways. Recommendations for Governor Oversight Governors should continue to: 1. Monitor DSL caseload and meeting commitments, ensuring adequate capacity. 2. Review the efficiency and resourcing of safeguarding systems. 3. Scrutinise the impact of interventions, especially for children repeatedly appearing in safeguarding logs. 4. Ensure the school maintains strong multi-agency relationships.	
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	5. Oversee the continued implementation of safeguarding training for all staff. 6. Reflect on whether the safeguarding pressure aligns with wider indicators (attendance, behaviour, mental health trends) and respond strategically. 7. The school is expecting its safeguarding audit in Term 4 and it would be good if governors could be UpToDate with this information and join us for this meeting. b) Safeguarding outcomes: Conclusion The data demonstrates a high-demand safeguarding environment, with DSLs managing a wide range of concerns and attending frequent Social Services meetings across the year. This reflects both the vulnerability of the school community and the diligence of staff in identifying and escalating concerns appropriately. Governors should remain mindful of the significant workload placed on DSLs, ensure that safeguarding remains a strategic priority, and continue to support leadership in ensuring safe and effective provision for all pupils.	
12.	Health & Safety: a) Issues or concerns: b) Premises update: The start of the spring term was significantly affected by ongoing issues with the air-source heat pump, which resulted in the temporary closure of Years 3, 4 and 5 for the first two days of term. This was due to prolonged delays in sourcing a replacement part and securing the appropriately qualified engineers required for the repair. The boiler system was finally restored to full operation on Monday 26 January 2026, following a three-week period of contingency measures. The leadership team has managed this situation closely to ensure minimal disruption to pupils' learning. In addition to this, the school is progressing planned improvements to internal spaces. Costing is currently underway for an upgrade to the EYFS toilets, which is being scoped as a school-led project. This aims to improve hygiene, accessibility and the quality of provision for our youngest pupils. The school is also exploring the redecoration of the Year 4 classrooms to bring these spaces up to the standard of the rest of the school and ensure a consistent learning environment across all year groups. Learning Environment To support increasing space needs and enhance provision, a garden cabin has been ordered and is scheduled for installation during the February half-term. This will provide additional learning space and	

	improve flexibility for targeted provision, interventions, or small-group work. Health & Safety There has been significant progress in addressing long-standing outdoor safety concerns. After nearly six months of delays, the soft-pour surface has now been repaired, with the A-frame and active line markings completed last week. The school extends its thanks to the Trust for funding these works, which have enabled all outstanding playground H&S items to be resolved. Further improvements are planned: The resurfacing of the main playground is scheduled for the Easter holiday, which will address remaining deteriorated areas and ensure that both the surface and surrounding slabbed areas are safe and fully usable before the summer term. As part of this development, the school will engage the School Council in designing the new playground line markings. Final proposals will also be discussed with the PTA, who may support related fundraising initiatives. The school has completed its travel plan at the end of the last term – This has been accepted – please see link below: https://app.governorhub.com/document/694ab9714db03edffdda6ece/view The school has taken matters into its own hands by deploying signs outside the school reminding drivers not to park on the Yellow ZigZags – these have been received warmly by our parents. Part of our additional programme will feature on encouraging a walk to school programme to start in the spring and turning off idling engines, along with a map of safe routes to schools to be produced in partnership with KCC highways. The headteacher has now spoken to two other schools in the trust who have also had a problem with their heat source heating and the effect this is having on the school, and together the three headteachers have contacted the trust and a meeting will be held regarding this. All of the H&S actions are now up to date with no outstanding actions St Nicholas have now agreed the lockdown system. For Governors information it is an alarm system which is different to the rest of the school and that will cost just under 3.5k, it is to alert the staff and children of a danger within the school premises and is in line with Martins Law.	
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	There is no message on the alarm but it is different to the ordinary alarm there will be three drills a year as with the fire alarm however children only need to be here for one There will be a meeting at the beginning of March for developers to put in a bid for the Sports Pavilion. Paul Thomas from a local councillor has been extremely helpful with our plans so date. Recommended Actions for Governors • Monitor the reliability of the air-source heat pump, and ensure contingency planning remains robust in the event of future system failures. • Oversee financial planning for the EYFS toilet upgrade and Year 4 classroom redecoration, ensuring costs remain manageable within the school's budget. • Review the deployment and impact of the new garden cabin once installed, particularly how it enhances provision for groups requiring targeted support. • Continue to scrutinise Health & Safety compliance, particularly the upcoming playground resurfacing, ensuring the project is completed on schedule and to required safety standards. • Support pupil and community engagement by endorsing the School Council's involvement in the playground design and encouraging collaboration with the PTA on potential fundraising. c) Review of Health & Safety and report on incidents recorded: d) Progress towards General Risk Assessment priorities:	
13.	Riskmate Risk Register a) Update from Headteacher regarding Riskmate Register b) Assess Riskmate return for current strategic risks and ensure appropriate mitigations are considered c) GDPR	
14.	Compliance (including website): Items for consideration:	
15.	Policy Review: To ratify/adopt the following policies due for review: Aquila Trust Policies: (Adopt only)	

	 Equality Statement 2025 - 2026.pdf  Early Career Teacher Entitlement Policy.pdf  Behaviour Policy 25-26 with Reasonabl  Attendance_policy_2025-26_updated.docx  Safeguarding Policy Checklist - Aquila 202  Governance Succession and Devel School Based Policies: (Ratify)	
16.	Any other business: Urgent Business to be notified to the Clerk and Chair in advance of the meeting PLEASE SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES	
Other:		
17.	Confidentiality: Governors to decide which items, if any, should be regarded as confidential and recorded within the confidential minutes for this meeting AOB	
18.	Confirmation date of next meeting: 25/03/2026	
19.	Closing Reflections & Meeting Summary a) What was the theme of the key discussion during the meeting and what is the impact for the pupils? The key themes of discussion during the meeting were maths interventions and improvements, and admissions through promoting the positive work and opportunities offered by the school. The impact for pupils includes improved outcomes in mathematics through targeted support, as well as sustained pupil numbers, which helps maintain a stable learning environment and ensures continued access to high-quality provision and resources. a) What was the key challenge facing the School/Trust during this discussion? The key challenges discussed were a decline in attendance, recognising the contributing factors and the additional impact of the Marsh extra week, and ongoing staff sickness, with a focus on staff wellbeing and how this can be effectively supported. b) What are the areas for celebration in this discussion? Areas for celebration included Health and Safety being rated green, the strength of the school's sports provision, and the heating system actually working as it should Closing Prayer	
Summary of Identified Actions		
Item	Action	Action owner
B/F		

11	Feedback on SG review by Judicium – DUE 25/02/2026	Chair & SD
13	Riskmate to be completed ready for a discussion at the next meeting	HT
New action s		
4	Pen portrait to be sent to HT	PF & HSW