

# CHAPEL ALLERTON PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held in school on Wednesday 21 May 2025 at 6.30pm

<b>PRESENT</b>	Jenny Hand (Chair)	Nicholas Sykes (Headteacher)
	Nicola Allardyce	Mohammed Rafique (from item 4.07)
	Marcus Bowell	Amy Sanderson
	Gemma Dolden	Samantha Todd
	Steve Gilmore	Emily Webb
	Laura Lascelles	

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Julie Kirkpatrick – Clerk, Governor Support Service  
Leah Magnell (Observer)

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1.00</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
	Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Amy Wilson.	
<b>2.00</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP MATTERS</b>	
2.01	Governors were aware from previous meetings that the term for Gemma Dolden, Co-opted governor and Vice-Chair would end on 01 December 2025. The clerk advised terms ending were noted on the agenda usually six months prior to expiration however this term had been placed on the agenda earlier due to the school holidays in between.	
<b>3.00</b>	<b>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b>	
3.01	There were no declarations of interest to record at this meeting.	
	<i><b>The Chair preferred to take the agenda out of order at this point to cover business items 6 and 7.</b></i>	
<b>6.00</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</b>	
6.01	<b>Resolved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That the minutes from the meeting held on Thursday 20 March 2025 were agreed as an accurate record</li><li>• That the Chair be authorised to sign the minutes.</li></ul>	
<b>7.00</b>	<b>REVIEW ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING</b>	
7.01	<b>(Minute 2.01: 20 MAR 25) Chair to check governor declaration regarding a trustee position:</b> Action completed. The Chair confirmed the information received from Emily did not constitute a conflict of interest as it related to a different trust.	
7.02	<b>(Minute 4.08: 20 MAR 25) Head to revisit progress data in response to governor query:</b> Action completed. The Head addressed this query again with both governors and the clerk, in conclusion the progress measurement data provided at the previous meeting within appendix B was the	

only data available due to the absence of formal SATS testing during the pandemic.

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| 7.03 | <b>(Minute 7.01: 20 MAR 25) New governors to complete the skills audit:</b> Action ongoing. The Chair would send the information to enable new governors to complete.  | Chair/New Governors |
| 7.04 | <b>(Minute 7.02: 20 MAR 25) Safeguarding governor to meet with Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Lead not the Safeguarding welfare officer (SWO) as stated in the previous minutes:</b> Action completed. Gemma had circulated her visit report to all governors.   |                     |
| 7.05 | <b>(Minute 9.01: 20 MAR 25) Safeguarding governor to meet with the SWO, Tessa:</b> Action ongoing. Gemma had planned a spring meeting with Tessa and would report back at the next FGB.  | July FGB agenda     |
| 7.06 | <b>(Minute 10.02: 20 MAR 25) Governor formal approval of the Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy known as the SEND information report or school offer plus the Behaviour principles written statement:</b> Action completed.<br><br>The Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy known as the SEND information report or school offer plus the Behaviour principles written statement had been circulated for review prior to the meeting and discussed extensively within the last PDBW committee meeting.<br><br><b>Resolved:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That the Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy known as the SEND information report or school offer plus the Behaviour principles written statement were approved.</li></ul> |                     |
| 7.07 | <b>(Minute 11.01: 20 MAR 25) Governor to complete website compliance review, clerk to send guidance checklist and advice:</b> Action completed.<br><br>The clerk had forwarded a checklist and guidance from the Governor Support services (GSS) to Emily after suggesting a new governor undertook this task. Emily had forwarded a report to the School Business manager, (SBM) for final checks and would then circulate the report to all governors.   |                     |
| 7.08 | <b>Minute 11.01: 20 MAR 25) Chair to complete an end of year governance statement:</b> Action ongoing. The Chair advised governors that she had drafted a mid-year statement sought advice from the clerk and would circulate her final version when available for governors approval.   |                     |

7.09 **(Minute 12.02: 20 MAR 25) new governors to complete induction training:** Action ongoing. The Chair reminded all new governors who had not already done to complete their induction training and checked they were aware how to access this.

7.10 **(Minute 13.01: 20 MAR 25) Gov to observe the SATS testing process and compliance with regulations:** Action completed. SATS testing had taken place Monday 12 to Thursday 15 May 2025. Nicola advised governors that seeing the process which took place in different areas of school, the restrictions, and reasons behind this had been enjoyable and informative.

*The Chair directed the meeting back to agenda point 4.*

#### 4.00 **QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

4.01 The Head had circulated and produced his comprehensive report to all governors. The time which had taken place between the last meeting, on 20 March and this meeting, given the Easter school holidays in between had made for a shorter report he advised. In addition to the information within his report, the Head drew governors attention to the following key points.

#### 4.02 SATS testing

The Head advised Governors that the maths paper this year had been particularly challenging, that two or three children had been upset. Governors with children in school relayed how positively staff had dealt with this. There was further discussion around the 45 minute extra sessions to prepare children for SATS. The Head and staff governor gave possible reasons why the attendance at these sessions had been lower than previous years.

#### 4.03 Inclusion Chartermark

Governors were pleased to hear of a recent positive visit which assessed school for the inclusion Chartermark with more information provided within the Head's report. The development of metacognition was an emerging strength which the Head felt should be included within the school development plan (SDP).

#### 4.04 Personnel and staffing

The Head added more detail to the information already within his report.

- All staff had been advised face-to-face where they would be based in the new academic year.
- A new Office manager had been successfully appointed.

- Three new Teaching Assistant's (TA's) had been appointed and two existing TA's would continue within school.
- The SWO would move to full-time from 30 hours a week.

**Q:** What was the reason for the SWO hours increase and how was the extra cost for this quantified?

**A:** An increase in the working hours for the SWO would alleviate some of the safeguarding work the Head was picking up when the SWO was not in school. It would additionally give the SWO increased capacity to pick up useful group work.

Governors probed for more information about the pressures the Head and SBM had been under due to staff absences citing the superintendent duties. The Head explained the solutions he had input which included help from Gemma in the kitchen. Gemma was employed by Chartwells, the Head had commended her for her support, and she had received a recognition award.

All school staff were praised and thanked for their flexibility and support during this challenging time for staff absence. The Head gave governors examples of his day to day work, how the awareness of time everyday tasks took had shaped his planning for the next academic year.

4.05 The Chair wanted more information around the proposed rebalancing and restructure of a cohort. In response the Head quantified his rationale, next steps and if agreed, how this would be communicated to parents.

4.06 Pupil numbers

On roll numbers were at 421, reasons for movement and information on advertising to boost numbers were given.

**Q:** Did parents need to live in the catchment area to apply?

**A:** No, the Head gave examples of parents who worked in and around school and used Nursery.

**Q:** Had a recent local Nursery opening impacted numbers?

**A:** No, as overall places had been lost within other Nurseries in the local area.

Governors heard despite a continued fall in birth rates, Reception application numbers had been good with 60 children predicted to start Reception in September.

4.07 Parents and community

Governors debated an array of ideas to assist with the Chair of the Parent Support association (PSA) with funding

for the school hall refurbishment and 150 year since opening celebrations.

***Mohammed arrived at this point.***

Crowd funding, the involvement of local authors, a book or film plus an approach to the Civic trust were amongst the suggestions. The Head said it would be helpful for long term strategic planning for governors to gather together their thoughts.

**All governors**

4.08

Budget

Governors heard how four children that had left to go to a specialist facility had impacted the budget. The Head added more detail on the challenge of the new funding for inclusion (FFI) system.

The strength of the Cluster support and relationship with school, which was extremely beneficial, was highlighted.

4.09

Complaints

There were no official complaints to note.

**Q:** What was the assessment query referred to in the report? Was this a complaint?

**A:** The DHT was investigating this the Head advised and added more information. Governors thanked the Head and noted that this showed how supportive school were at an early stage to prevent a complaint.

4.10

Parent survey feedback

An overview of the 52 responses received so far was outlined. Comments and areas for improvement were discussed.

The usage of DOJO and how the system may impact staff wellbeing was debated with the following question asked

**Q:** Was there anything within a policy regarding responding to parental queries?

**Q:** Did DOJO go straight to teachers mobile phones?

**A:** The Head and staff governor clarified the above, that there was a requirement for teachers to check their email once a day and yes that DOHO messages if teacher's had enabled this could go straight through to a mobile phone. Governors asked that it was made clear to parents when and how to use the DOJO messaging service, that they should always ring school with urgent queries was emphasised.

There was a governor suggestion to use a standard phrasing regarding messages and responses similar to standard replies reminding of working hours and outlining

expectations for a reply to the message used in external organisations.

## **5.00 GOVERNOR MONITORING OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES**

5.01 The following Magnificent 7 SIP ambitions would remain on the minutes to assist governors until updated.

- Equality and Diversity
- Curriculum
- Outdoor Learning and Play
- SEND
- More Able
- Writing
- Teaching, Learning and Behaviour

5.02 With reference to the SDP the Head drew attention to staff and governor feedback sought, he intended to do pupil interviews and collate the information to inform the future SDP strategic planning for the next three years which he anticipated would include the following headings.

- Growth mindset and restorative practice
- Social and emotional learning – how children arrive at school and how school support their learning
- Creative curriculum
- Adaptive teaching
- Metacognition
- Oracy and literacy – developing language skills
- Numeracy.

5.03 The Head explained in 2023 that governors had considered the status of the school which included options to join local Trusts or Academies. Influences for giving thought to alternatives were the increased pressure on school budgets which the Head quantified with the costs of for example financial support, Health and safety and GSS clerking costs. Potential savings were illustrated and deliberated.

**Q:** A governor asked if joining a Trust or Academy would make school more resilient when faced with key staff absence?

**A:** Yes in certain circumstances, the Head responded, school would be prepared and at less risk in the staff absence circumstances outlined.

The proposed benefits and disadvantages of joining a Trust or Academy were discussed hypothetically and in general terms.

The clerk proposed GSS support and advice that this should be an ongoing agenda item if governors wanted to

explore further, additionally governors offered the benefit of their external experience and knowledge.

5.04 Progress updates for the each of the top priorities had been included and discussed within the Head’s report section.

5.05 The Chair checked and all visits that had taken place had been discussed with reports submitted or referred to previously within the meeting.

5.06 The Head confirmed that there had been no NOVACS (Notice of Visit and Contact), or other external reports received since the last meeting and no updates to the school self-evaluation (SEF) to record.

**8.00 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

8.01 **Leadership and Management (Resources) Committee**  
The Chair of the Leadership and Management (Resources) Committee updated governors that the previous meeting had scrutinised the budget at length. The Head had raised and summarised the staffing issues included in the budget and the solutions implemented within his report.

In conclusion all governors formally approved the budget and thanked the Head for the information provided, refer. Item 9.03.

8.02	<b>Leadership and Management (Resources) committee statutory requirements</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
	The budget has been approved including the price of school meals	Y
	Health and safety policy has been approved	Y
	Charging and remissions policy has been approved	Y
	Mid-year performance management for teachers has been completed	Y
	<b>All items below in bold carried forward from previous FGB meeting</b>	<b>N/A</b>
	<b>Audit of school funds has taken place.</b>	Y
	<b>Schools financial value standard has been approved and submitted</b>	Y
	<b>Report from annual inspection of premises has been received</b>	Y
	<b>Data protection policy has been approved</b>	Y
	<b>Freedom of information policy has been approved</b>	Y
	<b>Whistleblowing policy has been approved (not statutory)</b>	Y

8.03 **Quality, Teaching of Learning and Assessment (QTLA) Committee**

The Chair of the QTLA Committee advised governors of the recent meeting which incorporated a useful metacognition presentation.

8.04	<b>QTLA committee statutory requirements</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
	School will be providing an annual report to parents	Y
	<b>All items below in bold carried forward from previous FGB meeting</b>	<b>N/A</b>
	<b>Arrangements are in place for a daily act of collective worship</b>	Y
	<b>Early years provision meets statutory requirements</b>	Y

8.05 **Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare (PDBW) Committee**

The Chair of the PDBW Committee made governors aware there would be an update at the July FGB meeting after the PDBW scheduled for Thursday 05 June.

8.06	<b>PDBW committee statutory requirements</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
	The annual safeguarding self-assessment has been completed	Y
	School meets equalities requirements	Y
	A school uniform policy has been approved (on the next meeting PDBW agenda)	N
	<b>All items below in bold carried forward from previous FGB meeting</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>School food and milk provided meets national standards</b>	Y	

9.00 **REPORT OF BUDGET AND APPROVAL FOR 2025-2026**

9.01 Governors agreed the extensive budget report circulated covered variances from last year's budget; staffing structure changes including financial implications; funding allocated for school priorities; the amount of any short fall or balance brought forward and forecast contingency for 2026/27. The Resources committee minutes which provided more detail had been circulated.

The Head drew governors attention to the surplus equating to 5.32% of the budget not spent.

9.02 Budget summary 2025/26  
 Estimated Income (2,794,690)  
 Estimated Expenditure (2,807,580)  
 In Year Surplus (12,890)  
 Forecast contingency carried forward for 2025/26 (131,390).

9.03 **Resolved:**

- That the plans for allocation of the budget for the financial year 2025/26 were approved.
- That the proposed surplus of £12,890.00 to be carried forward to 2026/27 was approved.

**10.00**  
10.01

**SAFEGUARDING UPDATE AND APPROVE THE ARM**

The safeguarding governor reported at their last visit she had talked through safeguarding and looked after children (LAC). Whilst the SWO was new to role the safeguarding governor had been given confidence processes and policies were in place.

Her intended next visit would be to examine the annual report on monitoring (ARM) and report back to governors at the next FGB meeting.

Governors were fully aware of their safeguarding responsibility, that the annual report on monitoring (ARM) must be returned electronically to the local authority by 4 July 2025.

**Clerk action/  
JULY FGB  
agenda**

**11.00**  
11.01

**POLICY APPROVAL STATUTORY (TOR 1.05)**

- **Staff Disciplinary Policy, Staff grievance policy and Staff code of conduct** (The Safer Recruitment Consortium’s “Guidance for Safe Working Practice – May 2022” can be adopted as the code of conduct) – carried forward for review at the next meeting on clerk advice as LA updated policy on 15 May 2025.

**Clerk  
action/July FGB  
agenda**

11.02

- **Teacher Pay Policy** – carried forward to the next meeting. Head outlined key changes and the requirement to approve again in the Autumn term.

**Clerk  
action/July FGB  
agenda**

11.03

- **Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy** (known as the SEND information report or school offer) – refer item 7.06 for approval.

11.04

- **Behaviour principles written statement** – refer item 7.06 for approval.

**12.00**

**EVALUATION OF GOVERNING BOARD EFFECTIVENESS**

The Chair reiterated that this had already been discussed within item 7.08 during the meeting.

**13.00**

**GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING**

13.01

The Clerk had provided governors with the link to the Governor Support Service training offer and a link to GovernorHub Knowledge prior to the meeting within the agenda.

Nicola had completed complaints training which was beneficial she reported.

Induction training for new governors had been covered within item 7.09.

The Chair checked and there was no further training to report.

**14.00 CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

14.01 There was no Chair's business to record.

**15.00 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

15.01 No urgent business was discussed.

**16.00 SET MEETING DATES FOR THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR**

16.01 2025 Summer 2 May-July

Thursday 05 June PDBW

Thursday 03 July FGB

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.32pm

Signed (Chair):
Date: