



GOVERNING BODY TO VERNHAM DEAN GILLUMS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on 19th March 2026 at 4:30pm

Present

Mr Paul Nicoll (Chair) Mrs Rachel Miller (RM)
Mrs Kate Taylor (KT)
Mrs Holly Bulpitt (HB)

In Attendance

Mr Ian Hickman (IH) - Executive Headteacher
Miss Nikki Pauk (NP) - Clerk

Apologies

Miss Siobhan McCullagh (SM)
Ms Anna Hall (AH)
Mr Steve Bocock (SB)

Absent with no apologies

Rev Carol Dunk (CD)

Red font denotes - Ensuring the clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

Green font denotes - Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils

Blue font denotes - overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

Ref	Agenda Item
1.	Welcome, Apologies and Prayer
2.	Declaration of Pecuniary Interest No declarations were made.
3.	Review and sign off the minutes from the meeting 23rd February 2026 The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and approved as an accurate record.
4.	HT Report LLPR Report Feedback The annual visit took place two weeks ago, led by Lindsey McCarthy. A range of activities were undertaken, including time spent in classrooms with staff and pupils. The visit was very positive overall. It was noted that the school must respond to the changing needs of pupils. The current KS2 cohort is smaller and academically less strong compared to KS1. A larger KS1 intake is expected in September,

with numbers approaching 30 pupils. Differences in academic ability across cohorts were highlighted, and staffing, capacity, and teaching provision will be reviewed in preparation for September.

Lindsey McCarthy commended the school's openness and the staff's awareness of areas for development.

Governor Engagement

Governors were encouraged to spend more time in school. Effective governance extends beyond attending meetings and includes engaging with the school environment, supporting staff, and asking informed questions.

Increased Governor presence provides valuable opportunities for staff to articulate their work and receive feedback, which can then be reported back to the Full Governing Body (FGB). This also helps build confidence among staff and pupils to showcase their achievements.

Local Authority Overview

The school is currently rated as requiring low support. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) outcomes were above the national average.

Staff Development and Capacity

Efforts are ongoing to encourage an EYFS practitioner to pursue further professional development, with reassurance provided regarding support available within the school.

Leadership capacity has been identified as a key theme in both the LLPR and safeguarding reviews. Discussions are underway to ensure leadership responsibilities are clear and that senior staff are not overly involved in day-to-day management. A more structured team approach with defined roles is being developed across the three schools, with gradual implementation planned over the summer term.

The school benefits from a strong and flexible staff team. Consideration is being given to appropriate recognition and workload distribution to avoid overburdening staff.

Attendance and Safeguarding

Attendance procedures are being strengthened to ensure consistency and compliance. A revised Attendance Policy will be implemented after Easter, including stricter gate closing times and clearer processes for late arrivals.

Safeguarding recording through CPOMS has become excessive. The school is working towards a more balanced approach. Training for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) will be arranged, and the school will join the Safeguarding Network to access additional resources and training. All safeguarding and child protection policies will be updated by the end of April.

Curriculum Development – Maths

While English and reading were noted as strengths, further development is needed in Maths.

Governor asked if there was a Maths Lead and was informed that HB had been attending core provision meets. Plans are in place to appoint a Maths lead across the three schools to strengthen provision.

Additional Notes

- "Hot seating" was explained as a teaching strategy where pupils take on the role of a character and answer questions in role.
- Attendance remains strong overall, though a small number of cases require ongoing support.

5.	Budget Report (Outturn) The school expects to receive approximately £30,000 in funding linked to pupils who transferred from Smannell. Confirmation will follow from the Chief Accountant. The budget position is positive, providing flexibility to review staffing and resource allocation. There are no immediate financial pressures, but spending priorities should focus on current pupils. Further checks will be made regarding capital budget. IH/NP to check if Scandor have availability over the May half-term for the groundwork for the YR playground.
6.	Benchmarking Benchmarking is an activity which Governors should undertake to compare spending across areas such as staffing, administration, and resources with similar schools. The information is out of date (about a year behind). NP to send link to Governors
7.	SFVS
8.	Policies for Approval Attendance Policy - Updates focus on the start of the school day: • A 10-minute window is provided for arrival. • Gates close at 8:55am. • Late arrivals must enter via the office. • Pupils arriving after 9:10am will be marked as unauthorised absence. The policy was approved. Safeguarding concerns were noted regarding unsafe drop-off practices.
9.	AOB • A number of policies require updating. It was asked if we could approve by emailing them out to Governors and receiving their agreement. This was approved. NP is working on a policy schedule. • A new policy on restrictive physical intervention will be introduced following updated guidance after Easter. • Governor asked if we had any SEN pupils transferred from Smannell? It was confirmed that we had not but we had put in applications recently for two pupils for support but these were unsuccessful. • Governor asked if Lucy Venn, a paramedic (Lucy Venn) may be invited into school to talk about her career. HB will confirm this with KS1 Teacher. • Governors were reminded to complete online training via the National Governance Association (NGA). In order to log in you are required to use your school email. KT has created a document of how to get in and suggested courses. If anybody has not yet accessed their school email account, please let NP know and she can resend instructions. • A school showcase event will take place next Thursday at 3:10pm. Governors were invited to attend.

	• Grounds maintenance options are being explored, including the possible purchase of a ride-on mower and storage solutions. • Skip to be hired next term. Greenhouse to be cleared out and taken down. • We have a family who are considering elective home education due to concerns about secondary school placement; this may present tracking challenges. • • Support for SATs week was requested. SATs take place between 11th and 14th May. RM and KT confirmed their availability to assist. • The hard work of staff was formally recognised and appreciated. • Governor asked if we had heard back from the family that came for a tour of the school. It was confirmed that we had not yet heard back but that we would follow this up.
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The meeting closed at

Date of next meeting: Thursday 14th May 2026 at 17:46

Signed (confirmed): 
Chair of Governors

Date: 14/05/26

	Action	Who by	Deadline
1.	Safer Recruitment training to be completed	KT & RM	
2.	Obtain correct Pet Insurance for Tilly to come into school	NP / HB	
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	Action	Who by	Date
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