



GOVERNING BODY TO VERNHAM DEAN GILLUMS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on 14th May 2026 at 4:30pm

Present

Mr Paul Nicoll (Chair) Mrs Rachel Miller (RM)
Mrs Kate Taylor (KT) Ms Anna Hall (AH)
Mrs Holly Bulpitt (HB) Miss Siobhan McCullagh (SM)

In Attendance

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

Apologies

Absent with 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 19th March 2026 The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and approved as an accurate record.
4.	With 10 children due to start Reception in September (26 pupils overall in KS1), class organisation for September was reviewed. The proposed structure is: • Reception class to run independently. • Years 1 and 2 to be taught together. • KS2 structure to remain unchanged. FN will begin teacher training in September and will take responsibility for Reception. Mrs Silver will work across Years 1 and 2 during the week. The school is currently projecting approximately 40 pupils for September. Actions:

	• HB to complete a social media post over half-term. • AR to provide additional cover in Owl Class to allow HB leadership time out of class, commencing after half-term. • Forest School provision is hoped to begin after half-term. AR has completed training and is currently preparing the handbook and policy. A member of staff has completed TARLA training. This differs from ELSA as it is less structured and provides ongoing pastoral intervention support. Children currently receiving ELSA support will continue until the end of the academic year, with TARLA provision beginning in September. Governor Question: Where are we with wraparound care? The school has experienced ongoing difficulties with the external provider throughout the year. Following a meeting with the senior leadership team, concerns were raised regarding the implementation of the franchise, and it was agreed not to proceed further with the provider. The school will now deliver wraparound care in-house using existing staff. It was recognised that provision must be maintained for parents. The long-term aim is for the provision to become self-sustaining. Hampshire funding will provide short-term support to cover any financial shortfalls. Governors discussed the importance of wraparound care to families, acknowledging that some parents may otherwise consider moving their child to another school. Parents will be informed shortly regarding arrangements, including staffing, booking and payment systems. DC is currently experiencing health issues. The school will therefore advertise for a Cleaner while continuing to support him in his role. Governor Question: If AR is stepping up to support HB, are there cost implications? AR is currently paid as an HLTA. There may be future cost implications depending on responsibilities undertaken, such as planning duties. General classroom cover remains within the HLTA role. Governor Question: Who has completed the TARLA training? MD has completed the training.
5.	Safeguarding Report Most safeguarding actions due by the end of April have been completed, with remaining items due by the end of term. Updates included: • Attendance policy updated and shared. • Registration and absence coding updated and communicated to staff. • Morning attendance procedures revised. The school website now includes a dedicated safeguarding section to make information more accessible for parents. Some final checks are still required.

	Staff induction procedures have also been reviewed using models from other schools to ensure consistency. NP will oversee induction processes for new staff. Training records are being collated to ensure clarity and compliance. A more collaborative safeguarding oversight approach is being developed and further changes are planned for September. IH will undertake a slightly revised safeguarding role from September onwards. Additional safeguarding training is being rolled out to increase school capacity in response to increasingly complex safeguarding responsibilities and updated guidance. CPOMS Changes have been made to CPOMS recording processes, including: • Clearer guidance for staff on recording incidents. • Addition of location and action-taken fields. • Improved category tagging for reporting and trend analysis. Lindsey McCarthy will deliver training across the three schools next Thursday and will also visit later this term to review progress. Governors discussed the challenges of safeguarding record keeping, including balancing detailed information with concise and accurate reporting. Staff often complete records under significant time pressure, and ongoing support will continue to improve consistency and quality. The school acknowledged the increasing importance of identifying trends and patterns in behaviour and safeguarding concerns, while recognising schools are expected to undertake an increasing level of safeguarding responsibility. The Staff Code of Conduct and low-level concerns procedures have been reissued to all staff. A safeguarding target regarding pupils' understanding of how school supports them to stay safe is being developed. HB will undertake pupil and staff work this term, after which KT will visit school to speak with pupils.
6.	Finance Benchmarking was reviewed. IT expenditure was notably high due to significant spending during the previous year. NP explained that the budget was not looking as healthy as it had appeared at the previous meeting. This was due to an error in interpretation within the IBC system, where figures shown in brackets represent a positive balance, whereas in the budget planner brackets indicate a negative figure. This discrepancy had not initially been identified, including during the budget-setting process with the EPS Advisor, and was only picked up when the Advisor later reviewed the meeting notes and budget-setting reports. NP also informed Governors that pupil numbers for September have reduced by two. Three Reception pupils were lost, although one additional pupil has since joined. Governor Question: Why did the Reception parents withdraw their children? NP explained that one family had intended to move to Chute, but the house purchase fell through

	and they are now living in Stockbridge. Another parent has chosen to home educate their child, and no reason was provided for the third withdrawal. Despite these changes, NP reassured Governors that the budget remains stable for the next couple of years, although projections indicate the school may move into deficit for one year thereafter. NP also shared the previous year's budget-setting documents to demonstrate how significantly budgets can change over the course of a year. Governor Question: Why has there been a significant increase in day trip and residential costs? The recent increase in per-pupil costs for both day trips and residentials is primarily driven by two structural factors: class cohort sizes and our alternating residential model, alongside wider inflationary pressures on transport and venues. 1. Smaller Cohort Sizes (Fixed vs. Variable Costs) A significant proportion of trip expenses - most notably coach hire and transport - are fixed costs. When a class or cohort size is smaller, these fixed overheads are divided among fewer pupils, which automatically increases the individual cost per child. Transport costs in particular have risen across the sector, and sharing these fixed costs across a smaller group directly impacts the final price per pupil. 2. Bi-Annual (Every-Other-Year) Residential Cycle Our residential visits operate on a two-year rotational model (every other year) rather than annually. Because we do not run a residential every single year, we are unable to secure annual volume/frequency discounts with residential centres and transport providers. Additionally, because two cohort years are often combined or structured across this two-year cycle, fluctuations in overall student numbers from one residential cycle to the next create noticeable cost variations compared to previous years. 3. External Inflationary Pressures External providers - including activity centres, educational venues, and transport companies - have significantly raised their rates due to increased staffing, energy, and insurance expenses. Our Next Steps & Support for Families: We remain fully committed to ensuring all educational visits are valuable, cost-effective, and accessible to every child. To mitigate the impact on parents/carers, the school: • Spreads residential payments over extended instalment plans. • Utilizes Pupil Premium funding and school support funds where applicable to ensure no pupil is excluded due to financial constraints.
7.	SFVS Completed
8.	Health & Safety Staff awareness regarding the reporting of near misses continues to be promoted. Reporting had initially improved but has recently declined. The bandstand refurbishment is taking place this term at a reduced cost due to support from a parent who is a timber specialist. The school is funding materials only. It is hoped the work will be completed in time for the Leavers' Service. Additional site works:

	• Fencing around the bins to be completed during half-term. • Replacement of the blue fencing scheduled for August. No significant incidents have been reported since the previous meeting. Tilly now has workplace insurance in place with £5 million indemnity cover. The certificate is displayed in the office.
8.	Policies for Approval The following policies were approved by Governors: • Anti-Bullying • Behaviour • Low Level Concerns • SEN • SEN Information Report • Equalities • Equality Information & Objectives Statement
9.	AOB Governor Recruitment Governor Question: Do we need more Governors? The school has received two applications for the Parent Governor vacancies, which will fill both available Parent Governor positions. There is currently still a vacancy for a Foundation Governor. PN asked whether the two new Governors had been invited to the meeting. NP apologised and explained that she had assumed, as Chair of Governors, PN would contact them initially and that a vote would then take place at the Full Governing Body meeting. PN clarified that this was not necessary, as Parent Governors are elected by parents and, with only two applications received for two vacancies, no formal vote was required. NP will contact the successful applicants to confirm their appointment as School Governors and will arrange computer logins, training, and NGA accounts. Conholt Governor Question: Have we heard back from Conholt? This matter remains ongoing Sports Instructors Governors discussed DBS oversight arrangements and whether sports staff are subscribed to the update service. AH had recently read - us having oversight of DBS checks. Are sports staff on update service? AH had recently read about the safeguarding incident at Whitecliff Park on Isle of Wight and wanted to ensure that third party employees were checked correctly. NP said that when signing up with Stow Sports she was issued with a profile for all coaches which included their qualifications and DBS update service number so we can check for ourselves. Wraparound Care Staffing Governors discussed ensuring more than one member of staff is present on site during wraparound care provision. In exceptional circumstances, Governors may be asked to support. NP will contact Governors if required. Superkind

	The school is due to receive the Superkind Award. SATS Thanks were extended to KT and RM for their support during SATs. Leavers PN raised the idea of reinstating the leavers' BBQ, which traditionally took place before Covid. Governors agreed it would be lovely to reintroduce the event. If it is not possible to hold it on the final day of term, it could instead take place during the last week of term.
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The meeting closed at 17:35

Date of next meeting: Thursday 16th July 2026 at 16:00

Signed (confirmed):

Date:

Chair of Governors

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