



# GOVERNING BODY TO VERNHAM DEAN GILLUMS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 4:30pm

### Present

Mr Paul Nicoll (Chair)

Mrs Anna Hall (AH)

Mrs Kate Taylor (KT)

Ms Siobhain McCullagh (SM)

Mrs Holly Bulpitt (HB)

Mrs Rachel Miller (RM)

### In Attendance

Mr Ian Hickman (IH) - Executive Headteacher

Miss Nikki Pauk (NP) - Clerk

### Apologies

None received

### Absent with no apologies

Mr Matthew Leavesley (ML)

Mr Steve Bocock (SB)

**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.	<b>Welcome, Apologies and Prayer</b> Cof G welcomed all to the meeting.
2.	<b>Declaration of Pecuniary Interest</b> Bulpitt Printing
3.	<b>Review and sign off the minutes from the meeting 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024</b> Approved and signed off.
4.	<b>HT Report (Verbal)</b> We have recently had an LLPR Visit which is an annual health check for the school. All schools have one visit a year and it is an evaluative visit. A copy of the report will be sent to Governors once received ( <b>A9</b> ). The report has two core focuses: local authority focus (vulnerable and disadvantaged children) and school focus. The visit

took place last Thursday. The LLPR met with IH, visited classrooms, chatted with teachers, a discussion was had around governance and feedback was provided at the end of day. Since September we have had pleasingly positive visits from LA colleagues which has helped us more effectively evaluate what we do as a school and move forward with support from LA colleagues. CofG commented that he had sat through the non positive visits and the recent visits show the huge amount of work that has been put in to change the mind set for the LA. CofG and KT met with the LLPR after she had been round the school and there was no negativity from her. There were some points for improvement brought up which we understand.

The LLPR was very complimentary about Owls and understands the challenges for HB. Our LLPR would like to use our school as an example as beacon to other schools who have to do similar things to us. Credit to HB who has hugely helped in getting the school from being knocked to now being highlighted as really getting it right. There will always be targets and actions that come out of a visit.

The focus word on the day was "transition" and this was a useful word in discussions when looking at the children, them moving up through the school and the different experiences they have. Think about how this works for our children. We need to smooth out daily diet which is something to think about going forward. Governor question: what do you mean by daily diet? Owls Class currently consists of four year groups. Within this class there is a really inclusive attitude. Shared engagement in the younger classes is more fractured. YR have provision running and sometimes join in with Y1 and Y2 which is more fragmented. Noticed at its worst looks too individualised for the Y1 and Y2 children. Governor question: Can the LLPR offer any help? This is something for IH and HB to look at. Had supportive helpful visits. Helped our thinking. Had EYFS advisor 2 visits looking a provision in YR class and getting us thinking how we can work better across the three year groups. Visit organised at another school to look at how they are managing mixed age groups. As we get into summer term have better idea about our intake for September and how we are effectively going to manage those children. Had visit from English advisor which has been helpful. Have half day visit from maths advisor after half term. After this not supported anymore and this is a positive. From a school point of view had a really clear expressions of what challenges were. Teaching mixed year groups on a day to day basis and associated challenges in the day to day curriculum. Having expressed clearly helps guide the work people have been asked to do. Set up for mixed classes but not mixed key stages. Day to day challenges of what learning looks like. Longer term implications what it looks like over the year and how do we make coherent for the children. Ideas around this clear at the start of the year. Spent a lot of time looking at English curriculum. HB working with LLP and Skylark Fed. English resources was there (text driven so easier) Maths use HIAS schemes of learning which maps out the maths curriculum well. Issue is resources and wanted to make sure children were having a similar resource diet. Why did we have 7 different subject leads? Things left over from last year which got pushed back.

School improvement wise we are focusing on provision for all of our learners. Really pleased with Owls Class which was a real challenge. Now this is in a positive place we now need to look more closely at YR, 1 & 2.

Communication with community seems to be working better for everybody. We have recently recruited two new members of staff:-

- Anneka Richards – HLTA is a qualified Teacher
- Millie Dickinson – LSA additional learning support capacity in school.

Recruiting has been challenging.

Planning for English and Maths – working well as per above.

Spelling – new scheme – planning out different stages.

Learning experiences for children: ensuring we are going out on trips and visits and providing enrichment for children. Making good progress this year.

Headlines for Governors: reviewing of staffing structure is something to bear in mind regularly for Governors. Early part of summer term when we know about September numbers.

Wrap around care lost one potential pupil due to not having. This is something to think about going forward.

More inclusion in community. Something for Focus Magazine. Tracy (school close) Focus magazine is a sales point.

Pupils on roll is currently 35. We had three show rounds last week. Governor question: Is there any indication of what September holds? IH confirmed that we are currently first choice for 4 pupils.

Motivation for joining our school: all moved due to not being happy with their current school. All mentioned about the atmosphere when they came into school.

Governor commented that there had been lots of positivity in short amount of time and asked if we could raise our visibility within the pre-schools. IH confirmed that we have done this heavily and social media has also been a strong point of advertising.

5. **Budget Report**

This is looking really positive for the school. Governors have helped to get school in a sustainable financial position.

Look at grouping children different ways. Have room to do this due to financial position. If numbers continue we could have an extra £50,000. October Census Day important as this is what generates our budget share. Governor asked if we would be recruiting a new teacher? IH confirmed that this will be kept under review. The cost of a full-time teacher is around £50,000 - £60,000 with oncosts. This would then wipe out our budget.

Wrap around care. This would have to be funded by parents. The school has previously sent out questionnaires regarding wrap around care. We offered it for a £1 per session and parents said this was too expensive! We want to be able to offer wraparound care but cannot do it for free.

	<p>Wraparound care is part of the strategic plan for school. Skylark has a new provider starting in the summer. We need something we can offer without taking unnecessary financial risks for the school. Grants to look into.</p>
6.	<p><b>IT</b></p> <p>IH has been in touch with Harrap. Server needs replacing, laptops are old and there is not enough for each pupil in the class to use one each. IT expenditure to look at. Does server need to be in school? AH said son could help. The decision we need to make as a school is do we want to continue with windows or move to google environment? IH has been using google for years and has found this works really well in school. Devices for children are chromebooks and are very reliable. In terms of delivering teaching and learning for children this would be a no brainer. Decision needs to be made in terms of what we would like to do going forward. Google is cheaper, no onsite server, cloud based storage, cheaper devices. Harrap's advice would be google. CofG asked what would the benefits be technically. Technically in terms of spec of machines not much difference windows machines will be unnecessary powerful for the children. Teachers get frustrated with tech that does not work and takes time to power up. HBT are upgrading their IT systems and are going into a supplier deal with a couple of other schools. This benefits because of association with other schools. Governor asked if there were any other benefits? There is the potential for shared costs but this would depend on how google environment is set up. This school would need their own google domain. Governor asked If we invest in google and don't like it can we pull back from it? IH stated that costs are important. In IH's experience of Skylark using google as a core provider they have managed to get IT into a good place as they have reliable devices that have lasted a long time and work and IT expenditure has come down as a consequence. Governor asked if there would be changeover problems for children? IH confirmed that there wouldn't be as it was very easy and children very adaptable it is mainly the Teachers who will be affected. We would have a couple of windows machines in school. The biggest difference in having google is the ability to easily share files, work folders etc. Google simplifies all of this. Makes it easier working from home. Governor said that it would be helpful to see price comparison. IH to sent out as soon as received <b>(A10)</b>.</p>
7.	<p><b>Catering</b></p> <p>Have to opt in.</p>
8.	<p><b>Safeguarding Update</b></p> <p>Continued with thinking about information for visitors and volunteers.</p> <p>Have one child on CIN plan.</p> <p>Safeguarding looked at as part of LLP visit. CPOMS entries looked through.</p> <p>PN checked SCR to ensure it was up to date.</p> <p>Significant amount of scrutiny around schools regarding safeguarding. Similar scrutiny over other agencies that act with children such as healthcare etc.</p>
9.	<p><b>Staffing / Personnel</b></p> <p>Two new starters as discussed above.</p>

	<p>Miss Barrington on maternity leave after tomorrow.</p> <p>Mr Cox (caretaker) on long term sick. Have contract cleaners in twice a week. This is an extra cost and will be reviewed. If we wish to cancel at any point only 1 weeks' notice is required.</p>
10.	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b> Compliance checks - IH to get in touch with caretaking support officer Paul Godfrey.</p>
11.	<p><b>Governor Self-Evaluation / Governor ~Training / WGB Training</b> KT sent two skills audits out to all Governors. One personal and one on how we support the school. Please could everybody fill in both <b>(A11)</b> then KT can pull these altogether and see where the gaps are for training. So far skills audit has been completed by KT and AT and gaps come up in SEND and safeguarding. Whole governing body safeguarding training has not been done for a long time.</p> <p>Our SLA finished with Governor Services in April. SM to look into induction training.</p> <p>We will be joining the National Governor Association. Far more worthwhile organisation to be involved with. Lots of different training online. Training will be more bespoke to us. Come April won't be able to use Governor hub anymore. Skylark have a shared Governors drive and all Governors have a Skylark email. PN and NP to meet after half term. Gordon Duff to be removed from Governor hub.</p>
12.	<p><b>AOB</b> Governor asked if there has been any discussion around school buses as if we are trying to draw in more children transport may be a barrier to them joining the school.</p> <p>Conholt – CofG to pick this up again and push to get some funding for the school.</p> <p>Conholt reimbursing for tyres.</p> <p>David Sullivan. Good to see HB at service. Around 400 people attended. He did a lot for school and was a lovely man.</p> <p>PN thanked all for support over the past couple of months. He confirmed that he is now cancer free 😊</p>

The meeting closed at 17:41

**Date of next meeting: 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

Signed (confirmed): \_\_\_\_\_

**Chair of Governors**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who by</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
1.	School Development plan to be drafted	IH/PN	25/10/24
2.	School Article to be published in village magazine	AH	
3.	Information to be sent to AH in order for her to prepare something for Focus Magazine	HB	
4.	New Governor monitoring form to be devised	PN	On hold
5.	KCSIE 2024 updates to be read	ALL	
6.	Email to be sent to IH with details of what Governor believes is not being done.	AH	Completed
7.	KCSIE update document to be sent to Governors	IH/NP	Completed
8.	Slides from Affordable Schools Network meeting to be shared with Governors	IH	
9.	LLPR report to be shared with Governors once received	IH	
10.	IT comparison costs to be sent to Governors	IH/NP	
11.	Governor Skills Audit to be completed and returned to KT	ALL	

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who by</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.	Budget Revision Agreed	ALL	21/11/24