

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD
OF ST. MATTHEW'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
HELD AT 4.00PM ON
MONDAY 6 OCTOBER 2025 AT THE SCHOOL**

PRESENT

Deacon R. Burke –Chair
C. Sergeant – Vice Chair
C. Sime – Headteacher
M. Murphy – Parent Governor
M. Edward – Staff Governor

ALSO PRESENT

T Youds – Clerk
A. Dunbar – Associate Member
L. Chamberlain – School Business Manager
J Collins – Associate Member
J. Evans – Associate Member
T. Gaskell – Associate Member

25/01 WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

Deacon Burke welcomed the governors and opened the meeting with a prayer.

25/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from D. Gidman, P. Regan and A. Doyle.

Request for clerk to update and circulate governor attendance record for last academic year. TY

25/03 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTERESTS FOR ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA

a) Specific to this meeting

There was no declaration of conflict.

b) Confidentiality

The chair reminded everyone that all discussions were confidential until the minutes were published.

Election of Chair / vacancies

Chair and Vice Chair were elected.

Governors terms of reference

Roles and Responsibilities

Scheme of delegation

Annual updates - code of conduct / updating pecuniary interests etc

I The group also reviewed the term lengths of office, confirming that most served a four-year term, with annual elections for the chair and vice chair.

II Chair emphasised that all governors should be aware of the position that we hold with regards to what we do in school.

III Head teacher (HT) explained that all key documents, including the code of conduct, scheme of delegation, and role descriptions, had been uploaded to Governor Hub. Governors were encouraged to familiarise themselves with their individual responsibilities. As the school operated as a full governing body rather than through subcommittees the scheme of delegation is straightforward.

IV Governors were asked to update their personal information on Governor Hub and to look at all of the relevant policies and click to indicate that you've seen them. **All Governors**

V Governor training, upcoming meetings, and difficulties with scheduling due to staff commitments were discussed. The timing of meetings might be reconsidered to improve attendance. **To be discussed under any other business.**

25/04 CHAIR'S EMERGENCY DECISIONS

Chair had no emergency decisions.

25/05 ITEMS FOR ANY OTHER BUSINESS – dates for meeting for 2025 – 2026 / times of meetings

Look at governors' meetings times and days. Term dates were being drafted in line with the local authority's calendar and would be shared ahead of the next meeting for approval.

25/06 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the meeting 7 July 2025, with the change of "Staff governors" to "Associate governors" in the Declaration of Interests Item, were approved as a correct record.

25/07 SAFEGUARDING – single central record

This has been completed.

25/08 HEADTEACHERS REPORT – including the budget

Detailed information on standards and progress had been uploaded to Governor hub highlighted the following points:

I Headteacher reported on pupil numbers, noting that the school had admitted two additional pupils above the planned total of 382. Efforts had been made to increase free school meal and pupil premium applications before the census. Recruitment banners had been displayed to attract new pupils, particularly in Reception and Year 1, where numbers were low. The school had received 41 applications for the following year and held an open day for prospective families.

II The introduction of Class Dojo had improved communication with parents, allowing messages to be translated into multiple languages. Governors discussed how best to support families with limited English, including translating key documents and using bilingual children to assist parents where appropriate.

III Staffing updates included the appointment of new teachers, four early years teachers, and one teacher on maternity leave. The school had faced some staff absences and was managing cover internally where possible to avoid supply costs. A new “Rainbow Tree Room” provision had been established to support pupils with additional needs and behavioural challenges.

Governor Question – How are children selected for this additional support?

CS Response - The program was in its early stages, with referrals based on need and parent agreement.

IV The finance section of the meeting confirmed that the school remained in a positive budget position, having come out of deficit earlier than expected. The insurance claim process was ongoing, with four outstanding claims under review. Budget monitoring showed a small surplus for the current year and projected carry-forwards for the following two years.

V The school continued to pursue additional grants, including wraparound care funding and a possible capital grant for a new nursery provision. The governing body supported exploring this development further, as it would expand early years capacity and improve community provision.

VI Concerns were raised about damage and vandalism to outdoor areas. **The school planned to seek local authority cooperation to help prevent future incidents and support site improvements.** CS

VII HT reviewed documentation including the SIP (School Improvement Partner) report, noting that Liverpool’s school improvement service had undergone major staffing changes. The new SIP, Jo Costello, headteacher at Springwood Heath SEN School, was expected to bring valuable insights, though her first visit was yet to take place.

VIII An overview of last year’s school development plan and current targets was shared, with ongoing priorities including curriculum development and the establishment of the Rainbow Room. The headteacher also intended to review the development plan with the SLT in light of the updated OFSTED framework.

Early Years

Early Years lead reported that the new cohort had entered with low starting points, particularly in phonics and early reading, with 70% of pupils unable to recognise phonemes. Weekly assessments and targeted interventions were in place to address gaps. Provision was focused on communication, language, and physical development, especially letter formation and fine motor skills.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Safeguarding policies and risk assessments had been updated to meet new requirements. The team was ensuring that children eating were always within the sight of an adult, following recent national incidents. Staff were also updating food safety training.

Key Stage Two and Curriculum

I Teachers reported logistical challenges in Key Stage Two due to pupils requiring supervision or medication. Curriculum time was restructured following staff feedback about overload. A new Week

A/Week B timetable model had been introduced to improve balance and lesson quality. Core subjects, RE, and collective worship remained non-negotiable, while foundation subjects alternated weekly. Staff felt listened to, and the approach was already improving pupil engagement.

II Curriculum leaders emphasised making learning more relevant to pupils' local context and reducing unnecessary content. PSHE provision had been adapted to use the PSHE Association framework for greater flexibility.

Religious Education

The RED curriculum had now been implemented from Reception to Year 4, with staff becoming increasingly confident. The school expressed interest in participating in pilot work with the new Parent Institute.

SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

I A high number of transitional reviews were underway, especially for Year 6 pupils with EHCPs seeking specialist placements. Speech and language remained a key area for development, with staff receiving further training. The number of EHCPs and parental requests had continued to rise, often fuelled by external misinformation online.

II Teaching assistants were timetabled according to need rather than fixed classes, supporting interventions, sensory breaks, and vulnerable pupils at transitions. Plans were made to train LSAs in IDL software to help identify literacy and numeracy gaps and reduce unnecessary external assessments.

Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

The headteacher highlighted the achievements of pupils who had faced significant emotional challenges, noting strong progress despite difficult circumstances.

Attendance

Attendance stood at 95.4%, slightly below national averages. Attendance packs had been sent to parents, resulting in greater honesty about holidays. Penalty notices were issued where appropriate and communication with the Education Welfare Officer was ongoing. Attendance for SEND pupils was at 92%, while non-SEND pupils were at 96%.

Behaviour and Rewards

Behaviour remained a school priority. Policies were reviewed and shared with staff and parents. Children were now grouped into four colour teams with matching PE tops, which had improved engagement and identity. Rewards such as local outings were used to promote positive behaviour. The school continued to work closely with the Behaviour Intervention Team (BIT) despite some delays in external support.

Trips and Extracurricular

Year 6 pupils had recently visited London, which was successful despite challenges with behaviour. Parents expressed high appreciation for the trip.

Health and Safety

The new caretaker and staff had completed a health and safety audit, identifying several documentation gaps that were being rectified. Most outstanding items were expected to move from red to green on the compliance report by the next audit in late October.

A governor reported that the school gate had been left open during their arrival to the governor's meeting. **HT agreed to address the issue with staff immediately to ensure full site security.** CS

25/09 APPROVAL OF THE PAY POLICY FOR 2025/26

Pay scale policy reviewed; pay progressions to be confirmed at a later meeting.

25/10 MOVEMENT OF MIS SYSTEMS FROM ESS TO ARBOR AND ACCESS

Need to move away from SIMS management software due to compatibility issues with local authority finance systems. Alternatives such as Arbor and Access were being explored. No immediate decision would be made until further evaluation.

25/11 SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR 2027-28 consultation

The admissions policy for 2027–2028 was to go out for consultation to local schools and nurseries as required. The headteacher clarified that, while the changes primarily affected oversubscribed schools, the school would still follow the formal consultation process

25/12 LOCAL AUTHORITY PAPERS

Chair stated that there was quite a few updates recently but nothing of note.

25/13 GOVERNOR TRAINING

There is a list of governor training dates on governor hub.

25/14 WHAT CAN WE CELEBRATE FROM THIS MEETING?

Having come out of deficit earlier than expected budget monitoring showed a small surplus for the current year and projected carry-forwards for the following two years

25/15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Curriculum policies available on Governor Hub for review.

Next meeting to include updated School Development Plan and Health & Safety report. CS

Dates for meetings of the Governing Body:

Monday 6th October
Monday 8th December
Monday 26th January
Monday 23rd March
Monday 18th May
Monday 6th July

There was discuss on moving time or day of meetings would facilitate increased attendance.

HT will contact governors and suggest if alternative times / days would improve attendance. CS

The meeting closed at 6:00 pm.