



MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF ABBEY COURT SCHOOL

MINUTES

Date: 25.11.2025 (Meeting 2)

Time: 11.00 a.m.

Location: Abbey Court School, Cliffe Road Site

Clerk: Cathy Poole

Attendees: Jane Hayes (Vice Chair)
Tim Muggridge - (TM)
Matt Powell (MP)
Vicky Aspin – VA (Headteacher)
Claire Richards – (CR)
David Field - (DF)
David Lane - (DL)
Chloe Knight - (CK)

Apologies: Jon Carthy – JC (Chair)
Barry Kemp (BK)

In attendance: Cathy Poole (CP) – Clerk

A	STANDARD ITEMS	ACTION
A1	Apologies: Jon Carthy – JC (Chair), Barry Kemp (BK) Apologies noted and approved	
A2	Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest relevant to this meeting.	
A3	Quorate Confirmed that the meeting was Quorate	
A4	Minutes of the last meeting Minutes from the last meeting held on 14 October 2025 were verified for accuracy and confirmed as approved and signed by the Vice Chair.	
A5	Matters arising: Health & Safety Review – DL outstanding	DL

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Chair of Governors on behalf of the Governing Body

	<p>DL agreed to undertake two visits during the academic year – one in the next few weeks and a further one in the final term.</p> <p>Completed evaluation form on Transition Meeting to FE to be circulated for information.</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Course – MP to complete evaluation form. Outstanding.</p> <p>Clerk Appraisal – completed and shared with JC/VA.</p> <p>CK agreed to attend Farm Lead Teacher interviews but unfortunately there were no candidates to interview. To be re-advertised.</p> <p>NGA Essential Safeguarding for Governors completed by the majority. BK outstanding. TM outstanding – access issues to NGA which Clerk is following up.</p> <p>Code of Conduct/Declarations of Interest 2025/26 – Clerk to follow up with Office Manager.</p> <p>Staff Exit Interviews – VA confirmed that the system has been reviewed and the form is now sent out with the acknowledgement of resignation giving people a longer period to complete and return which will hopefully improve the number received.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>MP</p> <p>VA/CK</p> <p>BK Clerk/TM</p> <p>Clerk</p>
B	Leadership Matters	
B1	<p>Headteacher Verbal Update VA reported back on the redevelopment of the Rede Court site – recorded in confidential minutes.</p> <p>Pupil Attendance – 90.7%. this has improved and is 3% above national average for specialist schools.</p> <p>Five new students, mostly in KS1, since the last meeting. This reflects the delays in EHCPs. Currently managing a high number of referrals, 40 since the last meeting which is very time consuming and most are inappropriate referrals.</p> <p>Recruitment – Interviews from Premises Manager taking place on Friday 28 November, 6 candidates. A further round of TA interviews will be held before Christmas – currently 9 TA vacancies.</p> <p>Training – PROACT-SCIPr-UK behaviour management training undertaken with all staff.</p>	

<p>Parental Engagement Six events have taken place since the last meeting all of which were well attended by parents.</p> <p>Curriculum Recently held Black History Month focusing on local history. Two further lambs born on the farm Welcoming parents into school looking at language and culture – Lithuanian this term. Christmas Jumper Fashion Show – fundraising but also develops drama and communication skills. Careers and work related learning – looking at individual needs. External work experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Café • Broomhill Park • Foodbank • College Taster Courses • Supporting outreach <p><i>DF asked about community access to the Farm.</i> VA confirmed that it is mostly schools, regular visits from other special needs school and some primary schools. Scouts & Cubs; Gardening Group; Snapdragons; Wicks; Lloyds; Young Farmers. There is still some capacity.</p> <p>Residential - Bronze Duke of Edinburgh; KS2 Sleepover in school. More residential visits will take place later in the year</p> <p>Safeguarding - two referrals to social care, escalated cases twice, one LADO consultation. Safeguarding Audit – VA will circulate powerpoint to Governors. Green in all areas. Actions to include: One member of the Safeguarding Team to attend Medway Training every two years. Increase number of parent sessions in relation to behaviour management/bullying. Explore the possibility of an online SCR. Governors agreed to submit the audit following sign-off from the Safeguarding Governor, JC.</p> <p>Christmas schedule circulated to Governors. Governors to advise VA which events they would like to attend.</p> <p>Agreed January meeting to start at 10.30am to allow Governors to attend lunch – advise VA if you will be at lunch.</p>	<p>VA</p> <p>All Governors</p>
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	<p>Presentation on Tapestry, Zoe Sylvester, Deputy Head.</p> <p>Tapestry is an online learning journal platform used to track and share a child's development with parents. It allows teachers to record observations, photos, and videos of a child's achievements and link them to the curriculum, which parents can then view and comment on via a secure login. The platform also includes tools for progress tracking, planning, and assessing children.</p> <p><i>DF asked about the subscription costs which ZS confirmed remain affordable.</i></p> <p><i>DF asked if the system was fully customizable to meet the needs of the school – this was confirmed.</i></p> <p><i>DF asked if using this system helped with teachers' workloads – this was confirmed as all the information is held in one place for each student.</i></p> <p><i>DF asked about Data Security and it was confirmed that there had been no data breaches to date.</i></p> <p>The Board thanked ZS for her very informative presentation.</p>	
C	POLICIES	
	<p>The following policies to be reviewed by the individuals noted and any comments sent to VA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection – CK • Freedom of Information – DF • Mental Health & Wellbeing – DL • Pupil Voice – CR • Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – MP • Managing Violence - JH 	<p>CK DF DL CR MP JH</p>
D	Finance	
	<p>Feedback from Finance Committee:</p> <p>Latest monitoring for current financial year to be circulated to Governors.</p> <p>Continued improved position.</p> <p>Rollover has increased due to on-going recruitment issues around staffing.</p> <p>Currently over 8% allowable figure.</p> <p>Selected for Finance Audit by Medway – around April for report.</p> <p>Funding – there have been some changes to the banding. Previously 96% of students Band 6, now 40%. Disputes around what money is due.</p> <p>JC to undertake Petty Cash monitoring.</p>	<p>VA</p> <p>JC</p>

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E	GOVERNING BODY MATTERS & STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES	
E1	<p>Training 2025/2026 With a focus this year on food agreed all Governors to complete the NGA Whole School Approach to Food. Clerk to circulate the link. Certificates of Completion to be sent to Clerk.</p> <p>CK sent list of training. JC/TM completed Safer Recruitment. Updated Training record to be circulated.</p>	<p>Clerk All Governors</p> <p>Clerk</p>
E2	<p>Monitoring and Tasks 2025-2026 Updated document to be circulated with minutes of meeting. Monitoring reports received to be circulated for information.</p>	Clerk
E3	<p>Evaluation of Board Diversity This is reviewed on an annual basis. We now have some younger Board Members; good balance of male/female. No ethnic diversity currently. Board considered possible ways of recruiting younger members for future positions, LinkedIn, ex-students, graduate training schemes all mentioned as possibilities.</p>	
E4	<p>Stakeholder Engagement Stakeholder engagement considered to be good. Wicks involved in the farm, donations, senior councillors' from Medway visiting, links with other schools through the farm, parental engagement. Distribution of Newsletter – strategic about who receives paper copy/email. Christmas card list.</p>	
G	CONCLUDING MATTERS	
G1	<p>Any Other Business Nil Meeting closed at 1.00pm.</p>	
G2	<p>Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 20th January 2026 (Mtng 3) Rede Court Please note earlier start time of 10.30am to allow Governors to stay for lunch.</p>	

CP:01/20/2025

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Chair of Governors on behalf of the Governing Body