



## ST KATHERINE'S SCHOOL AND NURSERY

### PUBLIC MINUTES FOR THE TERM 5 2024/2025 MEETING OF THE LGB HELD ON MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> MAY 2025

*Governors present at the LGB meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025 approved these minutes as a true and accurate record, and signed on Governor Hub electronically*

#### PRESENT

Carina Cuddington(CC) – Co-opted Governor (Chair)	Ray Lang (RL) - Headteacher
Laura Payne (LP) - Co-opted Governor	Sarah Mulock (SM) – Parent Governor
Adrien Booth (AB) – Parent Governor	Holly Ashton (HA) – Staff Governor
Sarah Aikenhead (SA) - Associate Governor	

#### IN ATTENDANCE

Andy Lacey (AL) Governance Professional	Caroline Loveland (CL) – AHT & SENCO
Romana Croucher (RC) FLO - part	Louise Stebbons (LS) Geography Lead - part

#### PART A – PUBLIC MINUTES

##### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE *(led by Chair)*

**1.1 Welcome:** CC welcomed all to the meeting, and asked if everyone could introduce themselves as in addition to a new parent governor, two members of staff were joining part of the meeting to present to governors.

Following CL's resignation, it was noted that Holly Ashton is now the Staff Governor and SM had been appointed as a Parent Governor.

**1.2 Apologies:** MC was absent from the meeting – no apologies were received.

**1.3 Quorum:** The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

##### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST *(led by Chair)*

**2.1** Governors were given the opportunity to declare any interests against the agenda to which none were declared. There were no updates to declarations.

##### 3. MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES *(Led by Chair)*

**3.1 Approval of Minutes:** Governors approved the public minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March. There were no confidential minutes.

**Action:** AL to publish the approved minutes.

**3.2 Actions:** Actions from previous meetings were noted as either complete or included as items for discussion on the agenda.

##### 4. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS NOT ON THE AGENDA

**4.1** RL asked if an urgent item could be discussed relating to young carers. RC attended for this part of the meeting. RC in her role, informed governors that she has become increasingly aware of a number of pupils who are 'young carers' in that they help to look after either parents or siblings who have a range of emotional, disability or neurodiversity needs.

**HA asked how many pupils were known to RC?** RC said there were 12 pupils but that there were probably more.

RL informed governors that since her appointment, RC had taken a fresh look at both how and what support is provided to pupils in relation to their health and well-being, and had identified a group of children that needed to be recognised and supported.

RC said that she has established a Young Carers Club, which runs once a week to provide time and space for those pupils to have time to enjoy themselves, and to show that they are not alone as there are others who are in the same situation. RL added that RC had transformed the garden room and pond area into a tranquil space for the pupils.

**CC asked how many of the pupils attended the club?** RC advised that 5 attended but she hoped that by increasing awareness, not only would the rest attend but other young carers would come forward once they realised that there was support and an opportunity to do things.

RC said that she had prepared communications for both staff and pupils to raise awareness, and for staff this included guidance how to identify young carers and what they could do to help and support the pupils. In addition, she was planning a school assembly to raise the awareness of young carers as she was certain there are others, who with encouragement would come forward.

In addition, RC had drafted a Young Carers Policy that she shared with governors who were asked to review such and feedback comments to her. RC would then revise the policy accordingly.

RL added that there might be enrichment opportunities specifically for young carers, which would provide respite and could include activities making use of the Forest School and school swimming pool.

**ACTION – Governors to provide comments and approve the policy via email to RC by the end of T5. T6 LGB would ratify the policy.**

RC left the meeting.

## 5. SCHOOL STRATEGIC MATTERS

### 5.1 Geography – update from Louise Stebbons (LS), subject lead

RL informed governors that much of the school development focus this year had centred on the core subjects – maths, reading and writing, and that the plan going forward was to develop leadership capacity within foundation subjects, which begun this term. This would also provide developmental opportunities for middle leaders and increase accountability within their roles.

LS informed governors that geography monitoring to date had been light touch, whilst this process had been informative and involved scrutiny of the subject folders and pupil conferencing. Key outcomes and actions were:

- Pupil knowledge is generally strong but it identified a lack of confidence in one specific area of the curriculum.
- Teacher marking was, at times, inconsistent and it was not always clear where scaffolding had been used to support pupils' learning.
- Findings and actions have been fed back to staff, which set clear expectations to ensure consistency in T&L. This included specific guidance, through a subject expectation document, which outlined non-negotiables, such as guidance regarding learning objectives, adaptation and curriculum content.

LS said that teachers had responded positively and taken the feedback on board.

**ACTION: It was agreed that LS would provide RL with her monitoring report for uploading to Gov Hub to share with governors for further comments.**

LS left the meeting.

RL informed governors that he is planning to bring the foundation subjects to the LGB on a rolling programme.

### 5.2 Strategic Document / School Improvement Plan (SIP)

RL provided governors with an overview of the SIP provided with the meeting papers. The key initiative was the ongoing development of a Maths Team to work with DT (AHT), and representatives from KS1 and KS2 were

providing support so that in T1/2 of next academic they could effectively lead maths across the school. This would provide DT with a greater capacity to focus on leadership matters and other areas of T&L.

LP feedback from the discussion at ECG regarding StK's changing approach to delivering the maths curriculum and ongoing additional support saying that the group thought it was a good idea as a member of SLT, DT was being pulled in different directions.

Rapid improvement plans have been implemented for Years 4 and 5.

### 5.3 Headteacher's Report

RL provided governors with a summary of his HT's report focusing on the following key issues:

#### 5.3.1 Mobility

The school continues to experience challenges associated with pupil mobility. Since September there had been 33 in-year admissions with 17 pupils leaving the school. *SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES*

In addition, RL advised that there was a shortage of primary places in Maidstone and as a result, pupils were joining StK's for short periods until a place became available at their local school. LP asked if once the school was full would there be less scope for in-year admissions? RL agreed saying that Sept 25 Year R intake was full and that there is a waiting list.

CC commented that it was due to the school increasing reputation for supporting pupils with additional needs that encourages parents of SEND children to choose StK's.

#### 5.3.2 Attendance

Overall attendance stands at 94.2%, which is slightly below the national average of 94.8%, and above that compared to the same period last year 94.1%). RL said everything possible is being done to improve attendance, which was verified by the school's KAPAS Officer during a recent visit. However, there are a group of children with attendance of less than 90%, 6 of which are on a reduced timetable.

SA advised that the T6 LGB will receive an update as to what action is being taken to improve attendance.

#### 5.3.3 Behaviour

RL highlighted that whilst there had been 6 suspensions this academic year, it was a significant reduction on the 2023/24 figure when there had been 27 suspensions.

SM asked if there was any correlation between the pupils who had been suspended and in-year admissions? CL said that there was. CC asked what might be the reason – was it because StK had higher expectations? CL said that in-year admissions might not have had the nurture and necessary support in their previous school and it was an initial learning process for both staff and the pupils adding behaviour tended to be better from their second year at StK.

*SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES*

RL said that most suspensions were for serious one-off events or occurrences related to children's additional needs. In all circumstances, reintegration meetings are conducted and measures are put in place to support children to move forward with their behaviour and sustain it overtime. SM said that most parents were keen to see schools deal quickly with unacceptable behaviour and the recent parent survey reflected that they were happy with school's ability to do so effectively.

#### 5.3.4 Staffing update

*SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES*

RL advised he was working on the staff plan for next academic year, which was challenging due to uncertainties regarding maternity leave, and also those who might leave. This should however, be clearer by the end of May due to notice requirements for teachers wanting to take up new jobs in September.

*SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES*

#### 5.3.5 Other Matters

LP asked if there had only been one GDPR breach this academic year? RL confirmed that this was correct. CC asked if there were GDPR breaches not being reported? RL said that the school had a clear desk policy and staff had weekly reminders about GDPR so very aware of what was needed to comply.

## 5.4 Spring Data

RL referred governors to the Trust-wide data report included with the papers. In summary:

- Year 4 and 5 data was significantly below expectations and as a result rapid improvement plans had been developed for implementation in the Summer term. In particular, reading outcomes were down, which had been reviewed and clear actions had been put in place.
- Year 6. It was expected that reading outcomes would be in line with national. Although Year 6 comparative judgement results were lower than expected, writing outcomes should be broadly in line with the national benchmark by the end of the year. Maths outcomes were also difficult to predict due to significant parts of the curriculum not being delivered in earlier years. It is hoped SATS outcome will be c60%, which although below national is a significant improvement on the previous year.
- Maths – Years 4 to 6 have had a specific and tailored curriculum mapped, including repetition of some earlier learning to address knowledge gaps. For years 3 and below, all pupils are being taught the full curriculum. The action being taken in Years 4 and 5 is already having a positive impact on developing children’s conceptual knowledge and building key foundational skills.

CC asked why were the Spring data figures for Years 4 & 5 lower than those achieved in the Autumn, and what action was being taken to address?

RL said it was due to gaps in the learning and the priority was to focus on key aspects of the curriculum to ensure pupils understood the basics that were applied elsewhere. It would not however, be possible to cover everything. There is a need to teach to the needs of the pupils and not necessarily to deliver at speed in order to cover the whole curriculum. The rapid improvement plans were being delivered through employing additional resources such as an additional teacher in Year 5 and a LSA in Year 4.

SM asked if the aim was to ensure pupils had increased knowledge so they could answer more of the questions? RL said that the plan was to ensure pupils had the fundamental knowledge to do and understand the basics and apply these in a variety of contexts.

SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

LP asked if the data outcomes were being skewed by in-year admissions not working at the ‘expected’ level, and whether shadow data could be provided showing how those pupils who have been at the school longer are performing? RL said it could and that if that was provided, he thought it would more than likely show improved outcomes.

## 5.5 Parents Survey Outcomes

RL provided governors with a summary of the parent survey outcomes:

- He expressed disappointment with the relatively low number of responses (74).

CC felt that a low response could be seen as a positive as could be interpreted parents were relatively happy with the school.

- Communication could be developed with regards to keeping parents informed about their child’s progress, and they wanted more than just parents evenings.

It was suggested that there could be displays and exhibitions of what pupil’s are being taught and their work. Governors expressed some concern about the time that it would take to organise to which RL said he would factor this in in order to make any actions manageable. In addition, an idea might be to hold an ‘immersion’ event so that parents could experience what and how learning is being delivered. HA commented that she had found that useful at her last school. RL said that choosing the right time would be challenging to maximise the opportunity for parents to attend.

- Parents would like more after-school and lunchtime clubs especially for younger pupils.

LP expressed surprise about the comment parents wanted more clubs as felt the school offered a number and variety for pupils. Several additional clubs are being proposed including musical theatre, and a girls football club and nature club specifically for KS1.

- Ability for parents to raise and discuss concerns. CL said that SLT were readily available as visible on the school gates both drop off and pick up, when parents could mention any concerns. RL added that SLT adopt an ‘open door’ policy and CL has published her email address for parents to contact direct.

## 5.6 ECG Feedback

LP provided feedback from the T5 ECG meeting. In summary items not already discussed were:

- Once the Ofsted framework has been confirmed the Trust will arrange for governors to receive an overview. There was a discussion regarding governor training and it was suggested there should be an audit of what people have done and what they would like / need to do. SH asked that she would like 'PETS' training.

**ACTION: To carry out a skills audit of the LGB and to facilitate access to appropriate and relevant training.**

- SEND Policy. LP said that the Trust were liaising with School SENCO's to consider the pros and cons for having a trust-wide policy or school specific policies. This is in response to KCC updating its approach to funding SEND and likely increase of pupils with additional needs being educated in main-stream schools.

RL advised that SEND needs to be a specific agenda item for T6 as governors need to be informed of the changes and likely impact.

HA said that as a teacher, she felt it was essential to have another adult in the class not only to provide 1-2-1 support for those pupils with additional needs but also to deal with an emergency such as a medical need. This allows teachers to focus on the class and T&L.

CL said that she had recently visited a school where there was a TA in every class but, were not necessarily 1-2-1 TA's but had a watching eye on the whole class to support the teacher and intervene when and where necessary.

*SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES*

## 6. SCHOOL SPECIFIC POLICIES

**6.1** RL informed Governors that the following policies due for review were not subject to any changes, which were approved:

- Anti-bullying
- Nappy Changing and Toileting
- Positive Handling

**6.2** SA informed governors that she had been reviewing the School Uniform policy, which had included discussing with pupils reflecting the school approach to 'pupil voice'. It was noted that the pupils had made some rational suggestions particularly with regards to ear-rings. SA is collating the responses and will provide an updated policy for governors to approve in T6.

**ACTION: T6 LGB to consider the revised School Uniform Policy.**

## 7. FINANCE UPDATES

### 7.1 March 2025 Management Accounts

CC provided governors with an update on the current financial year project out-turn. In summary, the key points were:

- Income was forecast to be better than budgeted mainly as a result of additional HNF and also income generated by the nursery.
- Expenditure was forecast to be higher due to the Teacher Pay Award.
- Overall, in-year deficit was greater than budgeted, which will be met from reserves

### 7.2 Draft 2025/26 Budget

CC informed governors that both next and the following years' budgets were challenging as funding was flat, expected teacher pay awards, and changes to HNF. Also, income was falling due to reducing pupil numbers following reduction in PAN, and staffing levels needed to be brought into line.

In addition, changes in HNF will see a reduction of 25% in money received for 2025/26, and there is uncertainty as to what the funding might be for 2026/27 and beyond.

Fortunately, StK has significant levels of reserves that will support the budget both this and next two years, and that the budget has yet to be fixed but is based on worst case scenario.

## 8. SAFEGUARDING, HEALTH & SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS

### 8.1 Safeguarding

There have been no LADO referrals.

### 8.2 Health and Safety

RL advised governors that there had been a reportable accident (RIDDOR) in term 5. The accident has been investigated and necessary action taken.

LP referred to the T4 H&S Audit and asked about the action to improve accident data analysis? RL said that it was necessary to further develop our data analysis to ascertain if there are any trends or matters that need action to avoid repeat accidents. This is an action for all schools within the trust.

## 9. TRUST MATTERS AND POLICIES

9.1 **Governors noted** the minutes of the T4 Trust Board meeting and the policies that had been approved, which were available on the trust website.

### 9.2 Risk Register

Governors noted the draft school risk register and Trust Risk registers.

## 10. ANY OTHER GOVERNANCE MATTERS

10.1 It was suggested that CL should be appointed as an Associate Governor to formalise her attendance at the LGB meetings. The appointment would need Trust Board approval.

**ACTION:** AL to raise item at the T5 Trust Board meeting.

## 12. CONFIDENTIALITY

12.1 Governors confirmed that paragraphs 5.3.1 (part), 5.3.3 (part), 5.3.4 (part), 5.4 (part) and 5.6 would be recorded as confidential. (TBC)

## 13. CLOSING REMARKS

13.1 **Dates of next meeting:** The 2025/26 Governance calendar will be available for the T6 LGB meeting. All to be held at St Katherine's School commencing at 1700.

13.2 **Other Dates:** Immersion day on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025 - Maths.

13.3 **Meeting close:** The meeting concluded at 18:50 and CC thanked all parties for their attendance and contribution.