



Doing all the good we can

**Richmond Methodist Primary School
Full Governing Body Meeting on
Monday 24th November at 5.30pm
at Richmond Methodist Primary School**

Core Functions of LGB (Colour coded to challenge):

- **Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction**
- **Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff**
- **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**
- **Purple denotes Governor approval**

In attendance

Sharon Stevenson (SS, Headteacher); Kathleen Bradley (Chair); Kathleen Wood (Vice Chair); Joe Larder (JLa Deputy Headteacher); Daniel Benfield (DB); Nicola Srafton (NS); Hannah Long (HL); Rebecca Kent (Staff Governor, RK), Kate Pepperell (KP)

Also present

Simon Longley, (Observer, proposed LA Governor)

Caroline Buck (Bursar, NYC)

Zoe Pick (School Business Manager, RMS)

Louise Flanagan, (Clerk to Governors, NYC (Teams))

17	Finance	<p>This item was moved forward in the meeting.</p> <p>Finance information was uploaded to SharePoint before the meeting and questions were invited.</p> <p>Governor Question (GQ) As we are halfway through the financial year most of the budget spend is around 50%, funding is going to music and PE, is that offset in reductions in staffing? HLTA is an under spend and that is because we didn't employ cover when a HLTA left who covered PPA. So instead of two HLTAAs for PPA cover we have specialists for PE and Music who are in school two days per week.</p> <p>GQ The ICT budget is spent for the year, is there anything else that will go as high? We have put a plan in place going forward, we don't need any new Chromebooks, some may need updating.</p> <p>GQ School meals – we were left with a huge deficit, are we predicting an in-year deficit? A bigger saving is predicted than calculated at the Start Budget. NYC is charging RMS 70p more, even with the fee from Hutchinson's the overall spend will be less. There is still an historic deficit, it was noted RMS does not yet have a full financial year of the new provider.</p>
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Date: 19/1/26

GQ Is there increased take up of the new menu? There is always increased take up in the Winter months, but yes the four options seem popular and staff have commented on how much nicer it is to have fresh vegetables.

GQ For those parents that pay, are they paying more? No.

GQ Looking at revenue income, we have predicted more across board for the nursery, next year do we need to be more cautious? When we did the Start Budget we knew what we would be getting in September. One full time pupil didn't come to RMS and one who did come is using their funded hours elsewhere. We have since filled those spaces from January. We are full from January so it will not be a worsening picture.

GQ Part of your report covers first choices, is that included? We have reduced numbers in the budget. Third year is reduced to 40 pupils in Reception.

GQ Are the figures based on population? That's a factor but we don't get much information from the LA regarding birth rate. RMS has 27 possibly 31 first choices and hopefully more externally.

GQ Is there an impact of the new transport policy? We can't tell as we don't know pupil addresses as yet. Conversations have been held around reducing PAN. SS to get in touch with Public Health England about birth rates and report back (AP).

Revised Budget

Two grants have been amalgamated into funding - National Insurance Grant to assist with NI increases and School Budget Support Grant which goes up in the 2nd and 3rd year.

Delegated funding reflects change in pupil numbers dropping £30k from year 1 to year 2.

Nursery funding is a challenge to calculate, estimated figures are used for Spring term, there is a drop because of the extra teacher.

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SEND top up funding takes into account Y6 leavers so £4k down in year 2 and year 3. It is difficult to predict going forward.

Pupil Premium includes Free School Meals and Service Pupils October 2025 census will feed into second year figures.

Sports funding is static.

GQ Regarding wraparound care – do we have staffing to do it? It doesn't take into account staffing. Income is £18792, staffing £9k, there has been a £8545 profit on holiday club.

Nursery, slight change as receiving more money for funded hours compared to what is charged.

GQ What is the reason for doing that? We put it in line with Wraparound Care, it is the same hourly rate. We could put it in line with what we get from the government but it would be a higher cost to parents. When we originally set up we were more expensive than Trinity.

Bank interest of £4k, this has decreased as there is less held in the bank.

Income received from pupil and staff meals.

Teacher Absence refunds for maternity cover and long term absence.

Community focus income which is wraparound care where the numbers are quite healthy.

GQ Is there a pattern to the WAC attendance? Fridays we amalgamate because numbers are low.

Staffing part of budget included increments going forward.

GQ Is the pay award fully funded? It is unknown until it happens each year. Support grant has been brought in, we can't budget for grants but they are generally never fully funded.

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GQ Is there any way of benefiting from the Apprenticeship Levy? We are interviewing on Thursday and might be able to benefit from the levy. We can only claw back money for the training.

Built in inflation for bought in services.

Utilities increased as follows - Water 4%, Elec minus 5% Gas 3.8%. Rates are straight in and out.

Educational Software - support for some for the hardware.

CB advised of the deficit predicted for year 3.

GQ How do we compare with other schools? Some have worse deficits.

GQ Can we use some of the Learning Resource? Hoping to use that on an alternative curriculum.

GQ We discussed the swimming pool closure previously? The pool is going to open between January and Easter.

GQ Are there a lot of parents who don't pay? Yes.

GQ Is it that they can't pay or they can pay and still do not ? We always ask parents to speak to us because we have some grants available. If we don't get enough voluntary contributions then trips will not go ahead.

GQ Could you offer swimming lessons out of school hours? Doing that might not target those who need to be able to do it, an after school club would probably be attended by children who like swimming and could probably pay for it.

GQ How many in Y6 who will miss the target for swimming? We are starting to look at those figures.

5 OFFICIAL

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		<p>It was suggested that an intensive session could be offered for Y6, with a minibus transporting pupils to Scotch Corner using the Sports Premium which can be used for travel to competitions – could we explain extenuating circumstances and use it for swimming?</p> <p>GQ Are there any implications that we are not meeting duty with low swimming figures? There has been a reporting change in the 'use of funding' questions, we don't think the Sports Premium funding will be reduced.</p> <p>SS advised that solutions can be looked at once numbers of Y6 non-swimmers are known. SS will also speak with a couple of parents who might have contacts and report back to Governors (AP).</p> <p>Still have £20k owed to be used for finishing toilets, decorating and storage. The importance of decorating was discussed, parents and governors can help with this.</p> <p>Governors would welcome the opportunity in future for finance questions and variances to be advised to the FGB ahead of the meeting and just questions posed at the meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ZP and CB were thanked and left the meeting at 6.30pm</p>
1	Welcome from the Chair and Opening Prayer	The Chair, Kathleen Bradley, welcomed Governors to the meeting and Kathleen Wood shared an opening prayer.
2	To receive apologies for absence and to determine whether any absences should be consented to.	Apologies were received from Clive World and Caroline Dawson these were accepted by Governors.
3	To remind governors of the need to complete	No business interests were declared for today's agenda

	business and personal, interests, pecuniary and non-pecuniary, gifts and hospitality and self-declaration form.	Business Interest forms and register of gifts forms were completed during the meeting.
4	To determine whether any part of the proceedings should be treated as confidential	There were no confidential items.
5	Notification of urgent other business.	There was no other urgent business to be discussed.
6	To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the FGB meeting held on the 23rdJune 2025	The minutes and confidential minutes of the FGB meeting held on 15 th September 2025 were approved as a correct record and will be digitally signed by the Chair as soon as possible (AP).
7	To consider matters arising from the minutes and for which there is no separate agenda item. (Actions Summary)	The 25-26 Summary of Actions was updated by the Clerk.
8	Headteacher's Report	SS advised that when the report was written the outcome of the Health and Safety check had not been received, this will be discussed at the next meeting. The grant application has received approval to move forward to the next stage, ZP and SS have a meeting on Wednesday with Align Property Services. NYC cannot meet the deadline but the next deadline may be achievable.

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GQ Can we reapply? Yes we can. It could bring in £150k so unsure why there isn't a strategic approach in place.

Attendance continues to be strong, there has been an increase in fines, seven have been issued in this period.

GQ Are NYC checking your refusals? Information from DfE and NYC is that we don't authorise leave at all for any reason.

GQ It is helpful to have a safeguarding table, is there anything we need to be aware of eg county lines? Local context is county lines and racism. Also an increase in domestic violence.

GQ Do you think more confidence in reporting? Not many are coming to us, generally from Operation Encompass where police have been present during an incident.

GQ Do you find that works well? On a morning we receive a notification that a child has potentially witnessed an incident so we can monitor and provide nurture. Throughout the day we receive more details from the police.

GQ There are suggestions domestic violence incidents have increased due to the economic situation? We think it's more complex than that, we have posters in school stating we are an Operation Encompass school.

GQ Do you get good a response from Early Help? We don't often hear back from Early Help, if a case has closed etc. We try to get parents to self refer.

GQ Appraisals were conducted differently was that successful? It was less time pressured doing it that way so there was more opportunity to talk, especially around wellbeing.

GQ Regarding staff absences are they related to specific absences doing that period? Yes.

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9	School Improvement Plan Update	SS advised that school improvement is still moving forward. KB advised that the Governor Strategic Plan should be looked at in conjunction with the SIP. KB suggested this is presented every other meeting. Next time it will be RAG rated.
10	Safeguarding report	All Governors confirmed they have read part 2 of KCSiE and completed the required training. GQ Did you attend the safeguarding meeting? This was attended a few weeks ago and it was really useful providing contextual information around Richmond which helps when thinking about PSHE curriculum.
11	Governor Training	Training information has been issued. Suspensions and Exclusions training has been attended Recruitment and selection training is ongoing, it is useful if Governors complete this training. GQ Does it count if completed through employment? Yes. The Safeguarding Governor is also Filtering and Monitoring Governor.
13	Governor Monitoring and Proposed Link Governor Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and governance – KB • Inclusion - HL • Safeguarding - JLi • Church School effectiveness / RE - KW • Attendance and behaviour - NS • Curriculum and teaching - English (writing) SL • Curriculum and teaching - Maths - KB • Personal development and wellbeing – KL / new parent governor • Early years - DB • Health and Safety - CS

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community link Governor – CS <p>KB thanked everyone for confirming their preferences for link roles.</p>
14	Governance	<p><u>Vacancies</u></p> <p>The Parent Governor election is about to take place electronically, KP will apply for the role again.</p> <p>Caroline Dawson has stepped down from the Governing Body, KB will write to her (AP)</p> <p>Governance Action Plan – a working party will link visits to priorities.</p> <p>GQ Do we have an example of what other Governing Bodies do? KB was sent 3, all very different eg 1/3/5 year plans. The Governor Strategic Plan is a good starting point</p> <p>KB to email Governors with suggested dates for a Working Party about the plan (AP)</p> <p><u>Skills Audit</u></p> <p>Governors were reminded to return their Skills Audits to the Clerk (AP)</p>
15	Policies for approval	<p><u>Updated Policies</u></p> <p>Hearings & Appeals Policy JL advised this is a standard LA template which gives timelines and route map, determined by HR.</p> <p>Charging & Remissions Policy KB advised this is an amalgam of DfE and LA policy, describes what school can and can't charge for</p>

AI Policy, the AI policy is going to be developed further

Child-Friendly Privacy Notice, General Privacy Notice, Website Privacy Notice

Data Protection Policy, Governor and Volunteer Privacy Notice, Information Security Policy, Policy Framework

Privacy Notice Framework, Pupil Parent and Guardian Privacy Notice, Records Management Policy, Workforce Privacy Notice

Pay Policy

Advises that pay progression is not linked to performance, sets out salary ranges Page 10 and 11 needs slight amendment (AP)

H&S Policy – CW add to next agenda (AP)

Budget Management Policy

DB advised that a couple of parts need to be amended eg p4 refers to finance committee Point 10 – school to complete as appropriate extended activities to be inputted. Staffing - delete committee. Mention of governance roles and website needs updating as still shows JLi as Chair (AP).

Unchanged Policies

CCTV Policy

GDPR Publication Scheme

RPA Cyber Response Plan

School Medical Policy

Online Safety

KNB

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		Governors approved all of the above policies with the exception of the AI Policy and H&S Policy and with minor amendments as stated.
16	External reports	The Safeguarding Report was uploaded to SharePoint before the meeting, KB thanked all those involved.
17	Financial Updates	This item was discussed at the start of the meeting
18	Performance Appraisal Cycle	Governors endorsed the proposals in relation the Pay Policy.
19	Health and Safety/Premises	A premises visit took place on 11 November 2025.
20	Approve registered charity signatories	Governors approved Joe Larder, Zoe Pick and Sharon Stevenson as signatories for the Charity Account Susan Gardiner, Natasha Welch and Susan Welch have been removed.
21	Benchmarking	This was discussed in item 17.
22	Confidential Item	There were no confidential items to be discussed.
23	AOB	<p>The Chair will write to new Director of Methodist schools to congratulate them on their appointment (AP).</p> <p>H&S paperwork check to add to the next agenda (AP)</p> <p>Richmond Methodist Community Consultation will take place 26th November 6.30 to 9.</p> <p>SL thanked Governors for the Colour Fun Run which was greatly appreciated by Nickey's family.</p>
24	Impact. How are we enabling all in our	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed budgets and scrutinised how money is being sent Checked safeguarding Updated and amended a number of policies

	school community to flourish?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered swimming support for Y6 to meet statutory obligations • Discussed how Governors support school strategically with the strategic plan
25	Dates for 25/26	<p><u>Dates for 25/26</u></p> <p>Spring Term 19th January 2026 (educational performance) 9th March 2026 (Finance/Work Scrutiny)</p> <p>Summer Term</p> <p>Plus one hour meeting for finance (hybrid) Summary of outturn and how it informs the Start Budget date on 11th May 18th May 2026 (Educational Performance) 22nd June 2026 (Ethos, vision and values/Round Robin)</p>
There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.46pm		