



Doing all the good we can

**Richmond Methodist Primary School
Full Governing Body Meeting on
Monday 19th January 2025 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**

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Signed:

Date: 9/3.26

In attendance

Sharon Stevenson (SS, Headteacher); Kathleen Wood (Vice Chair); Joe Larder (JLa Deputy Headteacher); Daniel Benfield (DB); Hannah Long (HL); Simon Longley (SL), Clive World (CW), Alice Walker (AW), Peter White (PW)

Also present

Louise Flanagan, Clerk to Governors, NYC

Apologies

Kathleen Bradley

Rebecca Kent

Nicola Scrafton

Jan Linsley

Kate Pepperell

1	Welcome from the Chair and Opening Prayer	<p>As the Chair was absent the meeting was chaired by Vice Chair Kathleen Wood who welcomed Governors to the meeting and shared an opening prayer.</p> <p>Confirmation was received today that Simon Longley has been nominated by the Local Authority to the Richmond Methodist Primary School governing body to potentially fill the current LA governor vacancy.</p> <p>Governors AGREED that Simon Longley be appointed as LA Governor for four years from 19th January 2026.</p> <p>Governors welcomed new Foundation Governor Peter White who has also been appointed for four years.</p> <p>The school office will arrange DBS checks and new email addresses for both Governors. Clerk to issue Business Interest forms and Code of Conduct (AP).</p>
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2	To receive apologies for absence and to determine whether any absences should be consented to.	Apologies were received from Jan Linsley, Kate Pepperell, Nicola Scrafton, Kathleen Bradley and Rebecca Kent and these were accepted by Governors.
3	To remind governors of the need to complete business and personal, interests, pecuniary and non-pecuniary, gifts and hospitality and self-declaration form.	No business interests were declared for today's agenda
4	To remind governors of the need for confidentiality	Governors were reminded of the need for confidentiality.
5	To determine whether any part of the proceedings should be treated as confidential	There were no confidential items.
6	Notification of urgent other business.	There was no other urgent business to be discussed.
7	To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the FGB meeting held on the 23rd June 2025	The minutes and confidential minutes of the FGB meeting held on 24th November 2025 were approved as a correct record and will be digitally signed by the Chair as soon as possible, Clerk to forward to Zoe Pick. (AP).
8	To consider matters arising from the	The 25-26 Summary of Actions was updated by the Clerk.

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	minutes and for which there is no separate agenda item. (Actions Summary)	
9	Educational Standards	<p>SS shared attainment and progress for the first term of the academic year for early years to Y6. Attendance is a real strength and RMS is a beacon of good practice which should be shared. Headteachers of other schools have been signposted to RMS to share good practice</p> <p>Governor Question (GQ) I notice one child can make a huge difference to the attendance figures and there may be reasons for absences, do you get any leeway with that? No, there is nothing we can do. DfE state that we still need to improve our fantastic attendance figures.</p> <p>GQ What are the implications of not improving? It is the first cycle on DfE meetings so we do not know yet.</p> <p>GQ Do the LA give you strategies to improve that figure? SS and JL meet termly to look at individual cases. Sometimes it is about the families needing support.</p> <p>GQ Is it 121 days or 121 sessions? 121 days and 242 sessions.</p> <p>GQ Can you do blended learning via Teams? We have offered it when a pupil had a long term illness, it is more difficult when it is the odd day.</p> <p>GQ Does it depend on when the school holidays fall? Parents sometimes add days off to school holidays, either at the start or end. We are currently tracking Friday afternoon absences.</p> <p><u>Core Subjects - Attainment</u></p>

GQ Can you talk about Y6 figures, especially writing? Comparing Autumn to Summer we can see the percentages have decreased. In Y5 NTS assessments are used but in Y6 pupils sit a practice SATS paper instead which is a step up because there is more reading. They have until May to improve.

Writing has decreased from 61% to 32%. School has implemented a new termly report to Y6 parents to share where the children are now and to encourage parents to ensure children attend Y6 Booster groups. 32% represents exactly where pupils are now against Y6 standards not where we predict they will be at the end of Year 6.. 15 more children are predicted to get to the expected standard or above in writing by the end of Year 6 and

There has been high mobility in Y6, 12 transient pupils are not predicted to get to the expected standard. Boosters are well attended, three pupils will definitely reach GD, hopefully five. Pupils are accessing boosters twice a week which they are enjoying and gives them opportunities to show their skills. SS has looked at individual targets of 8 pupils in the booster group. It is taking time for changes to the writing curriculum – Literacy Tree - to have a more positive impact on standards, SS has been advised that it can take 4-5 years for literacy tree to have an impact.

GQ Are there historic issues with Y6? This cohort only had one term in Reception before Covid so missed two terms of learning. Then were off again in Y1 and missed one term of face to face learning - although we acknowledge this is true of all pupils. RMS has lower numbers of Pupil Premium pupils so less pupils attended during the second lockdown when vulnerable pupils were attending school.

There is directed time for class teachers to work with those children at risk of not achieving the expected standard and SS has visited each class to observe writing.

GQ Y2 reading results? 70% are at Age Related Expectations or above, it was 82% last year. The school lost a TA due to budget who was providing catch up in reading and phonics from Reception to Y4.

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		<p>GQ Figures taken in Summer at the end of a full year, tests in Autumn are in a new term and pupils are still getting used to it – could that affect results? That can have an impact and teachers are also erring on the side of caution.</p> <p>GQ Do you think the NTS tests in Y5 are a helpful tool? Yes, we can see where the gaps are and teacher assessment can differ to how pupils perform in a test. We have noticed that some term's NTS tests are harder than others. A Y2 learning space is being developed to offer reading interventions.</p> <p>GQ How far below national average are we? Maths over time is improving. We are below national average for reading, writing and maths combined.</p> <p>Measures to address gaps are in place and staff are observing the quality of teaching, offering boosters and interventions, Governors support what the Headteacher and staff are trying to achieve.</p> <p>GQ What do children miss out if they attend boosters? We do not run interventions during PE or Forest School and try and move interventions so they don't miss same thing every week. Boosters are after school. We do not offer them during lunchtimes as play is important for children's wellbeing and protected at RMS.</p> <p>GQ Do parents receive help to understand pupils' work? We have videos which teach aspects of maths, English and science. Parent sessions are offered for Y6 SATS and multiplications but they are often not well attended. Staff model how to do story reading and phonics teaching at Stay and Play.</p>
10	<p>Equality Duty and Equality Objectives</p>	<p>An action from Safeguarding Visit is to ensure duty of equality. Three objectives are required, KB sent suggestions for KW to share with SS.</p> <p>GQ Have you consulted staff? Not yet. SS wanted to consult with Governors before taking the equality objectives to staff.</p>

		SS will speak to staff and bring some ideas back to the next meeting, LF to add to next agenda (AP).
11	SIP Update	The SIP has been RAG rated – red items are not yet started, amber items have started but ongoing. Whole school spelling research has not started due to time and will be implemented later in the academic year. The LA would like to see specific data targets on the SIP.
12	Pupil Premium Impact Report	<p>The impact report was uploaded before the meeting and questions were invited.</p> <p>GQ Can you feed back strengths and opportunities? Reviewing the previous year there is a lot more detail included now. We use Arbor to establish how many children attend after enrichment activities, including after school clubs and whether they are from vulnerable groups. There is a 50% reduction in persistent absence, lateness reduced and attendance improved.</p> <p>Service pupils receive extra support eg nurture sessions, 121, thrive, the army welfare service have come into school for 10 weeks to deliver draw and talk therapy for service pupils. Also using school chaplain to provide pastoral support.</p> <p>GQ Can governors have evidence of the impact next year? Data of the impact of those groups next year? Boxall assessments and reading assessment and phonics will have a start point and end point. Looked at training staff have had and we are working on certain targeted children.</p>
13	Safeguarding Report	<p>The Safeguarding Report was shared before the meeting, there has been no real change from the Autumn term. An action was to provide whole school training on lockdown (a table top exercise) and this was completed on the first day back in January. Pupils are not expected to complete the exercise as it would make some too anxious, staff are aware of what to do.</p> <p>All actions from the safeguarding monitoring visit are complete.</p>

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KMB

14	Governor Training	<p>Swaledale Alliance are offering `Introduction to Governance` training. Clerk to check and share LA training dates for new Governors (AP).</p> <p>MAST are offering two courses, on 29 January and 30 April, they are usually recorded for those Governors unable to attend.</p>
15	Governor Monitoring	<p><u>SEND – HL</u></p> <p>HL reviewed the new quality assurance programme for SEND, how staff are keeping track of actions and impact from IPM. Completed monitoring and spoken to pupils. If anything is incomplete a conversation takes place with staff. HL will visit again for another update.</p> <p>Also spoke about differentiation, parental voice available for parents evenings had been successful, pupil voice to find out barriers for children. Looked at steps Tim had set and all have been actioned.</p> <p>HL was thanked for her report and support for SEND and will share the SEND slides to all Governors (AP)</p> <p><u>Safeguarding JL</u></p> <p>Looked at the role of DSL, who needs to update their training, dates are in the diary for SCR check.</p> <p><u>Health and Safety CW</u></p> <p>CW met with ZP and caretaker, in the main the school is in good condition. There is a concern about the amount of leaves including in the boiler house and a damp patch and one or two door mats need replacing. Another check will take place this term. CW reported that ZP does a great job.</p>
16	Governance	<p>The Strategic Action Plan should be a three year rolling plan which will reflect on same titles as the SIP and link roles will be allied to areas of the SIP. KB will work up a second version two on the recent</p>

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		meeting and this will be shared to Governors. It will be a working document describing how the board works. (AP).
17	Policies	<p><u>Unchanged Policies</u> Collective Worship – KW – need to change Chair of Governors RE - KW Play - SS Prevent Risk Assessment - AW Self Harm - SL Suicidal Ideation – Message from NS boxes at top will be completed, does say staff (DDSL) GQ Is there a risk of suicide? Risk is low but never think it can be zero, pupils do sometimes say they don't want to be here. Any pupils comment shared with staff and safeguarding leads Sleep – DB</p> <p>The above policies were AGREED by Governors.</p> <p><u>Updated:</u> <u>Health and Safety Policy – CW</u> No mention of first aid in nursery</p> <p>GQ Emergency first aid trained? How often? Three yearly. GQ Anyone joining the school completes it? Yes</p> <p>GQ P14 water management folder, where is that? In office, will add that (AP).</p> <p>GQ P16 RA for manual handling? How often? Also every three years.</p> <p>GQ Offsite educational visits must be authorised by SS and governors? Will remove Governors (AP).</p>

		<p><u>Suspensions and Exclusions – JanL</u> Rewritten after recent exclusion experience and highlights further communications, keeping parents informed. Add `legal guardians` and communication to parents `in writing`. (AP).</p> <p><u>Behaviour – SS</u> Strengthened but reflects vision and values, matches the exclusions policy. CPD stepped behaviour approach has been changed. Add `in writing` and `legal guardians` all the way through as above (AP).</p> <p><u>Remote Education – KP</u> The policy details how remote learning can be implemented immediately for individuals, groups or whole school as required. Should have a list of related policies (AP).</p> <p><u>Assessment – JLa</u> Describes methods of assessment for all subjects, links to feedback policy, promotes quality first teaching. Made some alteration to opening paragraphs and aligns with new inspection toolkit. Include extra reporting to Y6s? (AP).</p> <p><u>Feedback – HL</u> Focus on live feedback, peer and teacher feedback, appendix at end. Page 3 needs a typo amendment (AP).</p> <p>GQ How do you ensure staff feedback on edits are moderated? We edit in purple pen then pupils show their book to the teacher. SS will add wording to make clearer (AP)</p> <p>Subject to the small amendments the above policies were AGREED by Governors.</p>
18	External Reports	LA Autumn Term Planning – already discussed LA Attendance Targeting Support Meeting – already discussed

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		Red Kite ECT Quality Assurance Visit – this was a positive visit, directors stated RMS are not only following statutory guidance but also go over and above.
19	Financial Updates	<p><u>Reports</u></p> <p>Financial reports were circulated before the meeting and questions were invited.</p> <p>GS There is an overspend on Lexia, what is that? A spelling and reading intervention on an iPad. Three year license.</p> <p>GS How much was tree removal? Several damaged trees were removed at a cost of £7k.</p> <p><u>SFVS</u> This needs to be submitted by the end of March and was shared before today’s meeting.</p> <p>The SFVS was AGREED by Governors.</p> <p><u>Grant Applications</u> The grant application was not submitted last year as there was not enough information around feasibility studies etc. It was planned to apply in 2026 instead, SS met with property services linked to LA and their quote was £7k. SS wrote to them to ask if LA would support financially.</p> <p>GQ Are any parents in that line of work? SS will explore (AP).</p> <p><u>Swimming</u></p>

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		<p>There are between 9 and 11 Y6 pupils who cannot swim. A private swimming pool is around £2k for hire and travel for 9 children, the sports premium could be used to pay for this. There is a trained swimming coach in school who is qualified to teach. Could we use private cars and taxis to bring costs down? JL will speak with Scotch Corner (AP) and DB shared that there is a parent with a private pool that we could approach (AP)</p> <p>Governors will then be advised further.</p>
20	Health and Safety/Premises	This was discussed earlier in the meeting.
21	Confidential Item	There were no confidential items to be discussed.
22	AOB	There was no other business to be discussed.
23	Impact. How are we enabling all in our school community to flourish?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kept costs low by ratifying a number of budgets • Monitored educational standards • Health and safety of site discussed • Approved Pupil Premium report • Approved various policies • Two new governors strengthen the Governing Body • Considered safeguarding of pupils • Challenge on data • Equality duty and equality objectives <p>CW advised that the Eco group will attend an event at the end of February in Richmond town hall, there will be a raffle and tombola. Preparations are underway for Mayfest, last year 5k visitors to the castle, there are plans for maypole dancing at RMS. CW was thanked by Governors.</p>

25	Dates for 25/26	<u>Dates for 25/26</u> Spring Term 9th March 2026 (Finance/Work Scrutiny) Summer Term Plus one hour meeting for finance (hybrid) Summary of outturn and how it informs the Start Budget date on 11 th May 18th May 2026 (Educational Performance) 22nd June 2026 (Ethos, vision and values/Round Robin)
There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.50pm		

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