

**Meeting of Full Governing Board
16th March 2026
4.30pm in School Library**

AGENDA

Governors:	Mick Baker, Sarah Bakhtiari (Chair), Rob Bradshaw, Alice Duvernois, Eleanor Fagan, Emma Hill, Matt Hillier, Alice Killip, Matt Nott, Eugenie Teasley, Neal Young
Officers:	Clare Doran (Clerk)
School:	Sara Bailey (SB), Richard Baker (RB), Cassie Dale (CD)

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
1	<p>Introduction</p> <p>a) Welcome The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Alice Duvernois who was joining as the new Parent Governor. The Chair thanked Rob Bradshaw for taking on the role of Strategic Champion for the meeting.</p> <p>b) Apologies for absence Apologies for absence received from Jessica Verdugo. All other members present.</p> <p>c) Declarations of interest There were no declarations of interest in relation to agenda items.</p>	
2	<p>Last Meeting Dated 2nd February 2026</p> <p>a) Approval of Minutes The Full Governing Board reviewed and approved 10 pages of minutes from the meeting held on 2nd February 2026. The Chair signed the minutes as confirmation of their accuracy.</p> <p>b) Actions and Matters Arising Not Included Elsewhere on Agenda Actions arising were either complete, in progress or on the agenda for future meetings.</p>	
3	<p>Proposed updates to KCSIE The Head provided the Governing Board with an update on the ongoing government consultation on Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). The consultation was expected to conclude within the next month, with likely implementation from September 2026.</p>	
4	<p>Chair's Update</p>	

The Chair provided a further update on the recent Governor Survey, following on from the feedback given by the Head at the previous meeting in her absence. Seven out of twelve Governors responded, and overall feedback was very positive. All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that meetings were well structured, focused on strategic priorities, and that time was used effectively. Governors also reported feeling comfortable contributing, that contributions were treated fairly, and that discussions were respectful and collaborative, with differing views handled appropriately. One area of challenge was identified in relation to the balance between support and challenge provided by the Governors. It was noted that this should remain an area of focus, with an emphasis on maintaining the role of Governors as “critical friends,” ensuring that challenge was constructive and supportive rather than adversarial.

Additional feedback highlighted strengths including the pace and relevance of meetings, shared discussion, and adherence to agendas. Areas for development included maintaining tighter time management and improving clarity about whether items were for discussion or decision. It was suggested that indicating at the start of an item who wished to contribute may support more effective discussion, as well as allocating an approximate time for each agenda item ahead of the meeting.

The Chair thanked the Governors for completing the survey and noted that the feedback would be used to inform future practice.

The Chair also updated the Governors on the recently published white paper ‘Every Child Achieving and Thriving’, which included proposals relating to collaboration between schools and the longer-term direction of the school system. The Chair advised that it signalled the possibility that over time all schools may move into academy structures.

Following the publication, Brighton and Hove City Council had written to maintained school headteachers and chairs of governors outlining its initial response. The council had indicated that, if the system were to move towards universal academisation, it would explore establishing a city-based Local Authority School Trust. The intention would be to retain a strong local education system rooted in Brighton and Hove rather than schools joining larger multi academy trusts operating across wider geographical areas.

The Chair advised that the government had opened a 12-week consultation alongside the white paper, which closed on 18 May 2026. During this period schools, governing bodies and other stakeholders were able to submit responses, and the council had indicated that it would be engaging with schools locally to gather views and consider the potential implications for the city. The Chair confirmed that she would continue to monitor developments and update the governing body as further information becomes available.

The Head advised a meeting in relation to this, was due to take place on Wednesday morning at which primary and secondary schools had been invited.

	<p>Finally, the Local Authority governor provided an update on Ofsted under the new framework, following recent local authority briefings. It was noted that inspections remained intensive, with a continued strong focus on governance. Key messages included the importance of governors being confident in understanding school data (including attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour), the school's context, and being able to demonstrate impact rather than simply describing actions. The importance of safeguarding knowledge was also highlighted.</p> <p>The Local Authority governor advised that support was available from the local authority, including preparation sessions and mock questioning, and it was suggested that this could be incorporated into the next strategy day. The Local Authority governor advised that she would send her notes around to all governors.</p>	<p>LA governor</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Head's Report /Update</p> <p>The Head provided an update on key school developments, with a particular focus on Year 11, attendance, and overall school performance. It was noted that Year 11 students had recently completed a second round of mock examinations and would remain in school until the May half term, rather than taking early study leave. This change aimed both to support students with structured revision during the exam period and to mitigate the negative impact that early study leave had historically had on attendance figures, which remained a key concern, particularly in the context of Ofsted inspections.</p> <p>The Head highlighted a 41% increase in first-choice applications for the following academic year, reflecting the positive impact of the school's outreach efforts. However, concerns were raised regarding longer-term pupil number projections across the local authority, with a noted decline in the overall number of school-aged children due to lower birth rates, cost-of-living pressures, and rising levels of home education.</p> <p>Attainment and progress were reported as strong, with a consistent track record over recent years, including for disadvantaged and SEND students. However, attendance continued to be the school's main limiting factor. While attendance remained above local authority averages, it was below national figures across all year groups.</p> <p>Governors noted that this reflected a broader challenge across the city but continued to pose a particular concern for the school. The Head confirmed that the school was actively reviewing its attendance strategy, including whole-staff engagement and targeted support for disadvantaged students. It was emphasised that attendance was closely linked to outcomes, making its improvement a key priority.</p> <p>Governors discussed the importance of maintaining a strategic focus on attendance and the importance for the school to be able to demonstrate testing and evaluation of strategies that had been put in place, in order to advise the governors on the impact of the interventions and what was and was not working. It was agreed that a review of the targets would also be beneficial to ensure they were sufficiently challenging. The discussion also highlighted the shared responsibilities of parents and teachers in maintaining attendance and the importance in ensuring SEND pupils' needs are met to encourage consistent school engagement. It was agreed that Loretta Lloyd would</p>	<p>Head/</p>

	<p>present at the next Full Governing Body meeting and the Head would provide appropriate guidance for the relevant content to be included for the governors.</p> <p>Updates were also provided on staffing; the SENCO was due to retire at the end of the academic year, and the Exams Officer had also left. Both positions were being advertised, with the current EVC Coordinator, who had prior experience in exams, temporarily covering the Exams Officer role to ensure stability during the exam period.</p> <p>The Head briefly addressed the budget, highlighting that the benchmarking indicated the school remained within the limits of comparable schools. It was noted that SEND costs had increased by £1 million over the past seven years, continuing to place pressure on resources.</p>	<p>Loretta Lloyd</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Business Group</p> <p>a) Meeting of 2nd March 2026 Notes from the meeting were included in the pack for information only.</p> <p>b) Budget Monitoring Reports Outturns for December and January were included in the pack with notes for information only.</p> <p>c) First Draft Budget The first draft budget, which had been submitted for initial review by the Council was included within the pack for review. A final version prior to submission on 15 May will be presented to the board on 11 May.</p> <p>The Business Manager advised that the school was in a strong position. Some expected costs, such as legal fees for the ski trip, had been deferred until the following year, giving a slightly higher carry-forward than initially projected. This allowed the school some flexibility and “room” in the budget to plan for improvements and investments in the school environment, even within the constraints of the PFI arrangements, which typically required work to be done “like for like.” It was agreed that modest spending to modernise facilities would have a positive impact on the school community and student experience.</p> <p>The Business Group Chair advised that the Business Group had agreed a 5% increase to the canteen costs across all items, which would come into effect from September to allow time for communication to families. It was noted that the prices had not risen for 3 years and therefore costs needed to rise but the 5% ensured that the school remained competitive compared with other schools. It was agreed however that canteen costs would be reviewed annually going forward to avoid the need for a higher rise.</p> <p>The Business Group Chair also advised that the Business Group had also reviewed the Risk Register and asked the Head to include the justification for needing an alarm system for locking down the school within it, and to also include litigation risk and AI risk within the register.</p>	

	<p>The Business Group Chair said that he also wanted to highlight the approach to staffing and advised that over recent years, staff numbers had increased to reflect the changing student profile, particularly in support staff and SEND provision, whilst ensuring that senior leadership team's expenditure remained efficient, particularly given that SLT members also carried teaching responsibilities. The Business Group recognised and commended this efficiency and felt it was an important message for the Full Board to hear.</p> <p>The Governors raised questions about financial risk, particularly regarding items on the register marked as high or medium risk and whether these should be budgeted for. The Business Manager clarified that while certain known costs, such as legal fees, were included in the budget, contingency for unknown risks was limited under local authority guidance. The Business Manager confirmed that capital risks under the PFI contract, such as major building maintenance, were the responsibility of the local authority rather than the school. The Head confirmed that mitigation strategies were in place to manage these risks, even if they could not be directly budgeted for.</p> <p>The governors also discussed succession planning and noted that key staff, including the Head, represent significant operational risk if they were absent or needed to be replaced. It was suggested that the risk register should more explicitly reflect these vulnerabilities and the level of risk be marked as medium instead of low. It was agreed that it was important that plans were in place to manage these risks, acknowledging that replacing senior staff took time and careful planning.</p>	
7	<p>School Policies</p> <p>a) Staff Disciplinary/Grievance Procedures</p> <p>AGREEMENT – the Full Governing Board approved the Staff Disciplinary/Grievance Procedures as presented.</p> <p>It was noted that it may be helpful to have a flow chart to show the procedures more clearly. It was agreed the Deputy Head would feed this back to the Local Authority.</p> <p>b) Supporting Students with Medical Conditions</p> <p>AGREEMENT – the Full Governing Board approved the Support Students with Medical Conditions policy as presented.</p>	Deputy Head
8	<p>Governance</p> <p>a) Roles and Responsibilities</p> <p>AGREEMENT – the Full Governing Board agreed for Neal Young to join the Business Group.</p> <p>Eugenie Teasley confirmed she was happy to remain on the Head's Appraisal Panel with the Chair. Alice Duvernois agreed to be the link governor for PE and Dance and Mick Baker for STEM. There still remained a gap for SEND, however it was agreed that</p>	

	<p>there was potential for the new parent governor to adopt this role, considering his experience in education.</p> <p>b) Vice Chair</p> <p>The Chair informed the governors that Emma Morey, the former Vice Chair, was no longer on the board. The Chair confirmed that they were in discussions with the parent who received the second-highest votes in the recent parent election to see if they would join the governing body, however there was still a requirement to replace the role of Vice Chair. Governors were invited to volunteer for the role of Vice Chair and were encouraged to speak to the Chair or Head if they were interested. It was noted that a vote to appoint the new Vice Chair would take place via email before the next Full Governing Body meeting, and any questions could be raised outside of the meeting.</p>	
9	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Rob Bradshaw reported that he had attended an anti-racism training session at the Friendship House, which he found to be very valuable, and he would share the associated resources. He also noted that the Local Authority had queried the source of the school's anti-racism training, as it had not been commissioned through them. The Head confirmed he would respond to this.</p> <p>The Clerk would arrange a strategy day and circulate potential dates to governors.</p>	<p>Rob Bradshaw</p> <p>Clerk</p>