

Meeting of Full Governing Board
13th July 2026
4.30pm in School Library

MINUTES

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

Rob Bradshaw joined part way through agenda item 3(b). Eugenie Teasley joined part way through agenda item 5. Cassie Dale left after agenda item 3(b).

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Actions</u>
1	Introduction a) Welcome The Chair thanked the Governors for their commitment, time, expertise, and voluntary contribution throughout the year. On behalf of the Governing Board, the Chair also formally thanked all staff for their dedication and commitment, recognising their significant contribution to the school and the positive impact of their work on students, often going above and beyond to provide the best possible educational experience. b) Apologies for absence Apologies for absence received from Neal Young. Jessica Verdugo not in attendance. c) Declarations of interest There were no declarations of interest in relation to agenda items.	
2	Last Meeting Dated 11th May 2026 a) Approval of Minutes The Full Governing Board reviewed and approved 6 pages of minutes from the meeting held on 11th May 2026. The Chair signed the minutes as confirmation of their accuracy. b) Actions and Matters Arising Not Included Elsewhere on Agenda Actions arising were either included in other items on the agenda or on the agenda for future meetings.	
3	Chair's Update a) Smart phone policy for Year 7s Governors received an update on the school's mobile phone policy following correspondence from current and prospective parents, which had been circulated to the Governing Board. This included a Freedom of Information (FOI) request seeking information on the evidence, consultation and governance relating to the adoption of the current Yondr pouch policy, and the decision not to adopt a 'brick' phone-only policy for Year 7 students. Governors noted that the principal national development since the approval of the policy in February had been the revised Department for Education guidance on mobile phones in schools, which became statutory in June 2026 and applies from September 2026. The guidance requires	

schools to have regard to an expectation that students should not use or have access to mobile phones throughout the school day, while allowing schools discretion over how this is implemented and for appropriate exceptions. The Board noted that the school's current arrangements remained consistent with this guidance.

Governors received an update on the operation of the Yondr pouch system. The current system had significantly reduced phone use during the school day leading to less classroom disruption and inappropriate use of devices. Governors heard that the system was actively monitored through targeted spot checks and Yondr pouches were considered to provide a more consistent and enforceable approach than previous arrangements.

Governors considered the themes raised in the correspondence, including the evidence underpinning the policy, the consultation undertaken during its development, safeguarding considerations, and the school's approach in comparison with other local schools. The discussion included student safety when travelling to and from school, the use of digital travel passes and payment systems, operational practicality, staff workload, and the importance of supporting students to develop responsible digital behaviours.

Governors noted emerging UCL research, which emphasised that mobile phone policies were most effective where they were practical, consistently enforceable, and maintained positive relationships between staff and students. Governors considered that the school's Yondr pouch system reflected these principles, having been implemented consistently and embedded within the school's culture, with clear expectations that supported positive relationships between staff and students while maintaining a smartphone-free environment during the school day.

In considering the correspondence, Governors reflected on three key questions:

- whether any new evidence had emerged since the policy had been approved in February;
- whether any new safeguarding, legal or operational issues had been identified; and
- whether there was sufficient reason to request a further review of the policy.

Governors concluded that no material new evidence or issues had been identified that would have warranted revisiting the decision made in February. The Governing Board remained satisfied that the policy was educationally sound, operationally workable, legally compliant, and in the best interests of students and the wider school community. Governors also agreed that the rationale for, and operation of, the policy should continue to be clearly communicated to prospective parents.

b) Update on EHRC Guidance and Local Communications

Governors received an update following correspondence from PSHE Brighton regarding recent legal developments relating to single-sex spaces and social transition in schools. The correspondence raised governance, safeguarding and equality issues in light of recent court judgments and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) guidance.

Governors noted the Local Authority briefing, which confirmed that PSHE Brighton was not affiliated with Brighton & Hove City Council and did not provide official PSHE advice, training or resources. The briefing further advised that an advocacy campaign had encouraged members of the public to contact schools regarding toilet and changing room policies.

The Chair reminded Governors that the school's policies would continue to be reviewed in line with legislative and statutory developments, taking advice from the Local Authority and other appropriate professional sources.

The Headteacher updated Governors on preparations for the revised *Keeping Children Safe in Education* guidance taking effect from September 2026. Work was underway to ensure

	compliance, including updates to changing and toilet facilities, revised arrangements for single-sex provision and overnight accommodation, and appropriate support for affected students and their families. Governors were satisfied that appropriate work was underway to ensure continued legal compliance and effective safeguarding.	
4	Head's Report/Update The Headteacher updated the Governors on the following key points: ● 'The Difference': the school's participation in the three-year inclusion programme, had begun, with an evaluation of attendance, exclusions, wellbeing and inclusion provision, identifying key areas for development. The school's inclusion work has also been recognised through a feature in 'Schools Week'. ● Year 11 students had now completed their examinations, with analysis to follow once results were published. ● Early tracking information for Year 10 suggested performance was broadly similar but slightly below the current Year 11 cohort; however, it was too early to draw firm conclusions. ● Student numbers remained at 1631 with some movement in student numbers due to families relocating. Year 7 intake remained below the planned capacity of 330 due to movement of students between areas. ● Building works: two large boilers had been removed from the Sports Hall area, with discussions taking place around removal of the unused showers to reduce any potential ongoing legionella risk. ● Staffing updates: the Safeguarding Officer was leaving the school to pursue a career change outside education. The new Deputy SENCO had been appointed from September following a successful internal application and a new Head of Year 7 had also been appointed. ● Attendance: whole-school attendance was currently impacted by the Year 11 attendance reporting after May half-term. Attendance is therefore higher across the school than the overall figure indicates, though still remained below national average. Attendance was a wider challenge across the city and remained a key Ofsted focus area. ● Budget: supply costs were forecast to be above budget owing to long-term staff illness. Teachers' pay would be increased by 3.5% from September and 3% the following year. Schools were required to fund the first 1% out of their income. ● Safeguarding: ongoing work around misogyny and respectful relationships taking place with changes to the PSHE curriculum. Misogyny remained a complex national issue. Further exploration of possible support, including through the Local Authority, was suggested.	
5	Business Group a) Meeting of 22nd June 2026 The Chair of the Business Group and Business Manager reported the following key points: ● The current financial position remained positive, with no significant concerns identified. ● The three-year budget outlook had improved, particularly following confirmation of additional funding towards the increased teachers' pay award. ● Catering price increases had been communicated to parents. Future reviews would aim to introduce smaller, more regular increases. Governors noted potential changes to school meal requirements from September 2027. ● A regular HR report had been introduced as a standing agenda item, covering staffing, wellbeing and wider organisational matters. ● Governors continued to monitor the PFI contract, particularly in relation to its eventual	

	conclusion and securing the best outcomes for the school. • An updated survey of the outstanding masonry works had identified no immediate risks, with the required works expected to proceed during the summer. Progress would continue to be monitored, with the school funding the works should any further delays be experienced. • The risk register had been updated and would now be reviewed twice yearly. Attendance remained a key area of focus, with further detail on risk mitigation to be included. b) Approval of Terms of Reference and Schemes of Delegation APPROVAL - the Terms of Reference and Schemes of Delegation, as presented by the Business Group, were approved by the Full Governing Board.	MH
6	Governance a) Agenda/Meeting Dates for 2026/27 A proposed agenda plan for 2026/27 was discussed with the following proposed changes: • Inclusion of the standing items under the Head's report agenda item. • An additional standing item for FGB meetings 'Working party/link Governor feedback'. • Updates on 'The Difference' programme to be included in the FGB3 agenda. • The most appropriate mechanism for including SEND within the agenda to be agreed. SEND link governor (Emma Hill) to provide a list of proposed key questions to be addressed in this area. • Provisional timetable for the Strategy Day included. The Headteacher to prepare a final plan for circulation to the Governors. • Consider the most effective mechanism for including LA updates. Clerk to finalise the agenda plan prior to September 2026. b) Roles and Responsibilities for 2026/27 AGREED - the roles and responsibilities for 2026/27 were agreed as presented by the Full Governing Board. c) Standing Orders for 2026/27 APPROVAL - the Standing Orders were approved as presented by the Full Governing Board.	EH MH EF/SLB CD
7	Any Other Business Governors received an update from the Local Authority covering finance, inclusion, attendance, governance and SEND reform: • School finances across the city were improving, with additional funding supporting mainstream inclusion and SEND transformation. • Increased scrutiny on suspensions, exclusions, off-site placements and student movement from July 2026, with governing boards expected to monitor trends closely and ensure decisions remained in pupils' best interests.	

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Increased emphasis on inclusion, school culture, attendance and effective governance, with governing boards expected to understand data trends, local context and demonstrate appropriate strategic oversight.● Importance of future leadership succession planning highlighted.● Update on SEND reforms, which aimed to strengthen early identification, mainstream support, workforce development and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. | |
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Dated:

Signed by Chair of Governors: