**RICHARD TAYLOR CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**MINUTES OF LG COMMITTEE MEETING: Summer 2025**

**Held on Tuesday 3rd June 2025 at 7pm**

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| Governing Body Core Functions  Ensuring Clarity of Vision, Ethos and Strategic Direction.  Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff.  Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent. | |
| *Present*  Andrew Symonds (AS), Jan Johnson (JJ), Philip Richardson (PR), Niki Hutchinson (NH), Lucy Shaw (LS), Netty Young (AY), Lynsey Barraclough (LB), Hannah Ruddy (HR), Martin Whincup (MW), Cath Phelan (CP)  In attendance: Hannah Manwaring (HM) – clerk, Emma Crisell (EC), Jane Goodwin (JG), Claire Dowson (CD), Caroline Fox-Robinson (CFR)   1. *Prayers*   Jan Johnson led the governors in prayer.  AS: welcome to Jane, Trust CEO, and Claire, Finance Officer for the Trust, here to provide an update on the budget.   1. *Apologies*   Robert Bath, Steve Scarisbrick both absent.   1. *Declarations of pecuniary interest*   None   1. *Budget update with Claire Dowson from YCST*   CD: Thank you for all being here. We are starting with the second set of figures which is in detail. As a Trust we are running a scrutiny on Richard Taylor because the school is atypical in relation to the other primaries that are in the Trust.  Salary costs at RTS are above those in other trust schools. This relates specifically to spending on TAs who support pupils with ECHP. Detailed comparison of spending in other areas demonstrates that in other areas the school is efficient in spending.  AS: the Finance governors are aware of this; SLT costs, energy, TAs, Admin costs, have all been scrutinised. Where we spend more is on support staff. This is because we have a high number of high needs children and EHCPs.  EC: there are additional children who COULD have an EHCP, for whom we haven’t applied (the process takes such a long time), but those children do get support.  JG: the challenge to you is to stay on budget AND support pupils.  LS: is our application process for EHCPs quick enough? Could Emily Styles get more support so that there is funding provided more quickly from the outcome of EHCP requests?  AS: Emily has been given additional non-contact time to address the backlog of ECHP applications.  JG: we have found that the challenge with banding is across all schools. Emily Styles is doing an audit activity around this as part of her work with the Trust this year.  AS: we have an excellent SENDCo network who are experts at submitting detailed ECHP funding applications. Essentially, we are working with the LA, who in many cases seek to provide the lowest banding of need despite the evidence provided. When the school then seeks to challenge the banding, the process can take several years.  JJ: we are also fielding the expectations of families, not just the needs of the children.  EC: in terms of budget and support staff, we have focused on supply costs. We don’t get supply in, if we can cover it ourselves within the school.  JG: how is the school performing against the budget?  CD: there is a deficit of -£60K. My successor will continue to monitor this (CD is leaving the Trust in August)  AS: The school and Trust are fully aware that this deficit has been impacted by significant staffing absence in the catering team and Yr3 class. The school has no insurance to cover catering absence. This will not be a problem moving forward as catering responsibility has been transferred to Aspens.  CD: Catering has been outsourced so there are a lot less losses coming your way.  CFR: we are looking at procurement, resources, books and how we can make savings to reduce costs. If we can increase income from parents, then we are looking at this also through parent donations. We have lost the lease to FunClub over the summer.  HR: are they not contractually obliged?  CFR: we were out of contract. The use of the school is part of the agreement. They continue to use for wrap around care.  AS: The school has a new partnership with Harrogate Town FC who will be running coaching sessions over the summer.  JJ: in relation to staffing, a pay award has been given?  CD: Yes, to teaching staff from September 2025. We have had to find 3.5% in the budget to cover this and there is some funding for this.  JG: at the best we would break even.  AS: A three-four year deficit has, in his experience, always looked negative, there are so many factors that we cannot yet know that may impact on the budget over 4 years.  AS: Outlined ongoing funding discussions with RTET who have mead clear that they won’t fund things that they consider to be what the Government should be funding.  EC: gave the example: we needed cover for interventions and the RTET didn’t want to cover this as they thought that it should be already covered by Government.  JJ: there is a member of the RTET who sits in the board of YCST board of trustees.  \*This was acknowledged by JG  MW: how much of a gap would the RTET money plug?  AS: Up to £5,000  HR: are the grounds for refusal explained each time?  AS: yes. What we want to achieve is a way in which the school can work in partnership with RTET to access and use funds for the benefit of all children.   1. *Review of minutes*   No comments or questions.  AS: we have completed a successful move for the kitchen to Aspens.   1. *Review of action plan*   AS: we have had positive comments in the staff survey especially from new staff.  JJ: the skills-based audit for Governors is to be included in a research project for Notts University.   1. *Correspondence*   No correspondence to share.   1. *Academy Update*   JG: I appreciate you have rejigged this meeting to accommodate me.  PowerPoint presentation shared with mission stamen for YCST, vision and values, as well as strategic plans. One of the strategic priorities relates to community and climate change. JG recognised the work of RTS in this movement.  There are 4 schools in the pipeline for September.  At the core of our central offer is school improvement.  HR: if the school has a contract that needs renewing, where do they go?  JG: Finance; we are working on contracts and renewals to make sure that none fall through.     1. *EVERY checking service*   AS: we have received no formal complaints this year. We get on well with our parents and parents also know where they can go if there issues, they want to raise. The Trust are undergoing an interna audit re Educational Visits policy.  CFR: we have found many limitations within Evolve which we will run through with Laura Claringbold when she visits us this month; focus of visit is to accompany HM whilst entering a trip onto Arbor.  **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**   1. *AS to answer questions on Head teachers Report including School Development Plan update*   AS: we are mid-season with testing. Thanks to all those Governors who helped with the SATS.  LS: what of the low attendance in Year 2 and 5?  AS: This was impacted by specific families within the cohort which the school is working with outside agencies to support.  *Child Protection*  AS: updates on this are included in the HT report. We are regularly updating CPOMs with safeguarding concerns. We are also dealing with issues around the use of phones and Whatsapp with Years 5/6.  *SENCo report including new statutory duties for governing bodies*  AS: a report will be sent to Governors in due course. We are very blessed to have Emily Styles as SENCO. She provides an invaluable support network for parents.   1. *Governor Visits and Monitoring Reports. Including Chair Report to the Trust*   AS: working party action plans are on Gov Hub.  JJ: can we soon invite along Matthew Hunter, the incumbent at St John’s?  AS: absolutely.   1. *Governor preparation for SIAMS inspection. Understanding the role of governors.*   AS: it is important that we ALL know what our vision is. Our values are strong: R, T, S. What this means in terms of outcomes is: oversubscribed, staff retention, good attendance compared to national averages, Community engagement. RE curriculum has been scrutinised by Kathryn Watson, RE lead. Adaptive teaching addresses ALL children flourishing.  Can all member of the school express understanding of spirituality? We are looking to consistently provide times of reflection in worship.  Governors to look strategically at how we can monitor effectiveness of Christian vision. IS what the school is showing/doing living our Christian vision?  Governors to sign up for a visit this term.  JJ: one of the problems that Governors have is working full time and also getting into school. Time off is difficult.  AS: we are drafting a letter for employers to support Governors in this.   1. *Long Service Presentation to Mr S Scarisbrick at the end of his term of Office*   Mr Scarisbrick was absent so this will happen at the Year 6 leavers service instead.   1. *A.O.B*   Thanks given to CD for her work within the Trust and supporting us at RTS.   1. *Date of next meeting: Tuesday 10th June 2025 7pm*   Dates to be checked and set in line with Trust dates.   1. *Statement of Impact*   The Local Governing Committee has continued to work to ensuring that our Christian vision ‘That all feel safe, loved and flourish as children of God’ is a living reality.  They have demonstrated a string and realistic focus on ways in which the challenges presented by the budget are address in a way which continues to ensure all children remain safe. They have looked at the development of our RE curriculum with a focus on ensuring all children can flourish academically. They have reviewed the way in which EVOLVE is used to ensure every child is safe whilst on educational visits.  The LGC have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the shared values of both the school and the Trust.  The meeting finished at 9.05pm |  |
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