St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation

Minutes of the 19th May 2025 FGB (Full Governing Board Meeting) at St Johns

Key: Action **Q/C** Question/Comment **R** Response For info and/or document reference on Governor Hub

Present	**Apologies:**
1. Mike Burroughs MB (Chair) (Foundation Governor) 2. Anna Burt AB (Parent Governor) 3. Lee-Ann Gibbons LAG (Foundation Governor) 4. Keith Harvey (Ex Officio Governor) 5. Will Hunter Smart (Ex-officio Foundation Governor) 6. Barbara McKenzie BM (Foundation Governor) 7. James Spillings JS (Parent Governor) 8. Duane Turner (Foundation Governor) 9. Julia Ward (Staff Governor) 10. Sian Williams SW (Vice-Chair) (LA Governor) 11. Magdalen Wind-Mozley MWM (Foundation Governor) Chrys Healy (Clerk) ChH	12. Caroline Chichester CC (Foundation Governor) 13. Philip Evans PE (Foundation Governor) 14. Rev Gary Collin GC (Ex-officio Foundation Governor) 15. Clive Loveless CL (Associate Member) **Absent:** 16. Gabrielle McGarvey (Co opted Governor) 17. Claire Hall CH (Co opted Governor) **In attendance** 18. Louise Thornton-Allen LTA (Associate Member) 19. Katie Blakemore 18 governors currently in post (the quorum is 9) **Meeting was quorate. Duration of meeting:** 7.00 – 8.35pm

1.	**Welcome** MB welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them all for coming to the scheduled FGB meeting. **Confidentiality:** Governors were reminded that the items discussed were confidential. All documents were for public view unless stated otherwise by this meeting. **Apologies** were received and accepted from CC, GC, PE, and MB confirmed that the meeting was quorate and introduced JS, the new Parent Governor, everyone present introduced themselves and explained what type of governor they were and what roles they had. **Declarations/Conflicts of interests** JS's wife works at St Johns. ChH clerks for Victoria Park Nursery School & Family Hub. **Chairs Discussion points:** **Resignation:** MB advised that Rod King had resigned on 8.4.25 and PE had advised he would be standing down as a governor at the end of the current academic year. Governors expressed their disappointment and thanked both for serving on the board and their support and help they had given. **Succession planning:** SW had advised she would be willing put herself forward as the Chair of Governors and DT had advised he would be willing put himself forward as the Vice Chair of Governors, but all governors were asked to consider if they would like to take on these roles. (Elections to be held at the 14.7.25 FGB meeting). SW and DT were planning to have 1:1 meetings with all governors this term before the end of the academic year. **Governors in School Day 10.7.25** DT was co ordinating this and was looking for governors to volunteer. KH explained that this was a good opportunity for governors to spend time in school and could be either in the morning or the afternoon. WHS explained this wasn't a formal observation but just a visit with opportunities to talk to both children and staff. **Action:** Governors to advise DT if they could attend the Governors in School Day on 10.7.25	**All govs** asap
2.	**Minutes of previous meetings** held on 31st March FGB (2.1 D1 FGB minutes 31.3.25 copy) and 29th April 2025 Extra FGB (2.2 D1 Extra FGB minutes 29.4.25 copy) **All Approved** **Matters Arising/Outstanding Actions** [1]**Federation Development Plan Action:** KH to check latest version and send to clerk to signpost for governors. **Done**	

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	[2]**Governor Safeguarding Training** **Action:** Governors to ensure they had done their safeguarding training by December. ChH explained that currently she couldn't access combined reports of governor training on Governor Hub. ChH can now access a combined document regarding what training governors have done once they have updated the information onto Governor Hub.	**All govs** 14.7.25
	[3]**Academisation Working Party:** **Action:** MB to check with if other governors wanted to be involved with Academisation Working Party. KH explained this area had gone a bit quiet, but currently John Rankin were looking to Academise. Governors agreed to remove from the action list but keep an eye on the situation in the future.	
	[4] **Governor Hub Annual Declarations.** All done except GC's, Code of Conduct Governing Board and WBC and Declarations of Interest. **Action:** MWM meeting with GC on Wednesday when they would both be in school and would remind him to do. **Ongoing**	**GC/ MWM** 21.5.25
	[5]**SEF** (School Self-Evaluation Form) **Action:** SW to check that the Governance Plan aligned with the SEF and the FDP. **Ongoing**	
	[6]**PREVENT training** Governors advised this needed to be done every 3 years as per the school staff. ChH had resent the link to all governors on 1.4.25. **Action:** Check at the 14.7.25 FGB. **Ongoing**	**All govs** 14.7.25
	[7]**Effective Governance** Effective Governance group had reviewed the current committee structure and decided to keep in place for now. **Done**	
	[8]**Religious Education Curriculum V1.1** **Action:** Bring forward Religious Education Curriculum V1.1 when new syllabus published. LTA had been to relevant training but still awaiting publication of new information. **Ongoing**	**KH** asap
	[9]**Governor Skills Audit** Most governors have completed. **Action:** ChH to email the document to GC, CH and SD, once his police checks are confirmed, and ask them to fill in asap and before the end of June 2025. **Ongoing** ChH resent by email to GC and CH on 22.5.25.	**GC/CH** 30.6 25
3.	**Governance** **3a: Membership** Awaiting police checks regarding Santanu De as the other Parent Governor. SD had advised ChH they should be in by the beginning of June 2025. **Staff Governor Elections:** No response to staff governor elections request. KB agreed to take on the role until the beginning of the 2025/26 Academic Year when elections could be held again. **Approved** **3b: SJSN Federation Governance Plan 15.3.25** (3b StJStN Federation Governance Plan 2024-27 V4 15.3.25) DT would mentor JS and when SD was confirmed, as a parent governor, SW would mentor him. When a new Staff Governor was appointed MWM would mentor them. SW asked governors to pass on any comments to her. The Federation Governance Plan was in line with both the current FDP (Federation Development Plan) and the SEF, which had a new SIAMS section. KH advised that the FDP would have a complete overhaul in the next academic year. SW said that Federation Governance Plan needed to be RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated and it would go to the last FGB of the academic year (14.7.25). This would inform the new one which would be in place for the beginning of the next academic year and align with the new FDP. KH advised that the FDP was for 2024 – 27 but things changed significantly so updates would be necessary. SW said it was important that the 2 documents were aligned and asked governors if they had any thoughts or questions and also suggested they contact her if they did. **Q** Governors asked if the RAG rating for where the vision was taking us was for now ? **R** SW said this would be for the next academic year.	

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	3c: Governors Activity Reports Folder (3c 7 ActivityReports/Learning Walks) SW explained these had all gone to the 29.4.25 S&C and were included in the paperwork for this meeting as a point of information for the non S&C governors, they included the Link Governor Reports as well. SW reminded governors who had still not had their Link Meetings with staff to organise them for the beginning of the second half of the Summer Term 2025 and avoid the end of July. SW also expressed huge thanks and appreciation to governors who had done their Link Visits. **3d: Governors Appraisal Form** (3d Governor Appraisal 2024 25 blank V3.docx) This had been included with the paperwork for information. When SW and DT would have their 1:1 meetings with the governors it would help inform their conversations. DT would be meeting with AB, CC, GC, LAG, CL and SW would be meeting with CH, GB, BM, JW and WHS. **Q** Governors asked if these meetings would be an opportunity to raise issues ? **R** SW said it would be and explained that the self appraisal exercise was an opportunity for the whole board to bring forward ideas 1:1. **Q** Governors when this was last done ? **R** SW explained it was with the previous Chair of Governors and Vice Chair of Governors. Re doing would help inform the new governance plan. The Governors Activity Schedule had also been discussed at the 29.4.25 S&C. **3e: Governors Skills Audit** Most governors had completed and returned. ChH to re send the blank document to GC, CH and SD, once his police checks are received, and ask them to fill in asap and before the end of June 2025. **f: Feedback Staff Survey** MWM, passed on CC's apologies and highlighted the following; • There had been three times as many responses and they had been a lot more positive • 40 responses = 50% of the staff • Staff were asked to complete the survey they didn't have to • Area to check was 50% felt they didn't have time to complete their tasks • Consultation re changes question: 8 responded - Always, 6 - Disagreed, 2 - Strongly Disagreed, this was a more positive response than last time • The comments section had positive responses • MWM felt there was room for improvement but things were not getting worse. SW would check with CC and see if staff could be informed of governor's appreciation of them completing the survey in a staff bulletin. **Q** Governors asked whether the school had been able to address some of the issues raised in the last survey ? **R** KH explained this was difficult as they had been due to the redundancies that had to be made. Governors asked whether they should do a termly staff survey, KH felt possibly not, but maybe discuss at staff meetings. **C** Governors noted that staff questionnaires were more frequent in some settings 3 to 4 times a year and there was 60 – 80% staff uptake. Governors discussed whether to do staff surveys termly and noted the issue regarding lack of time to fulfil tasks was for support staff as they had less time allocated to their tasks. Governors felt it was useful to give staff a voice and it was an opportunity to get feedback and gave governors a barometer to the situation. Governors agreed to the staff survey being done on a termly basis as a trial next year, overseen by the Well Being Governor, and thanked MWM for the update.	
4.	**Committee/Working Party Reports** draft committee minutes on Governor Hub **4a: AC** (Admissions Committee) (D2 AC Mins 3 3 25) The scheduled 19.5.25 meeting hadn't been needed so it had been cancelled. **4b: FC** (Finance Committee) 12.5.25 (D2 FC Mins 12.5.25) DT highlighted the following: **Carry Forward:** The current expected carry forward was better than expected, information on some government grants were received after the budgets had to be submitted and CB was doing the best she	

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could regarding the budget in the circumstances. Governors were planning to spend more time on reviewing funding at the 7.7.25 FC.
Capital Expenditure: Work hadn't started yet on the new heat pump but bigger radiators were being installed.
Capital Funding:
St Nics toilets £73,128 funding had been approved which was sufficient to replace the St Nics toilets. The report on the quotes received for the work were included with the paperwork (4b.2 SN - Quote toilets 2024.2025.xlsx) and the separate quotes were also included. They ranged from approximately £33k to £114k, limited work to an extensive upgrade. KH explained that the school needed to go ahead with this work or risked losing the funding and the current toilets were 18 years old. **C** Governors noted they weren't comparing the same specification across the quotes. They also noted that would need to be re validated and the specifications checked. **Action:** KH to ask suppliers to revalidate their quotes using the same specification for the work for the 7.7.25 FC, then the 14.7.25 FGB. **Q** Governors asked when the decision needed to be made ? **R** KH said there was a bit of time as the work could possibly be done in the October 2025 half term. **Q** Governors asked if there was an issue with asbestos at St Nics ? **R** KH said there wasn't but it had to be included in the quotes. **KH** 7.7.25
Fence Repair DT hadn't received the quotes from CB as discussed at the 12.5.25 FC. MB explained that this was discussed at the 12.5.25 FC and himself and KH had received the relevant quotes and agreed the approximate £4k expenditure.

Federation Final Audit Report This was discussed at the 12.5.25 FC and the federation was graded 'Reasonable Assurance: *There is a generally sound system of governance, and financial management control in place at the School. Usually moderate-to-minor issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of audit review objectives but are not a cause for concern.'* Areas to be addressed were: Purchase Orders for small items, Procurement Card issue had been addressed, Management of Private Funds – CB had sorted these out for St Nics and was working on St Johns.

Swimming was losing money. KH explained that this was due to not all parents contributing to this, residential trips were being funded. At best trip costs broke even.

FC Membership DT asked for volunteers to join the FC as sadly PE was retiring as a governor at the end of the academic year. JS volunteered to join the FC **Approved** and thanked.

St Johns nursery numbers were currently 5, the target was 12 to 13. KH was planning to canvas toddler groups and WHT invited him to attend the St Nics church toddler group. Governors discussed this area and JW suggested canvasing GP surgeries and governors were asked to contact KH if they had any suggestions of settings to approach. Governors had no further questions regarding finance.

4c: S&C (Standards & Curriculum Committee) (D3 S&C minutes 29.4.25) SW explained they had covered the usual standing items and the 29.4.25 S&C had looked at Progress reports and there had been positive progress in phonics which had been backed up by LAG's link visit. The meeting had talked through Governor Monitoring and the committee also saw the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) monitoring reports which they found hugely helpful. Governor monitoring continued with CC and CL doing a EYFS (Early years Foundation Stage) learning walk on 4.6.25. Governors would also be doing a MAGT (More Able Gifted and Talented) in the second half of the Summer Term 2025 and would be involving the same governors that did it last time. **C** Governors noted there was a comment in the Link Report regarding Maths (Folder 3c 7 ActivityReports/Learning Walks - 7c.1 PE Link Governor Activity Report Maths PE (2) 6.3.25) regarding the view that relatively low numbers of children are consistently completing assigned homework. **R** KH explained that Doodlemaths was only used for Years 4, 5 and 6 and there had been a decline in children completing online homework. **Q** Governors asked if the school had a strategy to address this and how to support transition to secondary school ? **R** KH explained that there was more homework for the older

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	children from Year 4 upwards. **C** Governors noted that there was a problem to monitoring technology usage in the past it had been paper version. **R** KH agreed paper was less used but there was a Homework Club to assist children who couldn't access support at home but a lot of work was done online. Governors noted this was also good preparation for secondary school. KH said the sad thing was not all families were using the £6 per child cost which could be used elsewhere. Governors noted it was difficult if parents weren't working and suggested reminding parents. **Q** Governors asked if assignments were available as per Ed Shed that could be carried forward and enabled getting a check if done, also the possibility of sharing expectations more ? **R** KH felt that they needed to assign more and check Ed Shed and look at refreshing the system further. Governors had no further questions. **4d: SIAMS** (4d 8 SIAMS wp notes 1-5-25 copy.docx) BM's notes were included with the paperwork for this meeting. The following areas were highlighted; • Developing the federation spirituality statement and look at ways to further implement • Develop the RE (Religious Education) assessment • Three I's to be added to the existing Worship Rose - Inclusive, invitational and inspirational • Remind governors to use the Worship Rose if they attend any services – KH was still working on this with a view to launch in September 2025, BM to message CC regarding this. • Inclusion of SIAMS in FDP was discussed • Timing of SIAMS inspection for St Nic's was not likely until 2026/2027 at the earliest, there should be a 5 year gap but this was now an 8 year gap • Spirituality was embedded in the individual curriculum policies • **Q** Governors asked if it was worth keeping a record of the International Evenings ? **R** KH confirmed this was being done. • **Q** Governors asked if it was possible to offer Spirituality Training for governors **R** KH would look into what was available the training for staff had no notes and they hadn't received a copy of the Power Point presentation yet. **Action:** When KH receives the Spirituality Power Point presentation he would pass it on to governors.	**KH asap**
5.	**EHTR** (Executive Headteachers Report) KH highlighted the following: **5a.1: Staffing** • CB was retiring from St John's after 23 years as a teacher, the school had appointed ES to the post, they were currently teaching in Reception and would become a full-time permanent teacher from September 2025. • There was an unfilled position of HLTA (Higher Level Teaching Assistant), which had been advertised for a little over a month. KH was hopeful that the school would be able to fill one day of this role. • STA has been appointed as a TA (Teaching Assistant) for afternoons for the remainder of this term and would start after half term. • NH will be taking up a temporary post in the Breakfast Club after the half term break, following the resignation of RK, who is unable to provide the time required due to family commitments. **Q** Governors asked as the school went into the next academic year, how much teaching would the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) be doing ? **R** Currently LTA would teach 1 day/week, the new St Johns Head of School would be doing 1 ½ days/week and KH had nothing timetabled but would cover when needed. Members of staff on maternity leave and long term sickness leave were due back in the next academic year. The school was currently in the process of working out staffing for the next academic year. The plan was to announce the following to staff this week: • Teacher allocation to classes next term. • KH to inform temporary staff regarding hours for next year, the budget for 54 hours was less than for Summer 2025, this meant that some temporary staff's hour would be lost which had been a difficult message for some staff.	

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- KH to inform the current nursery support staff regarding the position for next year, advising that terms and conditions would be changing to bring St John's in line with other nursery provisions. As both were currently temporary, they would have the option as to whether to apply for the role. KH had sought advice from LA HR (Human Resources) but as yet hadn't received a response.
- Allocation of support staff to classes/year groups/children would take place after the half term break.

5a.2: Assessments

- Year 6 SATs took place last week. Everything was carried out in accordance with statutory requirements. Several governors had come in to support the school which had been really appreciated. The headteacher's declaration has been completed for Year 6.
- Year 6 writing will be moderated this year which had been expected. It would take place on 13th June 2025. Before the moderation takes place, the school would be holding a writing week for Year 6 to ensure the schools judgements were secure. Year 6 teachers, supported by KH, LA and LAG will be making teacher assessment judgements prior to the moderation.
- Year 1 Phonics screening materials had been received in school and were being securely stored according to statutory duties.
- A Year 4 multiplication check information meeting had been held for parents.
- EYFS profile will be completed in June.
- All other year groups would be undertaking assessments, with Year 2 using optional SATs materials.

5a.3: Sites and Buildings There were two projects planned for the summer, one at St Nic's and one at St John's:

- St John's fence replacement was agreed at the 12.5.25 FC
- St Nic's heating system replacement with a heat pump - this was being fully funded by the Diocese and would take place over the summer. The Project meetings had not happened yet, but the school site would be controlled by contractors during the period of installation.
- St Nic's toilets – to be confirmed tonight from the quotes provided.

5a.4: Attendance for both schools is as follows:

- Current attendance for St John's is 94% (only including children of statutory school age). This was lower than LA (Local Authority) and national averages (95.1% and 94.8% respectively). However, attendance had risen slightly since the end of the Spring Term 2025, when it was 93.9%.
- Persistent absence was 22.6% and had risen from 19.8% at the end of the Spring Term 2025. There were 26 children who have missed 10% or more sessions during the year so far. Of these, there were 9 children whose attendance was below 85%. Of these children, 1 was on a part-time timetable, 1 was currently in hospital for an operation. Of the other seven, most were due to unauthorised holidays during term time, which had resulted in fines. One was being monitored following discussions with the parents.
- At St John's the attendance of disadvantaged children was 90.7% compared with 94.4% for those not disadvantaged. 46.7% of disadvantaged children (7 children) were currently persistently absent. This is an issue that the school need to continue to tackle robustly.
- St Nic's current attendance is 96.0%, which was above the LA and national averages (see above). This was slightly down on attendance at the end of Spring Term 2025 (96.1%).
- Persistent absence at St Nic's was 7.1% with 17 children whose attendance was below 90%. Of these children, there were 6 children, whose attendance was below 85%, all of whom were being currently targeted for attendance.
- At St Nic's the attendance of disadvantaged children was 94.0% compared with 96.5% for non-disadvantaged children. 13.3% of disadvantaged children were persistently absent at St Nic's.

Q Governors asked how these figures compared with the last academic year ? **R** KH thought they were better than last year's figures. **Q** Governors asked if the absences were mainly due to illness ? **R** KH

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	confirmed this was the case and mainly an issue with the younger children. The school did chase parents up and suggested children attend if they could. Supporting attendance was a whole staff approach and staff were also aware of any issues for the children. **5a.5: Leadership and Management** • Currently, there was no Head of School at St John's, but the temporary leadership structure had been working effectively and both schools were managing well. • A key risk factor with this was staff absence. So far, the absence levels had been slightly lower than over the rest of the year. However, even one or two people absent, particularly teaching staff, put a lot of pressure on other children. • This year at St John's so far 369.5 days had been lost to staff absence and at St Nic's 307.5 days had been lost. This was a total of 677 days lost. With 148 days so far this academic year, it meant that across the federation, there were, on average 4.5 members of staff absent each day. **C** Governors noted that there was significant staff absence due to 2 members of staff. **R** This had also had an impact on the other members of staff. Some of the TA's were working 1:1 to support children so children's health issues ie a cough were difficult to manage and avoid catching. **Q** Governors asked how much was paid to staff who had to take time off due to their children's sickness ? **R** Up to 5 days. **Q** Governors asked if there was comparative information available from other schools ? **R** KH explained that the levels were higher since Covid and wasn't sure if there were national comparisons data and a significant number of staff members never took a days absence. **Q** Governors asked if there was a breakdown of long term v short term absences ? **R** In theory there were meetings for high levels of absence but WBC HR were unable to support this area as they had staffing issues as well, they had been more supportive in the past. **5b: Head of School** verbal update - there was nothing to add to KH's information.	
6.	**Vulnerable Groups** KB advised there were 15 children with EHCPs (Education Healthcare Plan), currently it was all about transition from Year 6 to secondary school and Year 2 to Year 3 and the relevant support was being put in place.	
7.	**Safeguarding** (8 Safeguarding in education Action Plan 17-11-2023.pdf) ChH to check this document had been included with the paperwork for the meeting. Governors were asked to ensure that their safeguarding training was up to date.	
8.	**H&S** (Health & Safety) KH advised there had been a couple of serious H&S incidents in school and that all appropriate actions had been taken.	
9.	**Policies Information/Approval/Ratification** ChH explained that all the policies listed for ratification had been approved at the 29.4.25 S&C and the only changes had been to version numbers and dates. **The following were Ratified** Allegations of Abuse Against Staff SJN016 V1.3 (Allegations of Abuse Against Staff SJN016 V1.3 TBR) Appraisal Policy SJN008 V1.3 (Appraisal Policy SJN008 V1.3 TBR) British Values Statement SJN017 V1.3 (British Values Statement SJN017 V1.3 TBR) Capability Issues due to ill health SJN014 V1.3 (Capability Issues due to ill health SJN014 V1.3 TBR) Charging & Remissions Policy SJN084 V1.2 (Charging & Remissions Policy SJN084 V1.2 TBR) Disciplinary Procedure SJN015 V1.3 (Disciplinary Procedure SJN015 V1.3 TBR) Early Years Foundation Stage Policy SJN022 V1.3(Early Years Foundation Stage Policy SJN022 V1.3 TBR) Grievance Procedure SJN029 V1.3 (Grievance Procedure SJN029 V1.3 TBR)	

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	Looked After Children & Previously Looked After Children Policy SJN035 V1.3 (Looked After Children & Previously Looked After Children Policy SJN035 V1.3 TBR) Governors asked that, on page 6, the Contacts within the federation table – Named Governor for Looked After Children be changed to MB for now and CC for the next academic year. Governors discussed whether there should be a named governors for LAC, SEND and inclusion. **Action:** SW to check if CC would be happy with being the Named Governor for LAC/SEND and Inclusion. To go to 14.7.25 FGB for approval. **D2 Early Career Teachers Induction SJN023 V1.3** (x D2 Early Career Teachers Induction SJN023 V1.3) **Q** Governors asked how many Early Career teachers there were and how much time was involved in mentoring them and were there budget implications going forward ? **R** Currently 2, and 1 starting in September 2025. LTA explained how this was being managed and the school was happy with their progress. **Approved/Ratified** **D2 Equality Policy SJN038 V1.3** (x D2 Equality Policy SJN038 V1.3) Governors noted that Item 7 was incorrectly titled. **Action:** Update Equality Policy SJN038 V1.3 Item 7 - Two Types of discriminatory incidents include to be corrected to - Types of discriminatory incidents to go to 14.7.25 FGB for approval.	**SW** 14.7.25 **ChH** 14.7.25 **ChH** 14.7.25
10.	**AOB** (Any Other Business) **Summer Fair 28.6.24** SW advised governors that the SJSN Summer Fair would be held at St Nics on 28.6.24 and asked governors to put the date in their diary and come along to support if possible. **Training Credits** **Q** DT asked if the governors had any training credits left ? **R** DT to check the dates and contact SW who would advise re availability. All thanked for attending a good meeting which had very useful discussions. The meeting ended at 8.35pm.	
	Date of next FGB: Monday 14th July 2025 7pm in person at St Nics	

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