



# MILVERTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY AND PRE-SCHOOL

## FGB MEETING MINUTES

**Thursday 26 November 2025, 18.00**

Governors Present		In Attendance	
Martin James (Vice-Chair)	LA Governor	Gloria Hamlet (items 1-4)	Finance Officer
Clare Adams	Parent Governor	Kathryn Lanning	Clerk
Rachel Ford	Co-opted Governor		
Stephen Jones	Co-opted Governor		
Chris Mann	Co-opted Governor		
Stephen Penny	Staff Governor		
Nicola Stoddart	Headteacher		
Fiona Taylor	Co-opted Governor		
Emily Weiss	Co-opted Governor		

### **Item 1 – Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were accepted from Linda Burton and Kieran Neale. In the Chair's absence the Vice-Chair, Martin James, chaired the meeting.
- 1.2 There were no new declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda.

### **Item 2 – Minutes of the last FGB meeting: 25 September 2025**

- 2.1 The Board approved the minutes of the FGB meeting held on 25 September 2025.

### **Item 3 – Matters Arising / Action Tracker**

- 3.1 The Board noted updates to the Action Tracker as follows:

REF	ACTION	OWNER	UPDATE
<b>FGB Meeting held on 26 March 2025</b>			
Para 5.1	Follow up potential funding from Parochial Church Council	HT	Done. Funding not available
	Approach Milverton Trust for funding	HT/CM	Done. CM would let the HT have a grant application form.
Para 9.1	Upload statutory school policies not on website to GovernorHub	Clerk	Ongoing – school office to supply those policies not on website

FGB Meeting held on 25 September 2025			
Para 7.1	Some governors still required to complete Safeguarding training	Govs	Done. All governors have now completed some form of safeguarding training this term. NS is meeting the County Safeguarding Lead in January and would confirm exactly what safeguarding training governors are expected to complete and how often.
Para 13.1	HT to run a training session on governor monitoring at next meeting and revise visit feedback form	HT	See agenda item 8
Para 14.1	Governors to be sent a list of forthcoming events they are invited to attend	HT/Clerk	Included in minutes of the last meeting

## **Item 4 – Finance**

### Finance Report Month 7

4.1 The Finance Officer introduced the Month 7 report, drawing governors’ attention to the following:

- the report included an additional £8,774 to support the last round of teaching and support staff pay awards
- the PE and Sports grant anticipated this autumn/spring has been adjusted as new guidance meant 6 months’ funding would be received, not 7/12 as in previous years, and this had created a shortfall of £1,469

Question: what does the PE and Sports Grant cover?

Response (GH): it helps fund Forest School, PE subject leader time, Golden Mile (which involves pupils walking, jogging or running a mile daily), the Jasmine Licence (a PE education platform), coaches to sports festivals and some resources.

- the end of year BO1 committed revenue balance is £16,147 and the end of year BO2 uncommitted revenue balance showed a deficit of £19,786. This means that the budgeted end of year deficit has decreased by £34,132 to £19,786
- school meals are delivered by Kingsmead and changes to invoicing meant that Milverton Primary now has to pay bank charges. The cost of a meal has also increased to £2.61.
- Pupil Premium is currently showing an underspend of £978 but this cannot be released back into the budget. There has been an increase in requests for pupil premium subsidies
- the Budget for 2025/26 was based on 190 children and, whilst there are currently this number on roll, at the October 2025 census the school only had 189 children. The additional child would not be counted for funding until the October 2026 census so this meant a shortfall of approximately £4k in the current year’s budget.

4.2 The Finance Officer took governors through other key variances in the report since the original budget which included:

- teacher and support staff contracted hours have increased from budgeted estimates and supply costs have increased due to long term sickness. Contracted hours for admin staff had reduced but not workloads so there had been an increase in overtime costs.
- utility costs (electric and gas) were projected to be less than budgeted.

- After School Club income has been higher than anticipated. Higher than expected take up has not increased costs as staff are providing extra cover.
- SEN Alternative Provision costs are lower than expected due to changing needs.
- the committed revenue balance includes Universal Infant Free School Meals which is currently showing an underspend of £14,678 and in January, when census information is complete, it may be possible to release these funds.

Question: would County have to sign off on this?

Response (GH): no, we can reallocate the funds ourselves.

- pre-school income levels are higher than anticipated – a surplus of £12,542 instead of an estimated deficit of approximately £12k. From January the pre-school would be running at capacity 3 days a week. The appointment of an apprentice will mean places can be offered to those on the waiting list.
- swimming is overspent due to an error in the cost notified to parents and a number of parents making no contribution
- insurance premiums are less than budgeted due to a reduction in the number of staff
- High Needs funding has a deficit of £1,832, but funding for a child had just been confirmed and this could be in the region of £6k.

Question: when EHCP applications have stalled is funding back-dated?

Response (GH): yes, but this makes budgeting difficult

Question: is there anything on the horizon we ought to be worried about?

Response (GH): I attended a finance/school funding presentation recently and at the moment there is no additional funding available to cover next year's pay awards. Unions are asking for the bottom grade of 16.2 for support staff to be abolished (which would create a need for pay differentiation in the next grades), a minimum salary of £15ph and more leave.

Question: does the PTA contribute much to school finances?

Response (HT): yes they do, and also help with things like repairs to save us money.

- 4.3 GH also reported that the LA planned to pay interest on outstanding balances for 2022/23 and 2023/24 that have not yet been released. However, the LA also planned to top-slice 0.5% from school budgets to put towards County high needs costs. There was also a proposal to take a further amount from school budgets to support schools in deficit. This had been discussed at the Schools Forum held on 25 November, but the outcome was not yet known. The HT reminded governors that the initial draft budget for the current year suggested a deficit £150k, through a huge amount of effort and major cost-cutting this was then reduced to £59k and has now been reduced further to £19k.
- 4.4 The HT advised governors that there were now 99 schools in Somerset maintained by the LA: 89 primary, 2 secondary, 4 special schools and 4 PRUs and this number could continue to reduce as more schools joined academies. Whilst it is not a requirement to join an academy there were a sound financial reasons for the Board considering this. One governor stressed the importance of finding the right group to join that supports the school's ethos and the way it delivers education.

#### Finance Policy

- 4.5 **The Board approved the Finance Policy (unchanged from last year) and noted that the LA was working on a new model Finance Policy which it hoped to issue by April next year.**

*Gloria Hamlet left the meeting at this point.*

## **Item 5 – Headteacher’s Report (paper)**

- 5.1 The HT introduced her written report and advised that there had been 8 new starters since September, pre-school was going from strength to strength and there had been a slight improvement in attendance.

Question: what is your attendance target?

Response (HT): the DfE will in future send us monthly attendance targets but as a general rule we need to achieve over 95%.

### Health and Safety

- 5.2 A recent fire risk assessment had resulted in 54 actions, including the replacement of wooden cupboard doors inside a classroom. This would be quite costly but would be paid for by the H&S team at County.

Question: who carried out the fire risk assessments?

Response (HT): a fire officer from Somerset Council. We have fire risk assessments every 3 years.

- 5.3 A Health and Safety Audit had also been carried out this term which highlighted the need for governors to be more rigorous in their oversight of Health and Safety and carry out regular monitoring visits. RF, who had taken over the H&S Link Governor role recently, said she would carry out a visit before the end of term and review the H&S Audit checklist with the HT. Staff training also needed to be updated and this would be a focus of the next INSET day.

- 5.4 The Board agreed to delegate responsibility for Category A visits and risk assessments (non-adventurous/local) to the HT.**

Post-meeting note: Governor Services will add this to their model Scheme of Delegation approved by Boards at the start of each academic year.

### Curriculum

- 5.5 The HT had recently attended training run by SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) on the new RE curriculum for Somerset which was being updated to give a much broader focus on religion and world views with historical, social and philosophical themes. The HT had volunteered Milverton Primary to be one of the schools where SACRE trials mapping the new RE curriculum against the wider curriculum. From 2028 RE would be part of the National Curriculum.

- 5.6 The HT reminded governors that the LA was funding free online training on the format and delivery of new Relationships Sex and Health Education statutory guidance coming into force from September 2026. She would be attending the training session on 10 February at 3.45pm and, as this is such an important curriculum development, she invited a governor to join her. (FT subsequently said she would do this).

- 5.7 The No Outsiders project had been launched successfully to help children understand and value diversity. Parent information sessions had been held and the formal launch day was attended by 5 other schools.

Question: have you had any negative feedback?

Response (HT/CA): not at all, parents have been very positive. All the books being used will be on display at this term’s Parents’ Evenings.

### Safeguarding

- 5.8 33 entries had been logged on My Concern so far this term (many concerns relate to 7 children). Key themes were parenting concerns, pupil behaviours and pupil SEMH (social, emotional mental health) concerns.

Question: is that an increase on last year?

Response (HT): a decrease but I think this is due to staff training which has improved understanding of how to use My Concern and reduced updates being reported as new concerns.

- 5.9 There had been one serious incident on the playground between two children which resulted in one of them having to go to hospital. Following this a review was carried out of how playground equipment is used, with subsequent modifications, and some adjustments made to staff playground cover.
- 5.10 A school bus had narrowly missed hitting the HT when reversing over the turning circle onto the zebra crossing. She had discussed this with the bus company and would continue to try to get the police to monitor traffic in that location.
- 5.11 The Governors' Safeguarding Audit was due by 19 December and EW, as safeguarding governor, would complete this with the HT before the deadline. Results and the action plan would be shared with governors at the next FGB meeting.
- 5.12 Five bullying concerns had been raised by parents this term. On thorough investigation only one concern amounted to bullying and appropriate measures were followed. Two racist incidents had occurred this term: both were reported to Somerset Council and restorative work with both parties had taken place.

### SEND

- 5.13 Governors noted:
- the 2025-26 SEND Information Report for parents and carers which outlines the SEND provision offered at Milverton Primary
  - the SEND update from the SENCO
- 5.14 CA, the SEND link governor, reported that she had discussed the SENCO's concerns with her, especially the length of time assessments take. The HT reported that one EHCP application had recently been refused for assessment but the SENCO would challenge this. The PINS project appeared to be going well with training sessions for staff, governors, parents and pupils taking place this term. Nine parents had engaged with the training.

### Ofsted Readiness

- 5.15 The HT suggested that governors might like to participate in the GovernorHub webinar on Ofsted readiness the following day (27 November).

### School Development Plan

- 5.16 The HT would redraft the School Development Plan to ensure better alignment with the new Ofsted Framework. She encouraged governors to visit the school to discuss development priorities (see item 8).

### School Improvement Partner Report

- 5.17 The HT encouraged governors to read the monitoring report from the School Improvement Partner who looked at the school through an Ofsted lens.

### Admissions

- 5.18 The HT said that, despite falling birth rates, interest from parents with children due to start Reception in September 2026 had been high and approximately 18 new families had recently been shown around the school.

### Complaints

- 5.19 One formal/Stage 2 complaint had been received this term and considered by a panel of governors. The complaint was not upheld.

### Suspensions/Exclusions

- 5.20 There had been no suspensions or exclusions to date this term.

## **Item 6 – Safeguarding (oral)**

- 6.1 Covered in the Headteacher's Report above.

## **Item 7 – Online Safety (oral)**

- 7.1 SP advised governors that there is now a greater emphasis on online safety in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*. It falls under the PSHRE curriculum rather than Computing and SP monitors the school's online safety policy, incidents, teaching and training. The school buys the eLIM computing and online safety support from the LA which helps schools encourage children to be aware of online risks. SP was in the process of applying for formal online safety 360 accreditation and outlined the wide range of evidence that needed to be submitted with the application. ELIM had produced an online safety training video for staff and governors which would need to be viewed in school as the link cannot be shared.

Question: could parents be invited into school to watch the video?

Response (SP): I will find out.

**ACTION: SP**

Question: what is the school's phone policy?

Response (HT): children bringing phones to school have to leave them at the school office. We are also about to launch a Smartphone Free Childhood survey to gather parents' views.

## **Item 8 – Governor Monitoring (papers)**

- 8.1 The HT stressed the importance of governors ensuring that their monitoring activities reflect the new Ofsted Framework. She advised that Ofsted would no longer be carrying out subject deep dives so there was no need to allocate governors to monitor individual subjects. Instead governors should focus on:
- the School Development Plan
  - brief conversations with subject leads
  - learning walks / inclusion
  - pupil voice (she would bring training videos on this to the next FGB meeting)
  - pupil questionnaires
  - staff voice (captured in staff surveys and through governor visits)

- parent voice (captured in parent/carers surveys)
- School Improvement Partner monitoring reports

**8.2 It was agreed that governors would focus on SDP Key Priorities as follows:**

**KP1 – Quality of Education (focusing on foundation subjects)**

**CM, SJ, RF and CA**

**KP2 – Behaviour and Attitudes; Personal Development**

**FT (attendance, No Outsiders/PSCHE and will undertake RSHE training) and CA**

**KP3 – Leadership and Management (including staff wellbeing)**

**MJ, KN**

**KP4 – EYFS**

**LB**

**8.3** EW would continue to focus on Safeguarding, the Single Central Record and Pupil Premium. The HT would identify some possible dates for governor monitoring visits, which would include discussion about how to approach their area of monitoring. The HT would also produce a template to ensure that governor monitoring reports are consistent and cover everything they need to. This could include document evidence sources, what has been seen, links to SDP priorities, areas for development, questions asked and responses received.

**ACTION: HT**

Question: how do we ensure we see a breadth of ability when talking to children?

Response (HT): you can ask to see a diverse group including boys, girls, SEND, lowest 20% readers etc.

Question: how often should governors visit the school?

Response (HT): at least termly.

**8.4** The Board also noted governor monitoring reports on Behaviour and Attitudes and the PINS Project.

**Item 9 – Policies (papers)**

**9.1** Governors noted the updated policy schedule and approved the following:

- Teachers' Pay Policy
- SEND Policy
- SEND Statement
- Teachers' Appraisal Policy
- Capability Procedure Teaching Staff
- Capability Procedure Non-Teaching Staff
- Staff Grievance Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

**9.2** Governors also noted the updated 2024-27 Accessibility Plan.

Question: have the latest fire risk assessments affected the Accessibility Plan?

Response (HT): no

**Item 10 – Any Other Business**

10.1 There was no other business.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 28 January 2026 at 6pm

Kathryn Lanning  
Milverton Primary School, Clerk to Governors

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Clerk to Governors