Minutes of a Meeting of Sir William Stanier School (SWS)
Local Governing Board (LGB)
Date: Thursday 26th September 2024 at 4:30pm in person at SWS

Governors in attendance:	Mary Massey	(MM)	Chair
	Sean Houlston	(SH)	Vice Chair
	Pamela Simpson	(PS)	Appointed Governor
	Samantha Kay	(SK)	Parent Governor
	Sharon Yates	(SY)	Appointed Governor
	Lisa Hodgkison	(LH)	Appointed Governor
Other Attendees:	Paul Farr	(PF)	Interim Executive Headteacher (left the meeting at 5:58pm)
	Emma Johnson	(EP)	Deputy Headteacher (left the meeting at 5:58pm)
	Michael Smissen	(MS)	Deputy Headteacher (left the meeting at 5:58pm)
	Allan Howells	(AH)	Director of Quality, TLP Trust
	Sarah Lomas	(SL)	Governance Clerk, TLP Trust

The meeting commenced at 4:35pm.

ITEM		Action
	Governance and Administration	
1.	**Welcome, Quoracy, Apologies and Declarations** The meeting was quorate with all members present and no apologies to receive. Annual declarations and confirmations were raised as an item for completion along with statutory training for safeguarding and Prevent. **ACTION:** All governors to ensure completion of annual training, declarations and confirmations.	**All govs.**
2.	**Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising** The minutes from the previous meeting on 06.06.24 were confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings. Governors **approved** the minutes. **ACTION:** Upload a copy of the minutes to Governor Hub and mark as signed. The issue of website compliance was raised for discussion. It was confirmed that MM had issued an email requesting an update on policies that had been approved by governors but had not been updated on the website. **ACTION:** Review policies and update website in line with approval and the review cycle. The action log from the previous meeting was reviewed and the following items were noted: • Item 7 – PS confirmed that an enquiry has been sent requesting the use of the school for the next Primary Headteacher's meeting and she is awaiting a response. • Item 10 – **ACTION:** It was agreed that the action to invite Carolyn Brennan (Reading Lead) to the next LGB would be carried forward to the next meeting. • Item 13 – Student voice on safeguarding had been obtained by MM during recent safeguarding visits and these reports had been circulated to the Board via Governor Hub. • Item 14 – It was previously agreed that a report would be issued by the school to Katrina Wolfenden at Reaseheath College for SY. **ACTION:** School to check the status of the report and confirm issue.	**Clerk** **Clerk/ PF** **PF** **??**

	• Item 14 – It was agreed that the action relating to a presentation on Jigsaw would be carried forward to the next meeting. **ACTION**: Invite Jess Sheridan to the next LGB meeting to present on the Jigsaw PSHE scheme. • Item 16 – Clarity was sought on the status of Health and Safety policies and contractor DBS checks. It was confirmed that overall responsibility for Health and Safety lies with the Trust and the policy is live and up to date. There are also school level responsibilities around compliance for the site. Governors **queried** if the results for the second staff survey undertaken in the summer term were available for review. Response: The school confirmed that the second survey was not undertaken in the summer term and would be completed during this half term. **ACTION:** Undertake a staff survey during the first autumn half term. The school highlighted that recruitment and retention is in a positive position with the school commencing the academic year for the first time, fully staffed with no long-term agency staff in place. Governors recognised this as providing a stable start to the year in terms of staffing.	**PF** **PF**
3.	**Membership and Effectiveness Update** a) Governors considered the current vacancies on the Board: • 2 x appointed governors • 1 x parent governor It was confirmed that governor candidates are being sought across the Trust and the services of Governors for Schools have been employed to assist in this process. Previously, the potential of seeking staff candidates from other schools within the Trust to join Boards was considered, however Trustees have requested that this is not pursued following the recommendation of the Trust external review of governance. **Q: Is there a summary of the external review of governance available for the Board?** **A:** This has not been compiled as yet but will be issued once available. The review was undertaken primarily at a Trust level with some local involvement and the experiences of four schools within the Trust were utilised and considered as part of the process. The headline findings are that overall, governance within the Trust is very strong. There is an action plan in place and the majority of actions have already been completed. **ACTION:** Compile a summary of the Trust external review of governance for circulation to governors. **Q: In terms of the appointed governors, what skills do the Board require and could a governor role descriptor be shared for circulation to contacts?** **A:** The Board has very strong education skills so additional skills could be in the area of EAL for example. Local community representation would also be valuable such as any local business but an interest in governance and any skill set a candidate can bring would be beneficial. **ACTION:** Send governor role descriptor to SY to share with contacts. AH confirmed that he has contacted various groups when recruiting for a particular skill set and that seniority is not a factor. One area that has been identified within the Trust, and this is common across governance in general, is that there is not a wide spread of age ranges amongst governors.	**AH** **Clerk**

	Governor Comment: Where industry is lacking in certain skill sets in terms of recruitment, these areas could be promoted which could further benefit the school, students and local industry. **Q: Do businesses still provide release time to employees in governance roles?** **A:** Larger establishments tend to offer this benefit but not smaller companies. There is government and NGA guidance on this area. b) There were no new appointments to announce at this meeting. c) There were no terms of office due to expire before the next meeting.	
4.	**Annual Tasks** a) MM had been nominated for the role of Chair of the LGB and this had been approved by the Trust Governance Committee. MM was duly appointed as Chair of the LGB for a one-year term of office to run until the first meeting of the autumn term 2025. b) SH was nominated for the role of Vice Chair of the LGB. No other nominations were received. SH was duly elected as Vice Chair of the LGB for a one-year term of office to run until the first meeting of the autumn term 2025. c) Link governor roles were confirmed as follows but would be discussed in further detail under Part 2 of this meeting: d) The school confirmed that following the departure of the school careers advisor, there is a gap in terms of skills and the offer for students to be filled. It was confirmed that the Post-16 Strategic Careers and Schools Group of which SY is Chair could offer the school additional support in this area. **ACTION:** SY and MS to liaise regarding the support the Post-16 Strategic Careers and Schools Group could offer to the school.	**SY/MS**
	Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities	
5.	**Part 2 – Confidential Update on Leadership staffing arrangements** It was confirmed that this item would be taken at the end of the meeting, and this was recorded separately within Part 2 minutes.	
6.	**Ofsted Preparedness** The school confirmed that a visit is scheduled from a Lead Ofsted Inspector to undertake a mock inspection. The school are in the Ofsted window and expect a visit this term. Governors noted that there have been changes in the timeframes within which Ofsted will contact schools which has alleviated some pressure form schools. Ofsted previously could call schools between Monday and Wednesday of the school week to announce an inspection but this has changed to notification only up to midday on Mondays and this is a welcome change. The external visit will be beneficial for the school and will comprise of discussions with senior staff, curriculum leads and learning walks to provide valuable feedback on the position of the school. **ACTION:** Provide a summary report of the mock Ofsted visit to governors. In terms of changes put in place since the summer term, there have been no significant changes to report on, but the visit will provide a review of the impact of previous changes.	**PF**

Link Role	**Governor**
Safeguarding	MM
SEND	LH
Careers	SY

7.	**SEF Update** The school confirmed that the update is largely the same as that provided at the previous meeting. Governors **requested** that any updates to the SEF should be made in a contrasting colour to the main text to be clearly identifiable. The data included is from March 2024 and a review shows that the most up to date data is not included. The suspensions and exclusions data are also out of date. The school confirmed that the Trust deadline for the updated SEF is Friday 27th September. Governors requested that the school circulate the SEF as submitted to the Trust with updates in different colours. **ACTION:** Circulate the updated SEF as submitted to the Trust to governors. Governors **highlighted** that that the key performance indicators (KPIs) and key data is not available within the document to enable governors to question and challenge. The school responded that the SEF needs to be approved by the Trust prior to issue. Governors confirmed that they are tasked with identifying links between areas for development and the strategic plans and how this reflects back to the school improvement plan but currently this cannot be undertaken because the data is not available. The school confirmed that the version circulated is not the full version which also includes a column setting out the impacts. Governors **challenged** that whilst the Trust template has been reviewed, the Board are concerned with ensuring there is evidence as to why the key priorities have been chosen and the rationale behind this. The school confirmed that the Quality of Education priorities were selected following discussion with central Trust staff and the senior leadership team within school. Assessment was one main area highlighted by the Ofsted monitoring visit along with improvements to adaptive teaching practices. **Q: The Ofsted monitoring visit stated that the curriculum in place was more robust than it had been, are there further improvements to the robustness required?** **A:** The school anticipate that any questions regarding curriculum will relate back to the original Ofsted inspection and the school will need to evidence that any gaps in learning are being addressed and that progress is improving year on year. **Q: On page 13 of the SEF, there is reference to disadvantaged and SEND pupil performance issues but these are not listed on the SIP, given these are identified issues why are they not listed on the plan?** **A:** They are listed on the more detailed version of the plan that the school holds. Validated results data is not yet available and therefore cannot be published at this stage. One of the targets is to ensure that all classes are inclusive which includes SEND and disadvantaged pupils with additional detail on these areas.	**PF**

	Governors **requested** a copy of the SIP to enable them to review the full detail of targets. **ACTION:** Circulate the SIP to governors before the next meeting.	**PF**
8.	**Strategic priorities for 2024-25 including a rationale** The strategic priorities had been highlighted in Item 7 of this meeting and governors had requested circulation of the SIP for review.	
9.	**Education** <u>Performance</u> MS briefed governors on the 2023-24 results as follows: With reference to section 9 of the Headteacher's report on page 8, a breakdown of pupil groups has been provided along with a breakdown of groups and results on page 10 of the report. The performance of pupils in 2023-24 showed notable improvements, particularly in English and Maths. **Q: What do the school base their predictions for pupils on?** **A:** This remains a challenge for the school. The 2023 performance data was very low and predictions were based in part on Key Stage 2 data and Fisher Family Trust was also used to inform predictions. It was unrealistic to assume that the progress required to be made could be achieved in one year. A strategy needs to be formed with the current Year 11 students to evidence progress of each student in all subjects. The subject progress index (SPI) on page 10 of the report shows the strategy of targeting each subject but not individual students and it was identified that this wider approach has led to performance not being as high as anticipated. **Q: It was difficult to identify the prediction data within the report, how close were the results to the staff predictions?** **A:** There were significant reservations in staff predictions compared to results. The school is working to identify trends over the course of a child's education but staff changes throughout the year have made these efforts challenging. With improved consistency in staffing, this should lead to increased confidence in predictions. **Q: What is the current Year 11 target of 70.4% of students achieving a 4 plus grade based on?** **A:** The current target is based on assessments from Year 10, but the predicted grades are a realistic picture of what will be achieved. The school aim to be able to evidence that progress and attainment is improving and feel more confident this year in further improvements being achieved. The mock examinations in November will provide additional evidence to inform predictions. **Q: What information generates the predictions?** **A:** The use of the data and the stability of staffing are key to generating predictions. Staff take a holistic view of everything that is known about each student. **Q: How accurate are the predictions compared to results?** **A:** There is a piece of work to be undertaken to ensure that staff can predict more accurately and make less reserved judgements. **Governor Comment:** It is positive to see the improvements in results and that there is stability in staffing.	

	Q: Could national averages be provided alongside data to enable governors to compare? **A:** This could be done but the school results are significantly below national average at present. Governors **requested** that national averages be included going forward for English, maths and science. **ACTION:** Include national average results data for English, maths and science for all results data going forward. Governors confirmed that inclusion of this data would enable governors to identify trends and then to build an evidence base over a 2-3 year period would be useful to highlight any issues in subject areas. Governors were informed that the school has a high intake of students with low Key Stage 2 results and generally, schools in this position do not reach a zero progress 8 score (equivalent to national average) and it is important to be aware of this in terms of expectations. One of the biggest areas for improvement is literacy and ensuring that staff adapt their teaching to drive improvements in this subject to ensure results are moving towards the national average. **Governor Comment:** It is also important to note how different subjects can impact other areas of learning such as maths having a direct impact on science for example. **Q: The progress scores are not available for all groups, is the school targeting high ability students with interventions as well?** **A:** There are targeted small group interventions for high ability students to support accelerated progress. **Q: It is useful for governors to have data provided on both progress and attainment. How far has the school been able to progress pupils, particularly the higher ability students?** **A:** The school has the Progress 8 scores for this year and there has been a half grade increase across all subjects. The school now need to focus on attainment. It is unrealistic to aim for national average at present, but the aim is to evidence a significant shift year on year across all subjects. **Q: How many students does the school have that may not be counted in the validated data?** **A:** It is anticipated that the data will improve once validated. The school applied to have 12 students removed but it is more realistic to expect that 3 will be removed. There have been challenges in admitting asylum seekers within school who only stayed for a short period of time but were included within the census data which also increased staff workload. PS highlighted the differences between primary and secondary data and requested a briefing on secondary data. **ACTION:** MS to liaise with PS regarding secondary data. MM also happy to provide some guidance. Governors confirmed their recognition of the work that staff have put in to improve the results this year.	**MS** **MS**

	The school confirmed the change in approach which has led to these improvements. It was imperative that all subjects were aligned in the work to improve, and students were subsequently identified for interventions. The Trust supported the school financially in the use of the National Tutoring programme and it is hoped that this support will continue this academic year to enable a focus on a key cohort of students requiring support with maths. The mock examinations and other internal assessments have provided the key data to enable students to be identified for specific interventions. MM commented that the long-term aim should be to reduce the amount of interventions required as this should be covered as part of quality first teaching and this in turn will reduce the workload for staff. The school confirmed that the number of interventions were reduced last term due to the targeted approach employed. **Q: Will the Trust be introducing an overall strategy for all secondary schools within the Trust to manage the issues linked to having no KS2 data?** **A:** The Deputy CEO, Kate Baddeley is undertaking background work at present in all schools to ascertain the differences and similarities between strategies that schools are using. Governors **requested** feedback to the Trust that there should be an overall Trust-wide strategy implemented to manage the lack of Key Stage 2 data. The school responded that there can be issues with using a general testing approach such as CAT tests which have been used historically, whereby the grades predicted are too low and can lack ambition. Therefore, it is important to ensure balance with any strategies employed. Low predictions can demotivate students which is a risk. **ACTION:** Governors requested that MS communicate the detail of this concern to PF to feed back at the next Headteacher's meeting.	**MS**
10.	**To receive current predictions for Year 11 and preliminary targets for 2024-25 (including groups)** Governors acknowledged receipt of the Year 11 predictions and targets for 2024-25 and confirmed their acceptance of the data provided.	
11.	**To receive an overview of the strategies in place for Year 11 for the autumn and spring terms** Information regarding the targeting interventions for Year 11 was discussed under Item 9 of this meeting.	
12.	**Admissions and Pupil Numbers** There are currently 150 students in Year 7 and this year group is full. **Q: Did all applicants arrive in September as anticipated?** **A:** Yes, and there are two students on the waiting list to join. Governors noted that the school was the first choice in the majority of applications. The data included on page 15 of the Headteacher's report is important because it shows the in-year changes in admissions which often provide additional challenges. The school confirmed that managed moves and alternative provision placements have been more tightly managed. **Q: How many students have transferred to Crewe UTC?** **A:** 12 and these departures mean there is an increase in the potential of in-year admissions and there have been three new starters in Year 11 since the start of term.	

	Governors were briefed on the recent open evening which was positively attended. The deadline for admission applications for September 2025 is 31.10.24 and the school anticipate that the admissions trend for Year 7 will continue. **Q: Has feedback been obtained from the open evening and can the school provide an overview of this?** **A:** Surveys have been undertaken via Microsoft Forms which can be provided at the next LGB meeting. There were many positive comments received at the event and it was interesting to see that a large number of attendees were new parents and not parents of siblings who already attend the school. **ACTION:** Compile a summary of feedback from the open evening to present to governors at the next LGB meeting. **Governor Comment:** It will be a useful exercise to see how the information from the feedback can inform future open evenings. **Q: Did the event clash with any other local secondary school open evenings?** **A:** No, the school ensured that this was checked this beforehand to ensure no clashes. **Q: How was SEND managed as there were concerns last year that it was in an open space which may have impacted students with sensory issues?** **A:** There were the 'market place' stands for SEND and EAL in the main hall and families were then directed into the library for one to one conversations which enabled staff to also showcase the hub. Staff also explained the enhanced transition for Year 6 students. Visiting the primary schools earlier has also assisted in the understanding of SEND needs.	**EJ/PF**
	Welfare	
13.	**Safeguarding** It was confirmed that as part of the safeguarding link governor visit, MM observed work on the Jigsaw programme and it was evidenced that students are lacking financial understanding. Governors **queried** what the school are doing to equip students with key skills. The school outlined that Jess Sheridan is leading on this area. There is a unit in the Jigsaw programme based on self-management and the school have also contacted Barclays to ascertain if they still implement a unit of work with high school students on personal financial management. **Governor Comment:** It is imperative that students know how to manage their personal finances and are equipped with a basic knowledge. It was noted that the school's location in an area of high deprivation makes issues of this nature more likely. SY explained that as part of her role at Reaseheath College, contact has been made with businesses to explain the skills young people require and one legal company is keen to speak to students about the impact of legal issues and a finance company has also been contacted who could visit school to explain key terms.	

	The impact of work experience on students was discussed and SY explained the potential opportunity for college work experience at Reaseheath College for pupils who are struggling to organise an external placement. This could potentially accommodate 30 students and is being considered by the college as part of their school engagement strategy. The school confirmed that work experience opportunities were significantly improved last year in terms of engagement from students and the school are looking to reach out to local businesses to investigate how students could be referred for work experience opportunities. Governors **challenged** the importance of work experience and the inclusion of this as part of the preparing for adulthood agenda for SEND which forms part of all EHCPs but applies to all students regardless of need. It is essential that the school ensure that these skills form a thread throughout all PSHE work. LH confirmed that Springfield School are undertaking a large project on this area and SWS could potentially link up with Springfield on this project. It was noted that this area of development is important but that also, parents are required to engage with this. Governors noted that one of the items highlighted during a recent safeguarding network meeting was online safety and that parents do not have the understanding of online issues. The school have considered holding parental workshops but previous events have had very low attendance. **ACTION:** SWS to link with Springfield regarding preparing for adulthood project. It was commented that the school may consider a return to the introduction to business models within school, similar to the historic enterprise models. **ACTION:** Share Jess Sheridan's email with SY regarding careers and work experience opportunities. <u>Attendance</u> The school received a whole school average attendance rate of 85.7% for 2023-24 compared to the national average of 89%. For the current academic year, the overall attendance rate stands at 90.2% compared to the national average of 91% but it is important to note that this is based on two weeks of data since the start of the autumn term. **Q: How has the school managed to reduce the persistent absence from 55% in 2023-24 to a current rate of 28.4%?** **A:** Persistent absence was a significant issue with the previous Year 11 cohort and there were also a high number of students on part time timetables which impacted attendance rates. In terms of quality of education, the school has created an additional group in Year 9 so there are now two groups to tackle areas of concern such as reading. **Governor Comment:** Year 9 have been badly affected by Covid in terms of their learning, so additional support is required. The school confirmed that there are a high number of learners in Year 9 with a reading age of 5. Governors were informed that some students reading ages could in fact be lower than this but age 5 is the lowest age defined by assessments (Literacy strategy leader invited to next meeting).	**MS/LH** **EJ**

There is a support project in place with Crewe UTC which has resulted in significant changes to interventions. The access to the Hub has been removed and there have been some teething issues for students transitioning back to mainstream classes.

Governors thanked the school for the additional analysis provided on groups including pupil premium, gender and EAL however governors **challenged** the Pupil Premium strategy 2022-25 document which includes references to the current academic year, but it is not clear which year within the strategy this refers to. Governors requested that the Pupil Premium strategy report is amended to include the year which actions took place as this is important for Ofsted to be able to track the work undertaken by school and how funding has been spent.
ACTION: Update the Pupil Premium strategy report to include reference to specific years. **MS**

<u>Behaviour</u>
The school confirmed that whole school model and policy has been implemented and is now being embedded. The decision was taken to disband the SEND Hub provision and create a bespoke intervention programme for 34 students who would then rejoin mainstream classes. The internal exclusion room has also been altered and is now a reflection space for students who are dysregulated to access to enable them to reset.

Q: How do students access the reflection provision?
A: The school have increased the capacity of the on call provision from staff. There is a ready, respectful and safe strategy in all classrooms and all staff are receiving support on how to implement this.

Governor Comment: The policy in place is very clear for staff to follow.

The school explained that when students access the reflection space but their behaviour has breached the thresholds in the policy, they will attend a 30 minute repair and recover session with the member of staff concerned.

An internal suspension space was previously utilised to place students in for one day with the main aim of this being to slow down / reduce external suspensions. External suspension is still an option where required but would likely be used for physical aggression. Parents are informed at all stages of the implemented behaviour processes.

Q: Have students been involved in the construction of the policy?
A: Yes, there was a significant amount of consultation on the policy with all stakeholders. The reflection strategy will likely experience teething issues but this provision links in with meeting the needs of students within the classroom as part of quality first teaching. The reflection process allows staff to triage and identify any gaps in staff skills. It is recognised that staff may have been deskilled over time and there needs to be elements of change in all areas. The resilience in students need to be built up to enable them to cope with different situations. The feedback from students has been positive with students thanking staff for the actions taken and allowing them to learn in the classroom environment.

Governors were informed that there are two permanent exclusions in process.

	Q: Are staff trained in the use of reasonable force? **A:** Key staff are trained in Team Teach. **ACTION:** Check that the behaviour policy includes reference to Team Teach. Governors **requested** that data on the numbers of students who have accessed the reflection space, how many internal suspensions have been issued, repeat offenders, pupil premium and SEND data relating to intervention impact be included for future meetings. The school confirmed that recording of this data is now live and will be available for all future meetings. **ACTION:** Include behaviour data and intervention impact data for SEND for future LGB meetings. **Q: How is the school working with students to build resilience?** **A:** The interventions in place are a key factor to improve resilience and the work surrounding resilience also needs to be widened to maximise impact. All pastoral managers are trained as emotional literacy support assistants (ELSA). **Governor Comment:** The Thrive training is also very useful for staff. The school confirmed that Visyon and Motherwell also visit school to provide interventions and support to students and once the staffing changes have stabilised this will enable the trust and relationships to be built with students which will provide long term benefits. The attainment and progress of pupils is improving because of staff stability which will have wider impacts in other areas. Governors **queried** when the next staff survey would be undertaken by the Trust. **ACTION:** Request an update on the next staff survey to be undertaken by the Trust.	**EJ** **EJ** **Clerk/ AH**
	Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement	
14.	**Policies** The following policies were circulated to governors prior to the meeting for review via Governor Hub: a) Safeguarding b) Behaviour c) Attendance Governors confirmed receipt and review of the above listed policies. Governors **approved** the policies. **Q: Do all staff receive an induction when they join the school?** **A:** Yes, all staff receive induction training and also have a buddy assigned to them. **Q: Is there a governor induction process in place?** **A:** This is currently being rebuilt but there is a summary document available that is issued to new governors which summarises the key tasks within the first year of the role. **ACTION:** Send the governor induction summary to SY.	**Clerk**
15.	**Communication to Trust** Various actions had been agreed during the meeting which would be set out on the action log following the meeting as follows:	

	• Governors **requested** feedback to the Trust that there should be an overall Trust-wide strategy implemented to manage the lack of Key Stage 2 data. • Request an update on the next staff survey to be undertaken by the Trust. • Communicate the proposal of Trust-wide governor lanyards to be in place at all schools to improve the profile of governors and provide wider staff the opportunity to speak with governors during visits.	
16.	**Communication from Trust** Governors noted that the annual Trust Governance conference has been scheduled for Saturday 14th June 2025 and were requested to save the date. Further information on the conference would follow in due course.	
17.	**AOB** There were no items of AOB raised for discussion at this meeting. ***PF, MS and EJ left the meeting at 5:58pm.***	

The meeting moved to Part 2.