

**Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting
held on 24 November 2025 at 6pm
South Wing Conference Room**

Governors present: Anne Canning, Mark Chapman (chair), Tessa Hauswedell, Zoe Judge
Ian Macaulay, Claire Montgomery, James Nagata, Lewis Shevelan, Antonia Shortall,

Also present: Ewan Scott, Kirsten Sullivan (Deputy headteachers), Rani Tebbitt (observer)

Clerk: Sam Murray

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Rachel Howarth and Lorraine Hudson.

2. Declaration of interests

There were no meeting specific declarations of interest made by anyone present.

3. Headteacher's Report

Governors had received a written report from the Headteacher. ZJ highlighted the following:

- Data on the student cohort shows a reduction in the number of students with EHCPs.
- The pupil prior attainment profile shifts through the year groups and suggests that Y10/Y11 are similar in terms of a lower prior attainment profile. Lower years have higher prior attainment.
- Attendance data is looking positive.

Staff wellbeing included an update on the agreed workload mitigations. Staff feedback has been gathered through various communication channels including engagement sessions and MUCF meetings. Staff have had opportunities to give SLT feedback in multiple ways.

A survey on the recent two week half term showed that staff felt it had a positive impact on their wellbeing. ZJ set out the proposal for next year to keep the second week and to use it to split the term into two 7-week sections from 19 October to 30 October.

A staff governor reported that it was well received and second week really made the difference. The amount of time available to teach content for the mock exams needs to be considered when agreeing dates.

A governor asked what the student view was on the two-week half-term. ZJ responded that the student voice not yet been formally captured but anecdotally, students seemed to like having 2 weeks prior to their mocks to prepare for them.

A governor asked if SLT members had also had a two-week half term. ZJ reported that Assistant Heads had been off but she had been in school with the Deputy Heads.

The Chair noted that the LA are wanting to lead on coordinating dates for secondary schools locally taking a two-week half-term so agreeing dates for 2026-27 early is important.

Governors agreed the proposal for a two week half term in 2026-27

Behaviour data presented shows a small spike in suspensions but this is not an emerging trend. ZJ reported that the academic year feels like it has started calmly and students have shared positive feedback with staff in their feedback sessions.

In response to a governor question KS described some of the incidents that have led to suspensions. Governors considered and noted the suspensions data. Further review will take place in link governor meetings.

Standards update in the report outlines the new CPD offer and how this supports the school's teaching and learning improvement priorities.

Complaints data shows one complaint moving from stage 3 (Headteacher) to stage 4 (Governors). This complaint was heard using the new panel meeting model and the process seemed to work well.

Budget update figures for Quarter 2 were shared and noted by governors. Resources Committee governors had considered these figures in detail.

3.1 ARP update

ZJ updated governors on work by the LA to open an Autism ARP on site from September 2026. The final SLA is not yet signed but there is a working draft in place and progress is being made in terms of the location and financial and staffing arrangements.

In response to a governor question, ZJ outlined how ARP students will be part in the main school and part in the ARP provision. The plan is for 10 Key stage 3 students to join from September 2026.

Governors discussed a communications plan to update staff and the school community on progress.

4. Safeguarding Report (KS)

Governors received a termly written report with safeguarding data, referrals and information across the school. KS confirmed that there are no new concerns or trends to bring to governors' attention this term.

SEMH is still a big factor in many of the concerns and referrals. KS reported that getting external statutory services to work together or share information is still a struggle.

The safeguarding link governor (MC) gave verbal feedback on his termly review meeting. There are no concerns to report from an inspection of the single central record and KS had updated him on filtering and monitoring processes.

A governor asked how the school tracks the educational experience of students with referrals as the new Ofsted framework frequently refer to the progress of disadvantaged groups. KS outlined how students with formal LA Child in Need plans are monitored. Governors discussed how students known to social services might be defined and tracked in school.

Governors agreed that the Standards Committee would pick this up and look at how to define and track this disadvantaged group.

Action: Standards Committee to discuss tracking students known to social services as a disadvantaged group

A governor asked about the process for dealing with low level staff concerns that don't meet the threshold. KS outlined the process for the reporting of concerns and for training for staff on how to avoid situations that could lead to low level concerns.

4.1 Safeguarding and related policies for approval

KS outlined the changes in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy 2025-26 which has been updated to reflect the requirements of the new Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance. There are several related policies in the Appendices that have also been reviewed and updated accordingly including the Online Safety policy.

Governors approved the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and the related policies in the Appendices

5. Five-Year strategic plan document

Governors received and discussed a new 5-year strategic plan document. The plan outlines a top-level overview of the direction of school improvement and will inform the School Improvement Plan (SIP) work.

ZJ reported that the document is based on extensive engagement work with the whole school community, including staff, students and parents/carers. The development process also included links to the SIP work and a detailed review of the new Ofsted framework.

The document includes a rearticulated school vision, presented in a shorter, sharper format than previously and newly drafted values that support and underpin the revised vision. An outline of where the school is now, where the school aims to be in 2030.

ZJ asked governors to consider whether the document covers everything needed and if the vision and ambition is ambitious enough. ZJ clarified that another opportunity would be provided to discuss the Plan before final roll-out to the whole school community

In response to a governor question, ZJ explained that the document is currently an internal strategic working document. The strategic plan will help narrow down focus for the SIP and related improvement plans.

Governors were positive about the document and raised several points for consideration:

Academic ambition - is the expression of high attainment strong enough and could academic ambition be more explicitly expressed. Sixth form ambition was also discussed and how the school develops ambition in lower years.

Individuality - this is a strength of the school and the notion of the individual at Fortismere is something that makes the school feel different from others. Could this come across stronger in the document.

Governors gave really positive feedback on the document. The Chair noted that all governors are aligned in terms of what they want the school to be, with everyone coming from the same perspective on the school's future direction.

6. School Improvement Plan 2024-25 - Final review

Governors received a copy of the SIP 2024-25 with the final review and RAG rating. ZJ noted that disruption from the industrial action had affected progress in some areas but overall, it had been positive with much good progress made. The following areas were highlighted:

Progress and attainment data for SEND and achieving the SENDIA award was very good. Timetabling systems and processes have much improved.

The sixth form rapid action plan had had effect and better systems are in place.

There is still some progress to be made in the following areas started under the current plan: Pupil premium outcomes to really close the gap; a whole school homework policy; IT and AI strategy. Attendance, comms and the website are also ongoing. These will continue to next year.

Governors discussed the final review and noted that they are content that good progress was made despite some difficult challenges during the year.

7. School Improvement Plan 2025-26

Governors had received a copy of the SIP 2025-26 now presented as a one-page document with detailed actions plans linked to the key priority areas sitting behind it. ZJ highlighted:

The aim is to use the shorter document to give a window on to the school's strategic priorities and to foster a shared approach to school improvement across the school.

The SIP is now structured to link to the new Ofsted framework - the priorities are right for inspection but also right for the school too. It also links to the five-year strategy document.

Governors considered the document and raised the follow points in their feedback and discussions:

The SIP presented aligns clearly with the school's vision and strategic plan.

Could higher grades for HPA students be articulated. ES suggested that benchmarks for LPA, MPA and HPA could be added.

A governor asked how outcomes and impact will be reviewed. ZJ explained that detailed action plans behind the SIP will be based on the success criteria for each section.

Governors had received the action plan for Leadership and Governance.

A governor asked how the governing board will monitor and hold the leadership to account.

The chair explained that progress will be tracked across committees and through the FGB.

Governors agreed that link governor visits could be matched to SIP priorities going forward.

The Chair highlighted the importance of governors seeing the school in action to further inform their monitoring of the SIP.

Governors agreed the SIP as presented for 2025-26

8. Admission Arrangements 2027 entry

Governors would like to revisit the changes proposed to sixth entry requirements last year.

ZJ confirmed that a broader range of pathways with varying entry requirements could now be offered to students. Governors agreed that a proposal and consultation documents should be prepared.

Governors noted that the timing on the next full governing board meeting and agreed that the Standards Committee meeting on 9 December could consider and approve the final documents for the statutory consultation.

Action: FGB agree that the Standards Committee should consider and approve the admissions consultation documents

9. Minutes of last meeting

Governors agreed that the minutes of the last meeting held on 4 July 2025 were an accurate record of the meeting.

10. Committee Reports

10.1 Resources committee: The committee had met in October and reviewed the latest budget figures. There are no concerns to report and the budget is on track and closely monitored by SLT. Updates to the LA and school's financial regulations were considered and approved. The minutes and all the reports presented are on GovernorHub for non-committee members to access.

10.2 Standards committee: The committee had met in October and reviewed in detail the summer 2025 exam outcomes and follow on action plans. The Chair commented on the excellent outcomes and that the committee has a clear sense of actions for summer 2026. The minutes and all the reports presented are on GovernorHub for non-committee members to access.

10.3 Strategic Estates committee: Governors had met in November and received an update on the School Rebuilding Project (SRP) which continues to move forward. The Schedule of Accommodation (SOA) has been shared and gives a lot more detail than previously available. The Chair noted that the future of the Tetherdown building is still uncertain. The minutes and all the reports presented are on GovernorHub for non-committee members to access.

11 Governance items

Governors received the following updated annual documents for adoption. The clerk highlighted where there were minor revisions and updates. Governors approved and adopted all the documents:

GB Code of Conduct 2025-26 - approved

GB Delegation Planner 2025-26 - approved

GB Standing Orders 2025-26 - approved

11.1 Annual declarations

Register of business and pecuniary interests - Governors were reminded to complete their declaration, including a nil return, on GovernorHub and to keep this updated through the year.

KCSIE 2025 - Governors were reminded to read the guidance and declare this.

12. Committee terms of reference

Committees had reviewed the terms of reference in their meetings and there were no changes for the FGB to approve. Chairs confirmed that all committees have terms of reference in place for 2025-26.

13. Link governor roles

Current link governor roles were considered. MC agreed to look at the roles in relation to the SIP and if needed to propose some changes to governors.

Action: MC to review link governor roles and if needed to propose any changes needed to align roles with the SIP focus areas.
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14. GB Membership update

Governors noted the vacancies for a Partnership governor and Co-opted governor and terms of office that will expire in this academic year.

The parent governor election had experienced some technical difficulties but will have run and concluded for the start of next term.

15. Date of next meeting

Monday 9th March 2026 at the earlier start time of 5.30pm to allow for a pre-meeting presentation on the new OFSTED framework.

Meeting closed