

CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL**Full Governing Board (FGB) Minutes**

Governors are expected to read/review all documents circulated prior to meeting, and email questions to document author.

Date/Time	15 th December 2025 – held via TEAMS				
Present	Initials	Category of Governor			
Val Bishop	VB	Parent – Chair of FGB			
Mike Cooper	MC	Parent			
Emma Fell	EF	Co-opted (arrived late – technical difficulties)			
Jeremy Hilderley	JHi	Parent (left early)			
Jill Larcombe	JL	Co-opted (dropped in and out – technical difficulties)			
Catherine McBride	CMB	Co-opted – Vice-Chair of FGB			
Tom Paddon	TP	Staff – Headteacher			
Apologies	Initials	Reason for Absence - Sanctioned / Not Sanctioned			
Katy Plumley	KP	Staff – Not Sanctioned			
Kylie Taylor	KT	Parent – unwell - Sanctioned			
Jo Hutter	JHu	SBM			
In attendance	Initials	Capacity	Guests	Initials	Capacity
Fiona Lowe	FL	Clerk			

The meeting started at 5.32pm.

	Agenda	Led by
1.	Welcome to new Parent Governors – Kylie Taylor and Mike Cooper Decision to Co-opt JHi	VB
2.	Present & Apologies	FL
3.	Declaration of Interests	FL
4.	Finance Items	JHu
5.	Carbon Action Plan	JHu
6.	Minutes of FGB meeting of 16 th October 2025, approval and matters arising	VB
7.	HT Report	TP
8.	Surveys	VB
9.	Governor Visits & Training	All
10.	Reports – Safeguarding / Marketing / GDPR / Attendance	TP
11.	Policies & Procedures	All
12.	Items brought forward by the Chair	VB
13.	Impact Statement	All
14.	Part 2	TP/VB
	Date of next meeting	FL

N o	Item	Action
1.	Welcome to MC/KT – Unfortunately KT was unable to join us due to illness. Those present introduced themselves and MC was welcomed as a new Parent Governor.	

	It was decided to Co-opt VB instead of JHi to open up a Parent Governor position. JL proposed the co-option and CMB seconded.	
2.	Present and Apologies as above.	
3.	Declarations of Pecuniary Interest – none in addition to those already declared	
4.	Finance – In JHu’s absence, JHi confirmed that he has looked at the budget monitor and as we are half way through the financial year, it is looking good. There are still problems with Bromcom which has raised known possible inaccuracies. Questions asked of JHu prior to the meeting – <i>Q. Are you all sorted with Bromcom or is it still causing issues (I hope it's not)?</i> A. There have been further issues unfortunately, but I don't think they are because of Bromcom. 1. The way of producing the Monitor report changed again and is not straight forward. It involves copying and pasting from different Bromcom reports into a DCC spreadsheet. I understand this is not the final reporting solution and Scomis/DCC finance are continuing to work with Bromcom for a better solution. 2. There has been a stoppage of uploading and downloading of finance files, by DCC. They have held back all our reconciliation files because of known errors which they had to rectify. This has now resulted in a backlog of work for schools to download and reconcile many files and see if they are now correct. This is to do with the DCC Unit4 finance software. For the current monitor report, I used school figures, as I have more confidence in those being correct, but they did not “balance” to DCC figures by approximately £3,000 3. In April 2026 because of Unit4 all the ledger codes schools use will be scrapped at the end of the financial year. This is going to cause a huge workload because all the new codes will have to be manually input into Bromcom and all mapped within Bromcom to correct cost centres. For instance: Catering staff salaries currently 1060, NI 1260, superannuation 1360 will become A10051, A12051, A18051. When I input the new budget, it will all have to be on new coding. This will also have to be “mapped” to the correct CFR headings, so that the Benchmarking data sets can be compared nationally. So a large chunk of work to be completed March/April 26. <i>Q. I think we'll see it in next terms agenda when we look at meals, but is the new catering having a positive impact on income from school meals?</i> A. The biggest difference to school meals has been the quality of the food, which is still excellent. We have had higher than usual levels of staff absence within the catering team during the Autumn Term. Employing a supply chef has been expensive and will have impacted on the figures. However, meal numbers are climbing and the kitchen team has worked really hard. The biggest saving is on the management fee for Norse. Educatering have been very supportive and stepped in to do ordering and help us with the staff shortages. They do regular stock taking and I hope when all the reconciliation issues are sorted out we will have a clear picture of the financial outcomes of taking catering in-house. Thanks were expressed to JHu for her hard work and a good job done.	

5.	Carbon Action Plan – EF had raised a comment about children not having crackers in school. TP advised that this was a historical decision and the enough fun was happening for them not to be missed.	
6.	Minutes of FGB meeting of 16th October 2025 – these were agreed and will be signed as a true and correct account of that meeting. Matters arising • Governor profiles for newsletter – all provided. VB will include a festive Christmas message in this week's newsletter, and MC/KT will be asked to provide a photo and profile for inclusion in the new year – item closed • Decision on attending events etc – Governors agreed to attend when available and are happy to be identified as Governors on these occasions by a lanyard. • Safeguarding training – All completed – item closed • Marketing – TP/EF held a useful meeting and as a result CPS will be using Instagram which is the platform to use for promoting. They discussed a promotional video. Instagram will run alongside Facebook. • Link Governors to SIP & visit dates – Link governors have been appointed, and it is hoped that every governor will visit once per half term. It is important to log a visit report as this is the evidence for Ofsted. MC agreed to be the IT Lead Governor. VB/MC discussed the website, and it was agreed that there is a need to update. There is currently charge for every change made. MC is happy to help with migration. MC/EF/TP to discuss in new year. Some governors have made visits and need to complete the forms • Template Risk Assessment for Ofsted – VB/TP have investigated and need to create a RA for CPS in new year • Wellbeing Charter – it was agreed unanimously to work this into what we already do at CPS.	MC/KT MC/EF/ TP VB/JL/C MB VB/TP
7.	HT Report (including staff development, pupil targets and curriculum investment needs) – (JHi left 6.00pm). TP sent an updated report on 11/12 and will ensure that in future, any updated information is made clearer. The report will be kept to the SIP priorities. The data is mainly around assessment which has changed greatly within school (EF joined) JHi asked prior to the meeting <i>Q. How do the attendance percentages work? In my mind attendance + authorised absence + unauthorised absence should equal 100%, but the numbers provide including for national don't add up like that?</i> A. With regards to attendance question, my understanding is you have an overall attendance percentage based on 1 session= half day and 2 sessions =full day. From the percentage representing absences, you then work out from that amount, the number of authorised and unauthorised absences. Authorised absence: when a child is away from school for a good reason that the school agrees with. Unauthorised absence: when a child is away from school without a reason the school agrees with, or with no reason given. I think numbers for national take into account suspensions, part time timetables which do not count as authorised or unauthorised. There was some confusion over the updated report. TP hopes to be able to give governors logins for Insight with pupil names hidden. With the change in assessment, it is not possible to compare previous years with the current year as the previous data is too basic. CPS works by assessing each child at a fixed point in	

	time, not by yr group or age. E.g. there may be a Yr5 child working at Yr3 level. There is still lots of work to do to capture all the data and progress is being made as we have drilled down – this has changed the number of children on track. The old data gave a broad overview whereas the new will be more detailed. <i>Q. How do you track progress within curriculum objectives? How do you know if they are below level?</i> A. Using Insight – teachers pinpoint where the child starts E.g. Yr3 should be 2S (secure) but could be ta2D (developing), meaning they haven't mastered Yr3. They will be exposed to Yr3 content with adaptations in practice. Teachers have a deeper understanding of where the children are. <i>Q. How do you track which elements children have picked up?</i> A. EDS – Emerging-Developing-Secure steps. These 3 steps over the year so from 2S to 3S. Good evidence is used to provide grading. VB suggested that MC spend some time with TP to look at the tracking process. <i>Q. If lots of children are working below; how do you identify this?</i> A. Teachers repeat elements and would be aware. It was asked for clarification that Insight is used to capture headlines while teachers use many tools to assess skills. This was confirmed. Formative assessment is completed periodically and teachers know when children are secure. This is teacher led. <i>Q. Within the writing data there are some groups which show a low %, is this a surprise to you? What is in place to support these children?</i> A. This is not a surprise. It is a learning experience for teachers, but not a surprise for these specific groups, it is just more exposed with the Insight data. We are moving to BookWrites scheme after careful consideration of the schemes available. BookWrites expects teachers to teach. The assessments have been weak, and we expect the gaps to close. We are making adaptations, especially with the older children, built around high-quality progressive links. WriteStuff limited children. We are excited to have BookWrites and can drill down on what children need. <i>Q. PP versus non-PP shows very large gaps, can you reassure us that strategies are in place to close the gaps?</i> A. We are completing CPD every term for those disadvantaged. Our culture of knowing the children is empowering us to do what is necessary. Children are at the forefront of what we do, and at the centre of all planning. <i>Q. Is there anything in place for those falling behind?</i> A. Targeted provision plus work in order to keep up, not catch up. This is available if needed and inclusive provision is SIP priority no 5. We are working hard to put things in place to welcome children into school and for them to become familiar with everything asap E.g. A child without English – we provide signage/information initially in their first language to help them become familiar with routines etc. While updating the data allows teachers to know where the children are, new schemes take time to embed, however we are moving/changing quickly and “green shoots of improvement” are visible. The culture change across the school is obvious. This was agreed by governors who have visited. Thanks to TP for his hard work in his first term at CPS.	MC/TP
8.	Surveys – Surveys have not been completed for a long time and TP to ensure the staff survey to be distributed in January, ready to discuss the results at the February FGB. Pupil voice will be addressed later in the year.	TP
9.	Governors visits and training – Governors were reminded to complete visit forms - these are used to evidence governor visits with Ofsted. Training is available from	

	DES (ask FL to book) and there is a wealth of training resources available on GovernorHub.	
10.	Reports – acknowledged by all • Safeguarding – included in HT report • Marketing – <i>Q. Is Instagram set up yet?</i> A. We need new permission forms to be completed by parents, and it will then be released. • GDPR - acknowledged • Attendance - acknowledged	
11.	Policies & Procedures – some policies had not been recommended by the LGs. LGs are requested to review ready for the February FGB. • Accessibility Plan – a different approach has been taken this year. TP has worked with CP and AG and this is aligned to the SIP. There was a discussion about the sensory space and how it is determined which children use it and when. The sensory space has been in use for many years, and it has not been identified as being used “wrongly”. An outdoor space is also available along with the reading cabin. It is intended that there will be another space for KS2 children to use upstairs - approved • Disciplinary – new version – suggested amendment to Facebook, Instagram and X to be incorporated - approved • Resolution (Grievance) – new version - c/f as not available • Staff Leave & Absence – new version - approved • Draft Catering Policy – c/f • PSHE - <i>Q. Do we monitor that content is age appropriate?</i> A. Mostly on professional trust. SLT do talk to children to check their understanding. While there is no requirement to check, there are laid out programs to follow. <i>Q. Do you check the suitability of content?</i> A. Teachers are not PHSE checked – they are Jigsaw trained and the scheme “hand-holds”. The wording is appropriate, and the year group content is appropriate - approved • CCTV – c/f as not available • Charging & Remissions – charges need updating - c/f as not available • Lettings - c/f as not available • Freedom of Information - c/f as not available • Information Security – minor changes – approved by JHi, to be confirmed by MC – adopted in the interim • Data Protection - c/f as not available	
12.	Items brought forward by the Chair – none	
13.	Impact Statement – Good discussion on assessment and pupil learning. This is a positive change and strength within school. We are pushing forward Wellbeing and community cohorts and furthering teaching and learning within school.	
	Date of next meeting – Wednesday 11 th February – in person in The Studio	

With no further business, the Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 7.00pm. MC left while other Governors went into Part 2

Agreed as a true record	Date