

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	23 rd April 2026, via TEAMS				
Present	Initials	Category of Governor			
Val Bishop	VB	Parent – Chair of FGB			
Mike Cooper	MC	Parent			
Jeremy Hidderley	JHi	Parent			
Jill Larcombe	JL	Foundation			
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 – Work commitments - Sanctioned			
In attendance	Initials	Capacity	Guests	Initials	Capacity
Fiona Lowe	FL	Clerk	Jo Hutter	JHu	SBM

The meeting started at 17.32.

	Agenda	Led by
1.	Present & Apologies	FL
2.	Declaration of Interests	FL
3.	Finance Items	JHu
4.	Part 2	VB/TP
5.	Minutes and Part 2 minutes of FGB meeting of 11 th February 2026, approval and matters arising	VB
6.	HT Report	TP
7.	Results of Surveys	TP
8.	Governor Visits & Training	All
9.	Reports	JL
10.	Policies & Procedures	All
11.	Items brought forward by the Chair	CMB
12.	Impact Statement	All
	Date of next meeting	FL

No	Item	Action
1.	Present and Apologies as above.	
2.	Declarations of Pecuniary Interest – none in addition to those already declared	
3.	Finance – all reports acknowledged by Governors School Budget Share and Capital Monitor Report – Capital c/forward predicted c/forward Month 11 Monitor report £3,956. Total positive c/forward predicted £231,802. The current expected end of year c/f figure of £227,846 was confirmed	

	• 3-5 year plan – the favoured plan (B2) is based on modelling 11 classes and it was briefly discussed and confirmed that year 3 (2028-29) will show a predicted deficit of £31,040. JHu is not anxious about this as so much can happen in 3 years. The overspend in staffing was highlighted; it is recommended that this is below 80%. JHu advised that this is being addressed and the action plan to avoid the third year deficit is to not replace staff who leave unless absolutely necessary and make further savings in-year as contracts come up for renewal. It is also hoped that increased partnership working with pre-school settings will attract additional pupils. To put this into context, if five extra pupils are on roll by Autumn Census October 2027 and one teaching assistant has left by then, there should not be a deficit for the financial year 2028-29. Q. Why is there an overspend in IT? A. <i>Cost of migrating to cloud. We hoped to use capital budget, but this was denied and we used school budget. Papercut is the only item remaining on our own servers and this will be replaced in October 2026. We will then switch off our servers.</i> It was agreed that JHu should continue modelling 11 classes moving forward. It was raised that the redundancy % should have been reviewed in 2017 with consultation with staff and unions. The present staff were not in post then and the minutes do not show that this was done. JHu asked to investigate consultation process, Clerk requested to send the guidance to all governors. • LA Services – it was agreed that JHu should remove obsolete contracts	JHu FL JHu
4.	Part 2 – the meeting moved into Part 2 at 17.46 for 19 minutes. <i>JHu left at the end of Part 2 discussion</i>	
5.	Minutes and Part 2 minutes of FGB meeting of 11th February 2026 – these were agreed as a true and correct account of that meeting and will be signed at a later date Matters arising • Governor profiles for newsletter – Item closed • New Governor visit form – shared and available on TEAMS • Parent Governor Vacancy – It was agreed to send these out w/c 27/04 • Foundation / LA Governor vacancies – covered in item 11	FL
6.	HT Report – thanks to TP for providing reports which give a better oversight of the happenings at CPS. We are still testing out to see what presentation works best for governors. Any comments let TP know. Comparisons were requested. The attendance data is well presented and gives comparison to local and national data. It is hopefully that attendance will continue to improve. The “steadiness” of improvement has dropped slightly and TP conscious that holiday period will have an effect. The message in the newsletter will be changed to keep interest going. Fiona Cridland attended the RISE hub in Cranbrook and found this interesting and helpful. They have a high energy, and attendance is related to culture with very clear protocol to follow when there is a drop in attendance, which CPS will adopt. We are doing the best we can to support all. Cranbrook was selected as they have above average attendance. CPS continue to celebrate attendance in a tasteful way with small improvements celebrated to fit in better with inclusion. Q. Is it possible to get education data for Young Carers for comparison? A. <i>This can be done on Insight and Governors can have log</i>	TP

	<i>ins. TP to arrange this.</i> It was commented that it is great to see the progress against the SIP and to see growth and development. Governors are encouraged to look at this when visiting the school. Q. Where is the SIP located? A. <i>TP to share again via the Clerk.</i>	TP/FL
7.	Pupil survey – VB expressed thanks to staff for enabling this. Governors said “It is great to see the comments – the thoughts and voices of our children.” “It is my favourite document this time around.” TP felt that some questions were a bit closed and some governors would like to see the raw data as well as the highlights. TP to share this. Q. There is a small % of comments which are negative throughout – is this the same children? A. <i>It is unknown.</i> Q. 35% were always “sometimes”. This is a very grey area. Do we know who these children are and can we do something different to ensure help/support is provided? A. <i>We are still in the transitional phase with some indifference - it is possibly SEN groups – we need cultural change around celebration to show them what they do is significant. SLT have done a lot of work with teachers and now we need to do more talking to children in groups; especially those who are quieter or under the radar.</i> It was agreed to repeat all surveys at the same time next year for comparison.	TP TP
8.	Governors’ visits and training – Visits are important as we need to have evidence of how we monitor the school. JHi shared his thoughts that visits mean governors have insight from both teachers and pupils. It is important to talk to teachers to see that they have all the resources they need to do the best for our children. Going back to basics – using display boards and asking questions, looking at the consistency between classrooms can give clues as to whether teachers fully understand subjects. A reminder of governor links to the SIP will be circulated. Governors are reminded to make regular visits to school, using a visit form and Q cards to assist them. Terms of Reference are used as guidance and expectations for Lead Governors. TP/JL will discuss to find a solution to her mobility issues to ensure that she can complete visits. Q. Can we have a Learning Walk? A. <i>Yes. This can be arranged for 5.00pm on the day of the May FGB. TP will ask a teacher to lead.</i> It was also agreed to arrange a ½ day visit for those able to attend during the school day during June, with an opportunity to meet staff informally.	FL TP/JL TP
9.	Reports – acknowledged by Governors. Some previous items have touched on this content. MC is now LG for Data Protection	
10.	Policies & Procedures – if available • SEND – approved • Staff Leave and Absence – updated to include disability criteria – approved • Information Security – c/f – awaiting further information • Data Protection – c/f • Freedom of Information – c/f • CCTV – c/f • Parking Policy – CPS is facing challenges around this. If a policy is adopted it would set clear guidelines for all car park users. It was agreed to ensure that it is clear that the car park is solely for the use of staff (including	KP

	volunteers and governors) or parents/visitors on school business or by prior arrangement. It was requested that KP review as H&S LG – c/f	
11.	Items brought forward by the Chair • Strategic Plan – alongside the SIP there is a requirement to have a separate strategic plan. We already have this information included but need to make it clearer. It was agreed that VB/TP will bring to next FGB. • Governor Recruitment – CMB has taken the hard decision to step down at the end of this academic year due to work commitments. She will be greatly missed. This will mean that there are 5 vacancies (1 Parent, 2 Co-opted, 1 Foundation and 1 LA). Parent Governor nominations will go out next week. There was a discussion on ways to recruit governors, and all governors will share ideas and suggestions.	VB/TP
12.	Impact Statement – Pupil Voice heard in the survey responses, 3-5 year plan reviewed and agreed. Governor visits into school highlighted. A planned Learning Walk for all Governors in May with plans for a ½ day.	
	Date of next meeting – Thursday 21 st May – The Studio, CPS. To be preceded by a Learning Walk at 5.00pm	

With no further business, the Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 19.17

Agreed as a true record	Date