'Let your light shine' before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."
Matthew 5:14-16

DERRY HILL CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VOLUNTARY AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL MINUTES
FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON
THURSDAY 23rd SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 6PM

PRESENT: Mark Paxford, Carol Foley, Richard French, Hayley Roberts, Zoe Armstrong, Martyn Riley, Naomi Olner, David Halls, Kimberly Brown and Rachael Clayden.

Clerk: Danny Holland.

1	**Welcome and Opening Prayer** The Chair, MP, welcomed governors to the first Full Governing Body meeting of the academic year. A particular welcome was extended to Rachael Clayden, a newly appointed Foundation Governor, attending their first Full Governing Body meeting. MP also acknowledged that this was likely to be the final Full Governing Body meeting for Carol Foley who was retiring at her term of office end date and expressed thanks for her commitment and contribution to the Governing Body over many years.
2	**Apologies for Absence** There were no apologies for absence. All governors were present.
3	**Register of Business & Pecuniary Interests** Governors had been asked to complete and return to DH the declarations of business and pecuniary interest's form. A discussion took place regarding the publication of interests on the school website. Governors noted that whilst declarations are recorded and published in line with statutory requirements, detailed personal business information is not made publicly available. The website records whether an interest exists but does not disclose detailed commercial information. No additional declarations of interest were made.
4	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting** The minutes of the meeting held on the 20th July 2026 had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following amendment was required:

	A duplicated section relating to governor monitoring and training within the minutes. Subject to removal of the duplicated wording, the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record. The minutes were approved subject to the agreed amendment.
5	**Matters Arising & Actions** (from previous minutes) **Matters Arising** Governors discussed the revised governor monitoring programme. It was noted that monitoring opportunities would now be spread across the academic year, enabling governors to undertake more regular monitoring activities whilst reducing disruption to teaching and learning. The following governor monitoring visits had been scheduled: • 25 November 2026 - 11.00am • 3 February 2027 - 1.00pm • 28 April 2027 - 9.00am • 28 June 2027 - 11.00am **Review of Actions**

Action Description	Owner	Status
Cross-check Monitoring Visits record	DH	Complete.
Add DfE Prevent Awareness Week training	DH	Complete.
Circulate PREVENT training for Governors	HR	Closed - Governors were advised that no additional Prevent training requirements existed beyond those already circulated.
Dates for Governor monitoring	HR	Complete.
Report template for monitoring to be circulated	HR	Complete.

6	**Head Teachers Update (verbal)** The Headteacher presented a detailed verbal report covering staffing, safeguarding, inclusion, curriculum development, attendance, personal development and leadership. **Staffing** Governors were informed that new staff had settled well into their roles. Meg Leach had joined the school as an Early Career Teacher in Year 1 and had made a positive

start. Amy had joined Year 2 and initial observations and monitoring had been encouraging. Georgia Davies had joined the school as an MDSA.
Recruitment for an additional MDSA continues as this remained an area of challenge for the school.

Admissions
HR reported that the school currently had 205 pupils on roll, although one pupil admission remained in progress and had not yet been fully reflected within the pupil census figures.

Governors noted that, in addition to the Year 6 cohort transferring to secondary school at the end of the summer term, four pupils had left the school during July due to family relocation outside the local area.

Since the start of the academic year, one pupil had been admitted to Year 4 and one pupil had been admitted to Year 6.

Safeguarding
HR reported that a revised safeguarding structure was now in place. Emma Asfaw had stepped down from her role as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Dan Heavey had taken on additional safeguarding responsibilities. Relevant training had been completed, including DSL and safer recruitment training.

All staff had completed annual safeguarding updates, and governors were informed that staff completion rates were significantly ahead of previous years.

Governors were advised that an external safeguarding concern had been raised and investigated appropriately. Processes had been reviewed, discussions had taken place with the safeguarding governor and any necessary guidance had been issued to staff.

HR reported that all staff had completed annual anaphylaxis training and additional EpiPens had been purchased. The school now has eight spare EpiPens, ensuring sufficient cover for both educational visits and use within school.

Governors received an update regarding developments to safeguarding and behaviour recording systems through CPOMS.

Question: Has there been much change since the review of reflection procedures and behaviour systems? **Response:** The Headteacher explained that the revised arrangements remained focused on supporting pupils to understand and improve behaviour rather than acting as a punitive measure. Feedback obtained through pupil voice activities indicated that pupils understood the approach and viewed it positively. Leaders considered that the enhanced focus on reflection and positive behaviour had

had a beneficial impact across the school.

Question: Has a recent SCR check been completed? **Response:** The Headteacher confirmed that a review had taken place. A number of items linked to recent appointments remained in progress and a further review had been scheduled to ensure full compliance.

Inclusion
A new Inclusion Team had been established consisting of the Headteacher, SENDCo, Pupil Premium Lead and Inclusion Governor.

Governors were informed that Derry Hill would participate in a newly established Chippenham Rural Hub Inclusion Group, allowing schools to collaborate more effectively around vulnerable pupils and inclusion priorities.

A significant discussion took place regarding changes to DFE Free School Meals and Pupil Premium arrangements.

HR outlined the introduction of revised eligibility criteria and explained the distinction between targeted and expanded entitlement categories. As a result of these changes there has been a reduction in pupils classified within the targeted funding category. Whilst funding would continue to be received for some pupils, uncertainty remained around future accountability arrangements and how Ofsted would view data relating to disadvantaged learners.

Question: How will the changes to Pupil Premium and Free School Meal eligibility affect support provided to disadvantaged pupils? **Response:** HR explained that although funding arrangements had changed, there was no plan to reduce support available to disadvantaged pupils. The school would continue to monitor and support all pupils previously identified pending greater clarity regarding accountability measures and expectations from the DFE.

Question: Will pupils who no longer attract Pupil Premium funding continue to be monitored? **Response:** MR confirmed that all previously identified disadvantaged pupils would continue to be monitored. The school considered that pupil needs had not changed simply because funding arrangements had been revised.

Question: What is the rationale behind the national changes? **Response:** Limited information had been provided from the DFE, although it appeared that the intention was to target funding more precisely.

Governors also received confirmation that updated SEND documentation had been completed and would be published in accordance with statutory requirements.

Curriculum and Teaching
HR fedback that a recent School Improvement Advisor visit had been highly positive and that staff had settled well into their new teaching arrangements.

Governors were informed that the Literacy Tree curriculum continued to secure strong outcomes in writing and that Reading Leaves had become embedded across the school. The revised mathematics curriculum, developed by Dan Heavey and Martyn Riley, had been well received by staff and pupils and early indications suggested positive impact.

Attendance and Behaviour
Attendance remained a notable strength.

HR reported that overall attendance remained above national averages and above the school's predicted targets. Persistent absence and severe absence both remained below national figures. Governors noted that the school had performed strongly when compared to similar schools.

The behaviour policy had been rewritten using the Wiltshire model template following LA guidance. HR confirmed that school systems and principles remained unchanged and that changes related primarily to compliance with updated requirements.

Governors received an update on modifications made to CPOMS, enabling behaviour incidents and reflection sessions to be monitored more effectively.

Personal Development, RSHE and Wellbeing
Governors received an update regarding the launch of the OPAL Project.

Staff training had taken place during September and HR reported that the project had been well received. Governors were informed that a governor representative would be required to support the OPAL working group.

Governors also received an update regarding implementation of the revised PSHE and RSHE curriculum.

HR outlined plans to communicate RSHE curriculum content to parents and explained that detailed information would be shared, including guidance regarding parental rights and curriculum expectations.

Question: Will governors have an opportunity to see the communication being sent to parents? **Response:** The Headteacher confirmed that governors would be able to have sight of the information being provided to parents for awareness.

	EYFS HR reported concerns being discussed nationally regarding EYFS/Reception children being school readiness. Although Derry Hill's Reception cohort remained positive overall, staff had identified higher levels of emotional regulation needs than in previous years. Similar concerns had been highlighted by schools across Wiltshire and nationally. Governors were advised that baseline assessments had been completed and whilst noting the challenges, governors recognised the provision remained strong and that external feedback regarding the quality of provision had been highly positive. **Leadership** Governors received an update regarding changes within LA school improvement team. Governors were advised that the School Development Plan had been updated to reflect current priorities relating to safeguarding, inclusion, curriculum development, attendance and pupil outcomes.
7	**Data** MR presented pupil performance and attainment data. Governors were pleased to note exceptionally strong EYFS outcomes alongside continued strengths in phonics. Writing outcomes were identified as a significant strength, with writing progress placing the school substantially above national figures. Discussion focused on future priorities and the groups of pupils requiring the greatest level of support moving forward. **Question:** Does the target group now consist primarily of pupils working around the Expected Standard rather than those already achieving Greater Depth? **Response:** MR confirmed that whilst maintaining challenge for higher attaining pupils remained important, significant focus was being given to pupils working just below age-related expectations. A range of interventions and curriculum developments had been implemented specifically to support this group. **Question:** Looking at the data, could the school be perceived as prioritising Greater Depth pupils rather than those working at the Expected Standard? **Response:** MR explained that strong Greater Depth outcomes reflected curriculum development and effective teaching over a number of years. Current interventions and curriculum developments were increasingly focused upon pupils working towards the Expected Standard. These priorities were appropriately reflected within the School Development Plan and intervention arrangements. **Question:** Given the strong Greater Depth outcomes, is there a risk that pupils working at Expected Standard receive less focus? **Response:** MR explained that recent

	curriculum developments, intervention programmes and Number Stacks were specifically designed to support "cusp" pupils and ensure they successfully achieve age-related expectations.
8	**Finance** The Budget Monitoring Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. KB advised that the budget remained broadly in line with expectations. KB highlighted the key variances within the budget monitoring report. Additional income had been received through a Supply Pool Insurance claim and a refund relating to staff cover arrangements. Governors noted that the Universal Infant Free School Meals grant had been reduced by approximately £4,000 as a result of changes to national funding arrangements. Staffing budgets showed variances relating to the nationally agreed teachers' pay award. Governors were advised that teacher pay had increased by 3.5% whereas local authority budget guidance had assumed a 2% increase. The school was expecting a grant to partially offset the increase later in the year. Support staff pay awards had been agreed at 3.3%, slightly above the 3% budget assumption. The Pupil Premium and PE grant variances were discussed. Governors were advised that Pupil Premium expenditure would balance once planned spending had been allocated. Confirmation of the final PE Grant allocation had not yet been received from the DfE, although all funding received would be fully utilised. Governors noted that the Diocese Fund currently stood at approximately £14,000. Potential future expenditure included replacement interactive classroom boards, decoration work throughout the school and investment linked to the OPAL play project. **Question:** Governors asked what pay increase assumptions had been built into the budget. **Response:** It was confirmed that teachers' budgets had been modelled on a 3% increase which was at the direction of the LA whereas the final agreed increase was 3.5%. **Question:** Why are staffing variances appearing within the budget monitoring report? **Response:** It was explained that variances largely related to national pay increases, pension contributions and coding arrangements for staff employed across multiple contracts. **Question:** Is any additional funding available to support increasing costs associated with allergy management and EpiPens? **Response:** HR advised that discussions were taking place nationally; however, no additional funding had yet been announced.

	Question: Governors asked whether local businesses or farmers could support school meal provision through donations. **Response:** HR explained that catering arrangements were managed through the contractor, which limited the school's ability to directly influence food sourcing. However, the suggestion was welcomed.
9	**Premises, Health and Safety** KB informed Governors that the summer maintenance works had been completed successfully. The only remaining report awaited was the Legionella inspection report. Initial feedback suggested that no significant concerns had been identified. Emergency lighting remedial works had proved more expensive than anticipated due to specialist battery requirements. To reduce costs, the school's Caretaker, who has an electrical background, would undertake some of the replacement works before formal testing was completed.
10	**Governance** **Code of Conduct** - Governors approved and adopted the Governor Code of Conduct for the 2026/27 academic year. **Monitoring & Training -** Governors reviewed monitoring arrangements for the academic year. The revised monitoring template had been updated and would be circulated to all governors.
11	**Church School Distinctiveness** Alison Shears had assumed responsibility for RE, Collective Worship and Church School Distinctiveness. Governors were advised that Celia Hicks, who had been involved in writing the Wiltshire RE Agreed Syllabus, would be supporting the school and meeting with Alison to assist implementation of the new syllabus. Further support would also be available through the Chippenham Village Hub network. Governors were advised that Christian Distinctiveness monitoring meetings would be scheduled and circulated to governors in due course. **Question:** Has implementation of the revised Wiltshire RE syllabus commenced? **Response:** HR confirmed that implementation had begun from beginning of this academic year. Long-term curriculum planning had been completed and teachers were now delivering the revised syllabus. Appropriate support arrangements were in place through diocesan advisers and hub networks.

12	**Policies** The following policies had been circulated prior to the meeting: • Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy - proposed by MP and seconded by RF. The policy was unanimously approved. • SEND Policy - proposed by DH and seconded by CF. The policy was unanimously approved. The following policies were approved 'en-block' subject to identified amendments being reviewed. • Child Missing in Education • Maths • Phonics and Early Reading • Low Level Concerns • School Behaviour • Attendance • RSHE • PHSE • Charging and Remissions Policy – due to the changes in the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) eligibility the policy wording in respect of the support for children eligible for PPG would be amended prior to publication. • Allergy/Anaphylaxis The following LA Human Resources policies were noted: • Staff Code of Conduct • Staff Behaviour • Disciplinary • Grievance • Whistleblowing - Governors were informed that that since circulating the policy the LA had released a further update to the model policy. It was agreed that the revised version would be reviewed and recirculated.
13	**AOB** **Headteacher Performance Management** MP advised that the Headteacher Performance Management Review meeting has been scheduled for October 2026. Arrangements for governor participation and attendance would be confirmed outside of the meeting. **Allergy Management**

	HR reported that all staff had completed the required training and that additional EpiPens had been purchased to strengthen emergency provision both within school and on educational visits. **Question:** Are parents aware of any proposed changes to the school's allergy management procedures? **Response:** HR confirmed that no changes had been communicated to parents. The school was continuing to review its internal procedures and consider the implications of emerging guidance. Should any changes to current arrangements be required, parents would be informed once the school's procedures had been agreed and finalised. **Question:** Why are some organisations moving away from the concept of nut-free schools? **Response:** HR explained that current guidance increasingly promotes education, risk awareness and effective emergency procedures rather than relying solely upon restrictions relating to specific allergens. However, pupil safety would remain the primary consideration in any future discussions relating to allergy management. **Headteacher Performance Management** Governors noted that the Headteacher Performance Management Review meeting had been scheduled for October 2026. Arrangements for governor participation and attendance would be confirmed outside of the meeting. The meeting closed with a prayer.
14	**Next Meeting – 2nd December 2026 in school at 6pm**

ACTIONS

Action Description	Owner	Status
Amendment to previous minutes to be updated.	DH	
Circulate Christian Distinctiveness monitoring dates	HR	
Amend Charging and Remissions Policy and return for approval	HR	
Review and update the Whistleblowing Policy and return to governors for noting	HR	
Identify a governor representative for the OPAL working group	All	
Circulate RSHE parent communication for governor awareness when ready.	HR	

Circulate revised governor monitoring template and monitoring schedule	HR	