



St George's Primary School

Full Governor Body Meeting

Thursday 19 June 2025

Lower Site 5:30pm

Present

Community Governors

B. Clark	
J. Marshall	
C. Scott	Chair
M. Wiggins	

Parent Governors

C. Lucking
J. King
J. Pollard

Staff Governors

B. Cassidy	Head Teacher
J. Thomas	

Also Present

K. Choudhary	Clerk
T. Skarratts-Jackson	Deputy HT

Apologies

W. Alderton
P. Dunning
T. Freeman

Did Not Attend

N/A

Item 1 Welcome, Apologies and declarations of AoB

- 1.1 Apologies noted and received as above.
- 1.2 C. Scott welcomed J. Carlson to FGB.

Item 2 Declaration of any business or pecuniary interests

- 2.1 N/A

Item 3 Minutes of previous meeting and action points

- 3.1 Minutes accepted as a true and accurate record.
- 3.2 All actions completed.

Item 4 Clerk's Actions and Updates

- 4.1 Papers circulated as part of the papers.
- 4.2 K. Choudhary discussed the following with FGB:
- 4.3 FGB informed that both C. Scott (Chair) and J. Marshall (Vice Chair) had agreed to continue in post for another year.
- 4.3.1 No objections raised.
- 4.3.2 **DECISION TAKEN:** Roles reconfirmed.
- 4.4 K. Choudhary confirmed the Governor Information System (**GIAS**) records had been updated to include new governors.
- 4.4.1 FGB informed that only school email addresses are used in DfE GIAS system to maintain security.
- 4.5 K. Choudhary emphasised that governor attendance data is now publicly available on the school website.
- 4.5.1 SLT invest significant time preparing papers; governors were urged to continue prioritising attendance.
- 4.5.2 FGB reminded to pre-read all papers and focus on changes rather than full re-reads of policies.
- 4.6 FGB informed that the next skills audit due March 2026, but K. Choudhary will in coming days to allow earlier completion if preferred.
- 4.6.1 K. Choudhary reiterated this is statutory good practice and increasingly required by Wirral LA.
- 4.7 K. Choudhary expressed satisfaction with progress: 22 visits recorded already this academic year.

- 4.7.1 FGB reminded that these forms are critical as evidence for OFSTED.
- 4.8 Merger of National College with School Bus noted and governors encouraged to complete outstanding training modules.
- 4.9 K. Choudhary touched on nominated Governor roles. SLT stated that they will meet next week and discuss any gaps.
- 4.9.1 **ACTION 1 (11/25):** K. Choudhary will work with SLT to identify any link gaps and discuss options with Governors electronically.
- 4.10 FGB reminded that meetings will continue to be planned jointly by committee chairs and SLT and that maximum meeting length will be 90 minutes.

Item 5 Actions Taken from Academy Review and Informal FGB 09.10.25

- 5.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 5.2 FGB reminded of the school's position following the decision not to join PMAT and that clear messaging has been issued to governors, parents, and staff explaining the decision.
- 5.3 SLT stated that the school has held recent meetings with LA HR, LA Finance and local headteachers to ensure that we have strategic and operational capacity as a maintained school
- 5.4 FGB asked what feedback has there been from Weatherhead?
- 5.5 **RESOLUTION:** Very little formal feedback so far. However, existing collaborations continue: Maths Mastery project, English excellence project across multiple schools and ongoing secondary transition work. No further contact yet from trustees after the withdrawal from PMAT.

Item 6 Strategic Challenges Facing the School

- 6.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 6.2 SLT delivered a report outlining the gravity of current and emerging financial and system-level pressures, highlighting:

National Funding Context:

- The 2026/27 funding agreements were received on 20 November. Maximum school budget increase is 2.1%, though actual increase likely lower due to LA adjustments.
- Inflation and cost increases remain significantly higher, meaning a real-terms cut.
- Teacher pay award of 6.5% over three years is expected to be unfunded.

Rising Costs & Financial Pressures:

- Exponential increases in utilities and food
- Salary uplifts well above inflation
- Lack of flexibility following recent restructure
- Reduction in organisational resilience.

SEND Funding Reform

- SEND funding transferring from LAs to central government.

6.3 FGB asked what is the benefit of this move?

6.4 **RESOLUTION:** There is no immediate benefit. It was suggested that the sector is not fit for purpose; high needs funding increasingly spent on some unregulated, poor-quality external provision.

6.5 SLT emphasised that despite challenges, school is a positive and thriving environment. Yet strategic caution is essential to maintain stability in the next 24 months.

6.6 FGB reminded that the following was shared:

- RPC informed that [Teacher pay awards already proposed](#) (6.5% over 3 years)
- CPC had full updates regarding [OFSTED New Inspection Framework](#) and [Government's response to national curriculum review to be implemented from September 2027.](#)

Item 7 School Uniform Regulations

7.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

7.2 SLT reviewed new [DfE uniform guidance](#) stating that the school is fully compliant with statutory expectations.

7.3 SLT suggested that logo-free, low-cost supermarket uniform remains available for under £5.

7.4 SLT highlighted that uniform bank continues to support families.

7.5 SLT stated that non-uniform days may disadvantage children from socioeconomically deprived households.

7.6 SLT stated that the school PE expectations to be reviewed and standardised.

7.7 FGB asked has plain black trainers helped?

7.8 **RESOLUTION:** Yes. This approach has been positive, inclusive, and accessible for families.

7.9 **ACTION 2(11/25):** The school's uniform policy to be rewritten and revised version to be brought to next FGB.

Item 8 FGB and 3-year SPD aims

- 8.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 8.2 SLT presented the three-year SDP aims, highlighting the four long-term aims:
- **Embed Curriculum for Excellence and Teaching & Learning Policy**, with strong focus on SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
 - **Strengthen partnerships** locally and regionally.
 - **Ensure long-term resource planning**, considering restructuring impacts.
 - **Develop inclusive practice** across all phases.
- 8.3 Governors have access to all the detailed implementation and planning documents that sit under the overarching 3 year SDP.

Item 9 Smartphone Free Consultation

- 9.1 Circulated as part of the papers – and on school site
- 9.2 SLT suggested that strong progress on the school’s smartphone initiative.
- 9.3 The community response has been great with over 200 families have signed the school’s “smartphone-free” pledge.
- 9.4 SLT reminded FGB that they had previously fully endorsed this approach.
- 9.5 Wirral-wide collaboration now underway, led by the Assistant Director for Education.
- 9.6 The school will host a Wallasey-wide parent/carers event on 04/02/26 with expert external partner [Papaya](#).
- 9.7 FGB asked are Wirral schools moving toward a full ban?
- 9.8 **RESOLUTION:** No, as complete bans are perceived to be unenforceable. It was suggested that a likely position could be that children may carry phones but the use of them remains strictly forbidden.
- 9.9 SLT suggested that the focus should be on consistency, parent confidence, and digital safety, not punitive measures.

Item 10 Finance and Premises Issues

- 10.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 10.2 SLT stated that an attempt to secure three quotes for new bin store was unsuccessful.
- 10.3 Two quotes reviewed: contract awarded to Brearsmith.

- 10.4 FGB briefed on the creation of St George's & Wallasey Community Foundation Trust. Its purpose is to:
- To support the MUGA project and future fundraising
 - To ensure financial probity
 - To avoid placing excessive responsibility on PTA volunteers
 - Draft policies and governance protocols already written.
- 10.5 FGB asked is the trust being linked with organisations who can source additional grants?
- 10.6 **RESOLUTION:** Yes. A partner organisation has already been secured.
- 10.7 SLT invited governors to become trustees if interested.

Item 11 Staff Well Being

- 11.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 11.2 SLT shared strategic challenges with teacher recruitment and retention and key issues and presented a detailed wellbeing update:
- [Teacher Wellbeing Index 2025](#)
 - [Schools Week summary article](#)
- 11.3 J. Thomas highlighted that the Teacher Wellbeing Index shows:
- Lowest well-being scores since 2019
 - 76% of staff nationally report stress
 - 36% exhibit symptoms consistent with clinical depression
 - Recruitment and retention risks escalating
- 11.4 SLT stated that despite national trends, internal indicators at St George's remain strong:
- 90% of staff positive about parental communication
 - Staff value supportive communication expectations and leadership responsiveness
- 11.5 FGB asked why does staff wellbeing deteriorate so suddenly?
- 11.6 **RESOLUTION:** Due to restructures, there is now less organisational resilience. A few staff absences can rapidly shift pressure levels.
- 11.7 SLT noted that the school's absence rate currently 300% higher than at this point last year and that recruitment market extremely fragile.

Item 12 Statutory and Annual Reporting Arrangements

- 12.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

- 12.2 FGB informed that all documents have been sent to relevant committees.
- 12.3 Published on website are:
- 2025-26 Attendance Policy and Strategy
 - 2025-28 Updated Pupil Premium Report
 - 2025 - 26 Sports Premium Grant Report
 - 2025 Data and Standards Report
 - 2025 Parent Survey
 - 2025 SEND Report
 - November 2025 IDSR
- 12.4 Self Evaluation report will be written in February 2026 in line with New OFSTED Inspection Framework.

Item 13 Updated Inspection Dashboard Summary (IDSR)

- 13.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 13.2 FGB shared a live version of DfE IDSR.
- 13.3 FGB informed that that they should have access to PDF interactive dashboard but that it is very temperamental.
- 13.4 SLT suggested that the document is 186 pages long; mostly no new information.
- 13.5 SLT stated that benchmarking extremely useful for Standards Committee visits.
- 13.6 FGB asked why is the interactive PDF version unreliable?
- 13.7 **RESOLUTION:** Widespread technical issues reported nationally; inconsistent loading across devices.

Item 14 Head Teacher's Report to Governors

- 14.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 14.2 B. Cassidy walked FGB through the report, noting:
- Behaviour & Safeguarding**
- Behaviour strong; low suspensions.
 - Seven bullying logs (each carefully investigated).
 - Five racism incidents - an increase reflecting national tensions.
 - Reports of transphobic language remain very low.
 - Strong work from DSLs amid rising case complexity.
- Mobility & Admissions**
- Very low mobility (well under 1%).
 - School continues to be oversubscribed in most year groups.

Complaints

- Three formal complaints this year.
- Two linked to staff conduct; one linked to body consent - all resolved.

Staffing

- B. Cassidy explained that the staff leaver section of the Headteacher's Report contains incorrect figures, caused by a software error that deleted leaver data.
- Recruitment pressures remain acute.

14.3 **ACTION 3 (11/25):** B. Cassidy to reissue corrected leaver data in report.

Item 15 Annual Policy and Key Document Audit

15.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

15.2 FGB reminded that these documents are provided to ensure oversight and compliance by governors.

15.3 SLT presented the live policy audit spreadsheet, highlighting:

- All renewal dates logged.
- Red flags indicate required actions.
- GDPR policies will require significant revision for 2026 legislation.
- Governors will be provided with a live policy document with direct links to each policy folder.

15.4 **ACTION 4 (11/25):** SLT to provide FGB with a live policy document with direct links to each policy folder.

Item 16 Policy Renewals

16.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

16.2 FGB informed that all listed policies renewed with no substantive changes to most policies. Highlights:

- **Drugs Policy** – no major changes
- **Assessment Policy** – reviewed
- **Intimate Care Policy** – unchanged
- **EYFS Policy** – updated with “school readiness” content
- **F1 Admissions Policy** – updated for new DfE staff admissions criteria
- **Dragon Club Policy** – reviewed
- **RSE Policy** – no significant changes

16.3 **DECISION TAKEN:** Policies approved without objection.

Item 17 **Complaints Policy**

- 17.1 Circulated as part of the minutes.
- 17.2 SLT highlighted renewed (November 2025) in line with new [DfE guidelines](#):
- General Complaints Policy
 - Policy for Serial & Unreasonable Complaints.
 - Note that DfE has asked for renewal dates to be added to school website. Updated website page shared in the meeting.
- <https://www.stgeorges.wirral.sch.uk/Complaints-Policies/>
- 17.3 FGB reminded not to rely solely on school interpretation but also review DfE guidance directly.

Item 18 **HR SLA**

- 18.1 Circulated as part of the minutes.
- 18.2 FGB informed that the school is looking towards a new 3-year SLA and has received quotes from:
- Worknest @ £7,000
 - Wirral LA @ £12,500
 - Cook's Lawyers and HR @£7655.10
- 18.3 FGB raised concerns and recent dissatisfaction with Worknest response times during a complex case.
- 18.4 SLT suggested that Local Authority HR previously seen as poor value, but new leadership is restructuring services. As such, they have asked for some time to provide a revised quote.
- 18.5 FGB asked how can the LA suddenly reduce the price?
- 18.6 **RESOLUTION:** New Head of HR is revising the entire operating model, and it was suggested that the LA wants the school to remain with the LA. It was also suggested that they will match competitors' prices but details still unclear.
- 18.7 FGB asked do private HR providers struggle with Wirral LA specific policies?
- 18.8 **RESOLUTION:** Yes. Local Authority HR aligns better with LA policies, but service quality must improve.
- 18.9 **DECISION TAKEN:** FGB agreed to defer the decision to RPC chair (J. King) working with HT and SBM once LA formal proposal is received.

Item 19 **Council Admissions Consultation**

- 19.1 Circulated as part of the minutes.

19.2 Summary of consultation documents was shared with FGB and SLT invited to respond to LA admissions consultation.

19.3 SLT highlighted:

- Clear requirement for single parental application even where parents are separated.
- New detail on deferred start for 4/5 year olds.
- Fair Access Protocol offers equity but brings challenges

19.4 Governors invited to send comments by 1 January 2026.

Item 20 DfE and Breakfast Clubs

20.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

20.2 SLT summarised the new DfE funding model.

Operating Model:

- open to all pupils on roll in Reception to Year 6
- at least 30 minutes in duration, held immediately before the start of each compulsory school day
- free and accessible
- providing breakfasts that meet the School Food Standards for England
- located on, or in the vicinity of, the school site

Funding Offer:

- £1,000 start-up grant
- £25/day fixed cost
- £1/pupil/day attending

Operational Barriers:

- Staffing
- Space
- Catering logistics
- Impact on wraparound provision staffing model
- Risk of operational deficit
- Capacity for supervision.

20.3 FGB asked could breakfast be grab-and-go?

20.4 **RESOLUTION:** No. We can serve in this way but must provide 30 mins supervision. Safeguarding and supervision requirements prohibit this.

20.5 FGB informed that the school will not apply in this round. A strategic plan will be developed for future consideration. There are many hurdles for the school to overcome including:

Item 21 RPC 06.11.25 Action Points and Updates

- 21.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 21.2 Updates noted; HR SLA quotes forwarded as requested.
- 21.3 No further questions raised.

Item 22 CPC 11.11.25 Action Points and Updates

- 22.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 22.2 T. Skarratts-Jackson revisited safeguarding report, providing figures on:
- 22.3 T. Skarratts-Jackson provided figures on:
 - Looked After Children
 - Special Guardianship Orders
 - Child in Need cases
 - Early Help cases
- 23.4 SLT highlighted severe system pressures and gave examples illustrating:
 - Long delays (days) in receiving Operation Encompass notifications
 - Cases closed without informing the school
 - Children needing CP plans but thresholds not met
 - Social workers asking for evidence already supplied
 - Lack of agency attendance at CIN/CP meetings
- 23.5 FGB expressed concern that schools are left “holding risk” without adequate statutory support.

Item 23 Governing Body Training Requests

- 23.1 **ACTION 5 (11/25):** Governors to complete their Skills Audit by February 2026. K. Choudhary to review collective areas of FGB strength and weakness to identify training needs.

Item 24 AOB

- 24.1 N/A

Item 25 Date of next meeting

- 25.1 Thursday 12 March 2026, 5:30pm
- 25.2 Meeting finished at 7:00pm

Item	Summary of actions from meeting	Whom	Date to be completed
4.9.1	ACTION 1 (11/25): K. Choudhary will work with SLT to identify any link gaps and discuss options with Governors electronically.	SLT K. Choudhary	Dec '25
7.9	ACTION 2(11/25): The school's uniform policy to be rewritten and revised version to be brought to next FGB.	SLT	Mar '26
14.3	ACTION 3 (11/25): B. Cassidy to reissue corrected leaver data in report.	B. Cassidy	Dec '25
15.4	ACTION 4 (11/25): SLT to provide FGB with a live policy document with direct links to each policy folder.	SLT	Jan '26
23.1	ACTION 5 (11/25): Governors to complete their Skills Audit by February 2026. K. Choudhary to review collective areas of FGB strength and weakness to identify training needs.	FGB K. Choudhary	Feb '26