



Gildredge House

Full Governing Board - Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday 25th September 2025
Meeting Venue: Room TG5 at Gildredge House School
Meeting Time: 5:15pm

Governors: Richard Thornhill, *(RT)*, Chair
Julian Mace, *(JM)*, Vice Chair
E Erasmus, *(EE)*
Lucy Haggis, *(LH)*
Gabrielle Mace, *(GM)*
Lea Owen, *(LO)*
Katharine Paradas, *(KT)*

Ex officio: Craig Bull, *(CBu)*, Executive Head Teacher

Also in attendance: Vickie Jenkins, *(HOS)*, Head of Secondary
Gemma Nesbit, *(DOF)*, Director of Finance
Helen Punter-Bruce, *(HOP)*, Head of Primary

Clerk to Governors: Rif Aslam *(RA)*

Apologies: J Swann, *(JSw)*, M Taylor *(MT)*, J Searle *(JSe)*, L Callnon *(LC)*, N Uzorka Ion *(NUI)*

Full Governing Board – Minutes 25th September 2025

Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair welcomed Governors & SLT to meeting. • Chair accepted apologies for absence from JSw, MT, JSe, LC and NUI 	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interests There were no declarations of interest made.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of previous Governing Board Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors agreed the Minutes as an accurate record of 3 July 2025 FGB. Chair to sign a copy. 	
4.	<p>Governance Matters</p> <p>Personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair introduced and welcomed new Parent Governor, LH. • Chair introduced and welcomed EE. Board approved appointment of EE as governor. • Chair advised that JM’s term ends on 30 Sept. JM confirmed he was happy to continue. Board approved reappointment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of Chair and Vice Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clerk confirmed that only nominee for Chair was RT ○ Clerk confirmed that only nominee for Vice Chair JM <p>17:25 RT left room whilst voting commenced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governors elected RT as Chair <p>17:30 RT returned to room and JM left whilst voting commenced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governors elected JM as Vice Chair (VC) <p>17:35 JM returned to room.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clerk confirmed both positions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of Committee Chairs and Deputies <p>Chair confirmed Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs were happy to take on positions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education: LO as Chair. JSw as Vice Chair ○ Enterprise: RT as Chair. Vice Chair position to be discussed. ○ Admissions: GM as Chair. JM and CBU are also members. Open invitation to anyone else. ○ Policies Sub Committee – RT, MT & JM. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of Link Governors <p>Chair confirmed Link Governors were happy to take on positions as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SEND: EE (Secondary) & NUI (Primary) ○ Safeguarding: JSw ○ Careers: NUI ○ Curriculum: JSw ○ Personal Development: NUI ○ Pupil Premium: GM ○ Literacy: KP ○ Health & Safety: LC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of Panels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Head Teachers Performance Review: RT, JM and JSw ○ Pay & Progression: RT, JM and JSw 	

5.	<p>Action Summary Report EHT highlighted the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Pulse Survey – DHR will report on finding alternative to Enterprise Committee. • Income generation – Meeting took place with JSe and DOF will prepare business case. • Tour of School – EHT will advise Clerk of dates. • Early Years – HOP advised that our reception intake comes across from 30+ providers. Issues are around speech, language and communication. HOP preparing report. • Heat Source Pump – Service due in next 2 weeks. Original installer has gone bust. We have not signed off completion report. 	EHT/Clerk
6.	<p>Items not already on the agenda Chair confirmed there were none.</p>	
7.	<p>Chair's Correspondence Chair gave a recap of ongoing correspondence. <u>Governors approved purchase of SLA with Governor Services.</u> <u>Governors approved further exploration of legal services provided by ESCC.</u></p>	DOF Chair/DHR
8.	<p>Executive Head Teacher's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer School / Transition Update – EHT referred to paper and highlighted positive feedback about the transition process. This begins in Term 5. 107 students attended the Summer School and took part in activities to ease their transition to Secondary. HOS added that this is the 2nd year we have run it ourselves and processes are now embedded. HOS added we are seeing undisclosed needs, particularly noted rise in autism numbers. <u>Governor enquired</u> when Summer School took place. EHT advised 20-22 August. <u>Governor asked</u> how many of the 107 students were external. HOS offered to check numbers. <u>VC commended</u> the transition and Summer School events and wished to pass on the Board's gratitude to the Staff involved. • Ofsted Inspection Framework – EHT referred to paper. New framework will begin in November. The aim is to give parents clearer information through a report card with a 5 point scale, replacing the single word grades. <u>Governor asked</u> whether schools will still lead by saying what they think they are. EHT advised yes. • Initial Public Assessments/Exams Analysis – EHT invited Heads of School to speak. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary – HOP referred to paper and highlighted the following: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early Years - results at 73% were above East Sussex and National. Physical Development aspect particularly impressive. Different things are assessed beyond Early Years and perhaps this requires a bridging document. ▪ Year 1 – pleased with phonics results. We are one of the strongest schools. A challenging cohort but interventions and partnership with parents worked well. ▪ Year 4 - Good results in multiplication tables. ▪ Key Stage 2 – impressive results in reading. A testament to the work of LLe (Literacy Lead). ▪ Year 6 – made phenomenal progress. ○ Secondary – HOS referred to paper and advised that this is provisional data. Reviews of marking have led to our results going up. What we predicted happened. More students have achieved 7+ grades. Above East Sussex average. We're ranked 1st in Eastbourne for students achieving 5+ in Maths. Focus this year will be intervening early. Notable improvement in Geography. Credit to Lead Practitioner role in helping to achieve results across subjects. English department faced challenges with staff shortages but our external consultants worked tirelessly. This academic year, we have a fully staffed English Department. <u>Governor congratulated</u> SLT and staff for fantastic outcomes. <u>Governors echoed</u> commendations. 	HOS EHT

	<p>Governor queried whether there was capacity to target both lower and higher achievers. HOS referred to appointment of Pupil Premium Mentor with Head of Year focusing on higher performing children.</p> <p>Governor questioned how long Lead Practitioner role had left in her contract. HOS advised 1 year.</p> <p>Governor suggested that this be examined in Enterprise Committee.</p> <p>Chair reiterated congratulations on behalf of Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDP 224/25 Final Review – EHT referred to paper and highlighted governors tracking of targets throughout year with monitoring visits. Ofsted Inspection in October and our rating of good showed we were on the right track. The momentum continued after that. Term 5 & 6 Rag ratings continue into this year. <p>VC noted that simple easy targets have not been picked in SDP.</p> <p>Governor enquired who has taken over from JTo. EHT advised DOD. Whole school curriculum sits under Heads of School.</p> <p>Governor asked if there was any resistance from staff in implementing the Gildredge House 5. Both HOS and HOP stated not but there were inconsistencies. CPD in place to upskill staff. EHT added that we know who needs support and we are providing that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDP 25/26 – EHT pointed out that SDP has developed every year. We are doing things differently as we have matured as an organisation. SDP is a tool to drive school improvement. Targets agreed as part of SEF. SDP there to track those targets. 7 SDP targets were shared with colleagues in September. EHT invited the Heads of School to highlight aspects of their SDP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SDP1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HOP – advised Primary teachers teach every subject but everyone will lead on a subject. Focus will be oracy. ▪ HOS - advised that focus will be on lesson plans and scheme of learning. Continue with vocabulary and subject specific reading. ○ SDP2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HOP – ensure all teachers create high standards in classrooms. Upskill TAs. ▪ HOS – develop subject specific CPD and tutor time programme. Focus on Pupil Premium students with PP Mentor role. ○ SDP3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HOP – assessment and accountability of middle leaders. ▪ HOS – move to 60 min lessons. Ensure effective use of extra 10 mins. ○ SDP4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HOP – focus on systems and processing to support students. Examine Sunroom. ▪ HOS - ensure we’re meeting needs of every single child ○ SDP5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HOP – focus on positive behaviour strategy ▪ HOS – ensure all staff enforce behaviour policy and engage students. ○ SDP6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HOP – develop student leaders. Examine our House system and celebrations. ▪ HOS – focus on Careers. Faculty Heads to drive this. ○ SDP7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HOP – continually develop leaders. ▪ HOS – continue with everyone a leader programme. • Cyber Security Report – EHT explained that 70% of schools in UK have had a cyber attack. More than any other organisation. This is an audit being offered by ICO. <p>Governor commented that it would be useful.</p>	
9.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping Children Safe in Education – Chair emphasised that all governors must read Part 1 to comply with statutory requirements. 	All Govs

10.	<p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estates Summer Work – EHT referred to paper and highlighted the numerous completed tasks. EHT thanked the Estates Team for all their work. He went on to mention the rainfall ingress in Masters House and thanked governor for arranging a drone study of the roof as well as repairing a pothole. • Internal Audit Update – DOF advised that this was completed at the end of summer and was handled well by the Team. External Audit is due in October. • General Finance Update – DOF explained that figures for end of last year were being finalised. She has met budget holders and will continue to do so regularly to ensure smarter spending. • Admissions Update – Chair of Admissions thanked staff and students for an amazing Secondary phase Open Evening. Applications need to be submitted by 31st October. Primary Open Evening is due to take place on 13th November. 	
11.	<p>Policies</p> <p><u>Governors approved the following policies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedures • First Aid, Accident, and Sickness Policy • Whistleblowing Policy • Protection of Biometric Information Policy • Cyber Security Strategic Plan 	
12.	<p>Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Visit Mental Health 010725 – Chair noted that Governor has highlighted increasing upward trends in incidents of self-harm, suicidal thoughts and eating disorders. Chair to confirm with Governor that problem is lack of support from external agencies rather than Gildredge House. 	Chair/JSw
13.	<p>Any other urgent business</p> <p>HOP invited governors to volunteer for Primary Open Evening and Morning.</p>	
14.	<p>Confirmation of future Governor Meeting Dates for 2025/2026</p> <p>FULL GOVERNING BOARD: 11th December 2025 26th March 2026 2nd July 2026</p> <p>EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 9th October 2025 22nd January 2026 14th May 2026</p> <p>ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE: 13th November 2025 12th February 2026 11th June 2026</p>	
	<p>Meeting Closed</p> <p>Chair thanked governors & SLT and closed the meeting at 19:53 hrs.</p>	