



## Ruskin Community High School

### FULL GOVERNORS BOARD MEETING

**2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 at 4:00pm**

**Venue – School**

### MINUTES – PART ONE

<b>Present:</b>	John Rhodes (Chair) Dean Postlethwaite (HT) Chris Griffin (CG) Emma Szymura (ES) Marion McKenzie (MMc) Peter Storey (PS) Duncan Burrow (DB) Don Higgs (DH) Peter Thorpe (PT) Margo Veitch (MV)	<b>LA Governor – Chair of Governors</b> <b>Headteacher</b> <b>Co-opted Governor (MS Teams)</b> <b>Co-opted Governor – Deputy Head</b> <b>Staff Governor</b> <b>Co-opted Governor</b> <b>Co-opted Governor</b> <b>Co-opted Governor</b> <b>Co-opted Governor</b> <b>Co-opted Governor</b>
<b>Apologies:</b>	Denise McCumskey (DMc) William Ollier (WO) Debbie Jones (DJ) Cathi Boughey (CB)	<b>Co-opted Governor</b> <b>Co-opted Governor</b> <b>Co-opted Governor</b> <b>Parent Governor</b>
<b>In attendance:</b>	Hazel Goodwin (SBM) Natalie Burke (NB) Sarah Robson (SR) Jo Rankin (JRa) Cheryl Jackson (Clerk)	<b>School Business Manager</b> <b>Assistant Headteacher</b> <b>Assistant Headteacher</b> <b>Assistant Headteacher</b> <b>Senior Clerk</b>

<b>AGENDA ITEM 1</b>	<b>WELCOME &amp; APOLOGIES</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Governors received and accepted apologies from DMC, WO, DJ, and CB.

<b>AGENDA ITEM 2</b>	<b>CONFLICTS OF INTEREST, (PECUNIARY OR OTHERWISE)</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	There were no declarations of interest declared with the business of the meeting.

<b>AGENDA ITEM 3</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	The following items of AOB raised for discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Times of the school day (HT)</li> <li>• Wellbeing Link Governor (PT)</li> </ul>



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AGENDA ITEM 4	MEMBERSHIP
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>a) Governors noted the following changes to the membership of the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marion McKenzie (Staff Governor) appointed 11.12.25.</li> <li>• Neha Shahi (Parent Governor) appointed 04.03.25.</li> </ul> <p>b) Governors confirmed the current vacancies in accordance with the constitution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 x Co-opted Governor</li> </ul> <p>The HT suggested that a staff member becomes a Co-opted Governor. The Chair will consider the suggestion and discuss with the HT.</p> <p>Following the meeting the Clerk informed the Chair &amp; the HT that the number of Co-opted Governors who are school employees must not exceed <b>one third of the total board</b> when added to the Staff Governor and the Headteacher. Therefore, a staff member could be appointed to the vacant co-opted position. The Clerk noted that there is no urgency to fill the position , if Governors are confident that there are no skills gaps on the Board.</p> <p>c) There were no terms of office due to expiry.</p>
<b>Actions:</b>	The Chair to contact the HT regarding the Co-opted Governor vacancy.

AGENDA ITEM 5	APPROVAL OF THE PART 1 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS
<b>Discussion:</b>	Governors approved the minutes from the meeting on 26.11.24 as a correct record and the Clerk was asked to send the minutes to be signed virtually by the Chair.
<b>Decision:</b>	Governors resolved to approve the minutes of the above meeting.
<b>Action:</b>	The Chair to sign a copy of the minutes and provide for school for retention.

AGENDA ITEM 6	MATTERS ARISING
<b>Discussion:</b>	Governors reviewed the Action Log, there were no outstanding actions to discuss.

AGENDA ITEM 7	CHAIR'S ACTION
<b>Discussion:</b>	The Chair noted his visit to the School to support the completion of the SFVS.



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	<p>The Chair noted his agreement to the Bungalow building project pending completion of the building regulations. The School are looking for the work to start in the Summer term.</p> <p>The HT noted that the agreed planning permission will expire in May 2025 and that it would be better if the School did not have to re-apply.</p>
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AGENDA ITEM 8	PART 1 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>a) The following committee meeting minutes were circulated prior to the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LME 18.03.25.</li> <li>• SDW 19.03.25.</li> <li>• TLA 19.03.25.</li> </ul> <p>There were no further comments.</p> <p>b) The following Link Governing Monitoring Visits have been completed since the last meeting:</p> <p><u>Curriculum – Book Trawl / Student Panel</u></p> <p>MFL - (DH) 11.03.25          Maths – (DH) 11.03.25          Science – (PS) 03.03.25          Geography (DJ) 10.03.25          DT &amp; Food (BO) 18.03.25          Religious Studies (DJ) 17.03.25</p> <p>All Link Governor Visit Reports have been uploaded to Governor Hub. The Chair thanked SR for managing the Curriculum Link Governor Vsists.</p> <p>The following Statutory Link Governor Visits have been completed since the last meeting:</p> <p><b>Attendance</b> – (PT) 27.01.25 – Visit Report discussed at the SDW meeting on 19.03.25.  <b>Health &amp; Safety</b> – (PT) 12.02.25 – Visit Report discussed at the LME meeting on 18.03.25.  <b>SEND</b> – (DH) - A report on the Hive Provision was reviewed at the TLA meeting. DH noted on 19.03.25. DH noted that he has visited the Hive. Governors noted a number of locations in Cheshire East identified for new Alternative Provision or SEND.  <b>Safeguarding</b> (DH) – Verbal update provided at the SDW meeting on 19.03.25. DH completed an SCR check and attended the Safeguarding Team meeting.</p> <p>MMc was appointed as the <b>Wellbeing Link Governor</b> in line with DfE recommendations          She will work closely with the Mental Health Wellbeing Lead in School.</p>



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AGENDA ITEM 9	FINANCIAL / COMPLAINTS MATTERS
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>The SBM gave the update and noted that Finance updates had been discussed in detail at the LME committee meeting on 18.03.25.</p> <p>a) The Draft Budget Summary (with ISBL Assumptions) was circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. The SBM noted that figures show a £567K carry forward of which approximately £320K will be earmarked. There is still no confirmation about pay rises and whether they will be funded/part funded.</p> <p><b>Q – What is the impact if the pay rise is higher than budgeted?</b>  R – It is likely that Year 2 will be in deficit.</p> <p><b>Q – How much can the School carry forward?</b>  R – There is a limit of 5% , but additional surplus funds can be earmarked.</p> <p>The SBM noted that the School have a Spending Plan if they were to have surplus funds available. It was noted that the School are in a good position.  <b>Governors approved the Draft Budget 2025/2026.</b></p> <p>b) The Staffing Structure was reviewed and approved at the LME committee on 18.03.25.  <b>Governors approved the Staffing Structure for 2025/2026.</b></p> <p>c) The 2024-2025 budget v actuals position was reviewed in detail at the LME committee on 18.03.25. It was noted that there were no significant variances to report.</p> <p>d) The 3 Year Plan was circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. The carry forward figures show; Year 1 £567, Year 2 £141K and Year 3 -£186K.</p> <p>The SBM noted that the School have been cautious in their assumptions.</p> <p>e) The Schools Financial Value Statement (SFVS) was approved at the LME committee on 18.03.25 and submitted by 31.03.25.  <b>Governors approved the SFVS for 2025/2026.</b></p> <p>f) Governors agreed the updates to the Manual of Internal Financial Procedures (MIFP) in relation to being cash free. These were approved at the LME committee on 18.03.25.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Scheme of Delegation has been updated to reflect staff changes.</li> <li>• The Asset Register is up to date.</li> <li>• The Business Continuity Plan (BCP) (including Critical Incident Management) has been re-written. The SBM noted that Cheshire East are due to carry out whole school training on Critical Incident Management.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q - Is the School completely cashless?</b></p>



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	<p>R – Almost, 90% of parents are using School Gateway for catering and other school purchases. The process is safer and easier for parents and the School.</p> <p><b>Q – Does the School test the BCP?</b></p> <p>R – Yes, the School will do ‘dummy’ scenarios, and the HT noted that it had been tested during the pandemic and more recently when the School was closed due to the heating issue.</p> <p><b>Q –Do Novus manage the School’s IT traffic during an incident. Do they have a test plan in place to switch systems?</b></p> <p>R – Novus are a key partner in the BCP and are involved in the planning as are other external agencies.</p> <p>The HT noted that the experience of managing through the pandemic has moved the School forward significantly, they are now much better prepared.</p> <p>g) Governors confirmed that authority to approve the budget is delegated to the Finance Committee if Summer FGB is after budget submission date.</p>
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AGENDA ITEM 10	PUPIL PREMIUM
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>NB confirmed that the Pupil Premium Strategy had been shared at the LME committee on 18.03.25. The agreed budget remains the same.</p> <p>The allocation of funds for trips and visits has changed slightly and there is a new process in place which includes the subsidised costs. The School have also employed a fulltime Education Family Support Worker.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 11	HEADTEACHER’S REPORT
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>The Headteacher’s Report was circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The HT noted that he had been reflecting on the last 5 years since he became HT at Ruskin. He thanked the Senior Leadership Team for their support in sharing the vision and the high expectations to enable students to be the best they can be and referred to the challenges of the pandemic and the cyber security incidents and also the number of achievements noting the remarkable improvements for staff and students.</p> <p>The HT also highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The roles and responsibilities of SLT members are likely to change in response to the new Ofsted Framework.</li> </ul>



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- The September 2025 intake has surpassed our PAN, and the School will welcome 150+ students next academic year. Many schools did not achieve PAN this year.
- The comparative results from the 2024 public examinations have been shared. ES has provided comprehensive analysis and comparisons for Governors to review. Governors are aware that predictions for 2025 are not as strong due to the cohort of students in this year group. There is no Progress 8 this year as KS2 testing did not take place due to the pandemic.
- The new Performing Arts Studio has allowed School to re-purpose two areas of school to move the Library to the ground floor and then to re-purpose the old library into a SEND area "The Hive." The School has seen significant benefits with all areas adding real value.
- The demand for SEND has increased in the past year and this will continue.
- The 5-year Strategic Plan has been reviewed, and RAG rated this half-term and was circulated on Governor Hub Prior to the meeting. Progress is good, with many objectives already achieved.
- The new OFSTED framework is set to be in place from next academic year, and the School awaits the end of the consultation process and the training. The School are expecting an inspection in 18-24 months.
- The HT thanked Governors for their Link Visits and their contribution at the committees and invited Governors to suggest any changes to format or agenda if they felt it necessary.

### **Q – Why has the % of EAL students suddenly increased?**

R – This is due to the higher proportion of EAL students in Year 7. The School confirmed that they prefer to take EAL students in Year 7 rather than later on in the school year.

### **Q – Are the School aware of the EAL students prior to them starting school?**

R – This is included on the Data Collection Sheet and also would be a consideration during transition from Primary School.

The HT noted as the School is full they have unfortunately had to turn down some applications from EAL students.

### **Q – Does the School consider the forecasted results for 2025 to be a 'blip' rather than a trend?**

R – There is no evidence to suggest a trend, the data for this year is very much down to the cohort of students who either do not attend School or have significant behaviour issues. ES said that if these students were removed from the data then forecast would be comparable to last year.



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	<p>ES noted that the School would expect the current Year 10 to achieve much better results.</p> <p><b>Q – How was the School supported the students to get the higher grades in Maths?</b>  R – The Maths Department is now ‘overstaffed’ to provide an extra set and enable extra teaching.</p> <p>The Chair noted that in previous years the progress data was important whereas this year the School will be judged on headline achievement data only.</p> <p><b>Q – How have you measured progress for these students?</b>  R – This has been measured internally using baseline tests on entry. It showed that this cohort were well below previous cohorts due to their time at home during the pandemic. This will be the same nationally, but other schools may have a higher starting point.</p>
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<b>AGENDA ITEM 12</b>	<b>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>Governors noted that the SIP Report had been circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The HT noted that the SIP continues to work with the School and will be involved in staff CPD in the Summer term.</p>

<b>AGENDA ITEM 13</b>	<b>SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	The School reviews the School Development Plan next term and a new revised plan will be submitted in the Autumn Term. The wider objectives will remain and dovetailed to the OFSTED report and the wider framework changes.
<b>Actions:</b>	The HT to present the new SDP in the Autumn term.

<b>AGENDA ITEM 11</b>	<b>GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>The Training Link Governor (JR) referred to a reminder from the Clerk regarding Safeguarding training. He asked all Governors to ensure that this training is completed as it is a mandatory requirement.</p> <p>He also reminded Governors about the Cyber Security training. The SBM will provide records of this to the Clerk who will update Governor training records.</p> <p>All Governors were requested to update their training record on Governor Hub..</p>



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<b>Actions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Governors to complete Safeguarding training</li> <li>• All Governors to complete Cyber Security training.</li> <li>• All Governors to update their training profile on Governor Hub.</li> </ul>
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AGENDA ITEM 15	SCHOOL POLICIES
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>Governor reviewed and approved the following policies which were available on Governor Hub prior to the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allegations of Abuse Against Staff (GOH)</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Behaviour</li> <li>• Complaints</li> <li>• Equality &amp; Diversity</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety (Science)</li> <li>• Pay</li> <li>• Protection of Biometric Data</li> <li>• School Uniform</li> <li>• Staff Grievance</li> <li>• Supporting Children with Medical Needs</li> <li>• SEND</li> </ul> <p>Policies reviewed at LME on 18.03.25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Aid</li> <li>• Premises Management</li> </ul> <p>The following policies were not reviewed and carried forward to the Summer FGB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appraisal</li> <li>• Careers Guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Decisions:</b>	Governors <b>approved</b> all the statutory policies listed above (except the Appraisal & Careers Guidance Policies).
<b>Actions:</b>	The Clerk to add Appraisal & Careers Guidance Policies to the Summer FGB agenda.

AGENDA ITEM 16	PLANNED RESIDENTIAL VISITS
<b>Discussion:</b>	ES informed Governors of the following planned residential visits for this year:





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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duke of Edinburgh – Expeditions Summer Term.</li> </ul> <p>All risk assessments will be sent to the LA one month prior to the trip and will be discussed with DMc.</p>
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AGENDA ITEM 17	STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE
<b>Discussion:</b>	Governors confirmed that the School will purchase Clerking Services from Cheshire for 2025/2026.

AGENDA ITEM 18	AOB
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p><u>Times of the School Day (HT)</u> The HT informed Governors that the School had decided to reduce lunchtime from 50 minutes to 40 minutes and therefore change the end of the school day to 3:00pm (10 minutes earlier) . The School have been able to do this due to increased capacity at lunchtime. Parents are aware.</p> <p><u>Wellbeing Link Governor (PT)</u> Discussed in agenda item 8.</p> <p>The Chair commented on the unplanned fire drill he had experienced whilst visiting the School and noted how well the students and staff had performed.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 19	DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>The dates and times of the Summer Governor meetings are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LME – 17.06.25 at 4:00pm</li> <li>SDW – 18.05.25 at 3:15pm</li> <li>TLA – 18.06.25 at 4:00pm</li> <li>FGB – 02.07.25 at 4:00pm</li> </ul>

AGENDA ITEM 17	STATEMENT OF IMPACT
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>Governors helped to move the school forward in this meeting by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carrying out curriculum visits to the School , including a book trawl and a student panel.</li> <li>Appointing a Wellbeing Governor.</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensuring the SCR check has been completed.</li><li>• Agreeing a balanced budget and being reassured about the School's financial position.</li><li>• Asking questions about the effectiveness of the Business Continuity Plan.</li><li>• Reviewing and asking questions about the data forecast for Summer 2025.</li><li>• Agreeing to complete cybersecurity training.</li><li>• Being made aware of the new Ofsted Framework and the implications for the School.</li></ul>
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**The Part 1 meeting ended at 5:20 pm**

**The meeting moved to the Part 2.**

**Chair.....**

**Date.....**