



The John Fisher School

Teaching, Learning & Standards Committee Part A Minutes – 26th November 2025

Governors	Category	Attendance
Ms G Grabowski (GG) Chair	Foundation Governor	Present
Ms S Nasser (SN) Vice Chair	LA Governor	Present
Ms J Cole (JC)	Parent Governor	Present
Mr D Fox (DF)	Foundation Governor	Absent
Mr P Hall (PH)	Staff Governor	Present
Dr A McGowan (AMc)	Foundation Governor	Present
Father Francis Murphy (FFM)	Foundation Governor	Present
Dr T Newman-Sanders (TNS)	Foundation Governor	Absent
Mr T Richmond (TR)	Co-opted Governor	Present
Mr R Teague (RT)	Headteacher, Ex-Officio	Present
Mr A Theobald (AT)	Foundation Governor	Present
Mr A Tierney (ATi)	Foundation Governor	Present
Mrs N Walsh (NW)	Parent Governor	Present

Attendees (non-voting) :-

Mrs S Lovelock (SL)	-	Deputy Headteacher Pastoral
Mr P Bennett (PB)	-	Deputy Headteacher Academic
Mrs J Beeson (JB)	-	Croydon Education Partnership Clerk

MINUTES		
1.	Apologies for absence & declarations of interest Apologies for absence were received from DF and TNS - these were accepted. The meeting was quorate. There were no declarations of interests.	
2.	Minutes from the meeting on 8.10.2025 The documents were taken as read. The minutes of 8.10.25 were scrutinised page by page. The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meetings and approved by all governors. The Chair signed the hard copies to be held in school. Actions – - NW confirmed she was due to meet with the Head of Careers – carried forward. - Completed. - Completed. - RT explained that the intention was to relaunch the Safeguarding and Behaviour Policies in January therefore this was carried forward. - Completed. - Completed. - Completed.	
3.	Safeguarding, behaviour and pupil groups (<i>paper distributed</i>)	



3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4 3.5	Referencing the paper distributed relating to disadvantaged pupils from data drawn from FFT identifying the KS4 attainment and KS4 progress in 2025, RT said they are particularly concerned the progress gap despite the fact that the JF FSM6 (RT explained this free school meals Ever 6 categorisation) pupils are achieving at the same level as the national figure for none FSM. With regard to the progress gap, he explained that in 2023 (the first data set referenced) prior higher attainers had the worst progress, but this was still an issue for those who are also disadvantaged. Although there are only 4 pupils in the same, it remains significant and will be looked into further. Most other groups are improving, but white boys on FSM and prior higher attainers on FSM are falling below the national average. RT proposed that he would circulate the whole of the KS4 FFT report for greater detail – ACTION. A governor asked what strategies were being put in place this year to address these factors? RT replied that they were reviewing the Pupil Premium (PP) spending and feel they have not yet used it to the maximum effect. Whilst it has been used for individual pupils' tutoring, but their progress/attainment when compared with others is not much different. The other big ticket item is that it has been used for is music lessons, which whilst they are keen to continue this on a smaller level, there will be greater targeting and small group lessons. The main aim will be to close the gap but they will focus on particular interventions to help other pupils not just the PP pupils, particularly with regard to reading to allow greater access to the curriculum. A staff governor agreed with this focus on reading, commenting that of his current Y7 group half displayed an SEN need of varying levels but it was generally their literacy which was so low that it made accessing the lesson difficult for them. RT added that reading has a multiplying effect and also has a direct impact on behaviour. A governor asked if it was possible to use dyslexia screening at this early stage to raise the school's awareness and pick things up from early on in Y7? RT replied there is an inclusion section in the SEF about how they screen early on but agreed there remained more to be done on this. They also have data from the primary schools before the pupils arrive but the CATs they use in Y7 are also very useful intelligence to flag for further identification. A governor said it was shocking that after at least 6 years in education, pupils arrived at JF with such low levels of literacy and asked if it was possible to identify which schools this might relate to and put actions in place for those? She felt it would be worth speaking to those headteachers. RT said they received pupils from over 40 different primary schools. He cautioned that some of this problem overlapped with disadvantage and it is known that 30% of boys nationally lack literacy fluency. JF is generally getting boys with above that level. However, he agreed that they would look at the 6-7 feeder schools to see if there were any patterns. A governor commented that parental literacy was also an issue and something they had discussed before. She asked whether things could be signposted for parents to training? RT said they had put things in the newsletter, but acknowledged that the ability to disseminate information in a way those parents could access was challenging.	8.
---	---	------------------



3.6	A governor commented on the importance of music, particularly for those with lower attainment levels. He asked if there was a programme to promote their music education? He also asked about their inclusion in things like school concerts. RT replied that the school's Director of Music held a St Cecilia's concert last week when the majority of the Y7s took part. The aim is to build up school music by encouraging orchestral participation, hence promoting learning of those instruments rather than individual ones to help more boys to become involved. The school recognises it is a big part of the school's tradition. 3.7 Safeguarding (<i>report previously distributed</i>) – The Chair advised that it was for governors to ensure they were clear about how safeguarding is monitored and know it is effective. RT said that David Mawer (DSL) will be at next week's FGB. The information in the report is based on the annual safeguarding audit done for Sutton and as part of the SEF process using the Ofsted framework, together with the external safeguarding report they had done early in 2025. The key issues which they focus on include Pupil voice, which they want to hear more from. Hence they have introduced 'My Confide' to address low level concerns. In addition to the My Concern safeguarding portal. They engage more with external agencies which has been positive. Safeguarding has a direct link with behaviour and culture; it is felt that things are moving in the right direction but there remains a lot to do. There is a safer recruitment report, with a summary of those onboarded this year. They need to have a least 1, but preferably 2 or 3 of the board of governors trained on safer recruitment. 3.8 Exclusions report – the analysis was circulated with the reasons. In 2023/24 there were 115 suspensions, this number went down last year after initially peaking. However, it is going up again this year, but for good reasons because they have been ratcheting up on behaviour management and making the pastoral system tighter. He advised the effect would be reflected in these metrics. There have been 39 exclusions so far this academic year (relating to 34 different boys). RT detailed the key reasons. <i>(TR joined the meeting).</i> A governor asked why Y11 was so high against other years? RT referred to the trend in this year group over the last 3 years. A governor commented that this was the 2021 Y7 cohort who therefore might have had Covid-impacted reasons. There was wider discussion about the year group. A governor asked if it was possible to include a behaviour criterion for entry to the 6th form? RT advised this was not possible if pupils are already in the school and meet the academic entry admissions criteria. They had investigated this previously. A governor commented that they had already addressed the entry levels and the nature of the 6th form curriculum.
------------	---



	RT added that the school wants the boys to be able to access courses which are in their best interests and the school has also set its stall out as to what are the expectations, therefore some of those pupils naturally move on. A governor commented that it should be made clear to all the boys that if they want to stay on and think they will be staying on, they need to have consequences to their actions now. RT replied that they stress the importance of references. A governor asked if attendance was also able to be a criterion? A governor commented that other 6th forms do so e.g. Reigate College. RT agreed this was an effective lever for some, however there are some core groups who are disengaged and this includes for college options afterwards.	
4.	School Self-evaluation Form (SEF)	
4.1	The Chair advised that the SEF is a working document for senior leaders in the school and informs the SDP. It is for governors to approve and know about the SDP.	
5.	School Development Plan (SDP)	
5.1	RT advised that they had changed the objective after the Catholicity inspection. With regard to Catholic life and mission, there was work to do on Catholic teaching. PB is leading and embedding this and the details are explained in the plan. There has been CPD followed up with every member of the community to ensure they are aware how this applies to their lives rather than just be in the abstract. They are also reflecting on how they are dealing with the boys. PB explained further that they have Service Leaders in every year group to see how it is being lived in their daily lives. They will train the SLs to report on it and give feedback amongst their peer group where they see it and where they don't. It will involve education for pupils and staff to embed it into their teaching and curriculum. A staff governor commented it would be helpful to have framework as a reference point in their curriculum.	
5.2	A governor asked how they induct staff members who are not Catholics? PB agreed that they need to think about strategies and training for that. A governor suggested that a Catholic project across the school involving both boys and staff might be helpful. A governor asked what percentage of staff were Catholic/non-Catholic? RT confirmed the majority were not Catholic, but there are also many committed Catholic staff and around 14 regularly go to mass on different days. A parent suggested that explaining the language of the mass might be a good start.	



	YE advised that The Well at the diocese Education Service has lots of suitable material for this purpose, She advised that PB refer to them. <i>(NW left the meeting).</i>	
5.3	RE teaching – RT advised that the new Head of RE had made a really good start and the subject is getting back on track after last year's staffing issues, with standards visibly rising. The aim is to consolidate what is already going on.	
5.4	Collective worship – The school has done a lot with this. Every form has a representative; there are form prayers; there are consistent standards for morning prayer which are very high; the boys engage and are reflective; there are opportunities to go to mass 4 times per week and confession once per week; there is a class prayer at the beginning of each lesson.	
5.5	Weekly retreat programme – this takes place from 10am to 1pm each Friday for each class with a carousel of activities and ends with lunch.	
5.6	The chapel is open every break time. A governor asked how well utilised the chapel was? RT said it was a slow burn but was increasingly used.	
5.7	A governor asked if the school does much to link with primary schools and getting them to come in to chapel, for mass etc and to build relationships? RT said that Laleham Lea use the chapel but for their own things rather than with JF. PB agreed this might be a valuable part of the transition process. RT agreed they could invite feeder schools for a mass and to strengthen links. He is due to meet with the headteachers in the Sutton LA next week, so will speak to them about this – ACTION. A governor agreed this would increase the school's visibility with other Catholic primary schools. RT felt it could be part of the marketing. A governor commented that the school must remain inclusive and attract as many families as possible. A governor said she felt it would build the Catholic foundations and she proposed they might consider family masses. RT said this took place within a challenging time with recent negative publicity. The reality is that the school is changing and they must be aware that they cannot please everyone but they must simply improve.	9.
5.8	Quality of education – RT said this was key to the school's success. There are 4 sub-headings and they have put in targets, setting 0.9 for Progress 8. The behaviour together with teaching and learning will lift the results. They are building and consolidating routines. They are providing literacy support and also looking at increasing reading for pleasure and developing students' reading habits.	



	PB explained they had done a parental survey on homework which gave some interesting feedback, principally there is not enough and parents find multiple platforms frustrating. So they are looking at this and addressing it with middle leaders about the concerns about homework. A staff governor commented that the switch to Bromcom had possibly delayed putting homework on the system. PB agreed this was certainly a factor and Bromcom was not as fluid to use, but he is aware that other schools use it successfully and he is going to visit various ones to pick up tips. The staff governor agreed that different teachers set different levels, he asked whether it was felt having a Homework Policy might support a standard but also questioned if this became less flexible. PB agreed that they did not want to set homework for its own sake but to support learning. The Chair asked them to come back with a strategy to the board – ACTION. There was wider discussion about the C Newport 'Deep Work' approach.	10.
5.9	Behaviour and Attitudes – RT explained the report included a summary of what they are doing and the sanctions, praise and rewards. Easy wins for the pupils and staff. SL added that they have put in systems through Bromcom which are very easily accessible for low stakes praise to add to the building of relationships. Whilst demerits are easy, this also introduces positives with a Teaching and learning golden drive which is easy and quick. SL explained how the reward system works. They are embedding this before Christmas and feel it will drive positive conversations. Also the pastoral Head of Year can issue a golden tie each week to a pupil on the back of the criteria which have been decided. This is a visible reward and includes things like skipping the queue for that week. Again it is very easy to put in place, creating happiness, reward and a positive conversation. A governor asked if they had a similar reward system for the staff? SL said they had spoken about it but not yet devised one. RT said they used to have a trophy each half term but a lot of staff did not like it, finding it patronising. The Chair said it was for the SLT to decide what they did for the staff to feel valued. SL said they are considering a hand-written thank you card. PB said that the new kitchen/staff room is appreciated.	
5.10	SL explained further about the panel meetings she is holding 1-1.5 hours per week which are proving successful on how they are dealing with the most challenging pupils. These panels include SEN, Safeguarding, attendance representatives. They are using data spreadsheets with core data from the systems for things which stand out. The pupils are reviewed on a pastoral level and this will also link with their learning. They consider whether the responses are adequate to remove the barriers and whose role is to do what, so everyone is clear.	
5.11	Personal development – They want to give the boys the vocabulary of virtue and to understand what it	



	is, all linked to them functioning in an effective way as human beings. PB added this has a high profile around the school with a particular virtue focused on each half term to be lived out and recognised. A governor asked how the virtues were identified and selected? RT said it was with the chaplaincy team, but they plan to review them next year. A governor said the virtues should link with the Mission Statement.	
5.12	Leadership and Management – RT commented that since last term there had been a lot of change and they are now forging a cohesive team. They are planning an away day and also to get speakers in.	
5.13	Financial management is a big issue within this area. The DFO is doing big things but it is currently all down to the one person. They plan to review the administration function structure and roles which have been in place for a long time and they need to revisit if this continues to meet the needs of the school. They are looking at:- • SEND funding with an SMS expert to ensure this area is as efficient and they are getting all they are entitled to and how they are using it; • lettings income; • the school environment – they have created a list of projects since April 25 and those for which they received grants, this will go to the FGB next week. • A Facilities Manager has been appointed to keep on top of maintenance and drive forward projects.	
5.14	Sixth form – there is continued marketing for this and the possibility of co-education. The timeline for this currently is to come to governors in summer 2026 for a decision to accept girls from September 2028. DECISION – the governors approved the School Development Plan as presented.	
6.	Policies update, plus statutory policies	
6.1	The governors were asked to review and approve the following policies (<i>previously distributed</i>). • Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 25-26 • Capability Policy • Teachers' Appraisal Policy • Teachers' Pay Policy • Charging & Remissions • Premises Management • Governors' Allowances • Suspension & Permanent Exclusion • RSHE DECISION – the governors approved the policies listed.	
7.	AOB	



7.1	Proposal for a 2 week half term at October (paper previously distributed) – RT detailed that JF is the only Sutton school without a 2 week half-term in October which presents problems for staff and families which children in other schools. This also impacts on staff recruitment which is not working in the school's favour. As a local authority maintained school, they are bound by the 190 teaching requirement, therefore they would have to find 5 days elsewhere in the calendar and the only realistic place is from the summer, but they already have teaching to late July by which time public exams are long gone and it is hot therefore less pleasant to be in the classroom. The only place is August when 5 days might cause issues and not be fair to parents regarding family holidays. He concluded the 2 options were:- 1. They leave the week as it is. 2. Lengthen the half term break by 3 days. A governor commented that she had the Croydon schools' dates through to 2029 and they had done it. RT said that Sutton had also released the dates so they might look at it each year depending on how the dates fall. A governor asked how other LA schools were managing it? RT agreed he would address this and come back to the committee for approval. A governor commented there were always conflicts with different family requirements, so families just had to accept that. A governor added that if they opted for the 3 additional days option, families would potentially take 2 more to allow them to have the holiday, so this would increase absence. RT agreed this was always a danger and they were aware that around other holidays it happens. The Chair said that RT would make the decision and advise the board.	
	TL&S meeting dates this academic year • 4th February 2026 at 5.30pm • 18th March 2026 at 5.30pm • 13th May 2026 at 5.30pm • 1st July 2026 at 5.30pm	
	The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting closed at 7.20pm	



Actions list 2025 – 2026

	Action	For	Date	Comments	Status
Meeting of 8.10.25					
3.	RT to investigate potential issue on the GCSE history paper	RT	a.s.a.p.		Completed
4.	New Safeguarding Policy and updated Behaviour Policy to be presented.	SL	26.11.25	Carried forward 26.11.25	Open
5.	Safeguarding and behaviour – agenda items for next meeting.	GG / RT	26.11.25		Completed
6.	Glossary of education acronyms.	RT	a.s.a.p.	Email sent	Completed
7.	Staff list with who does what to go to governors,	RT	a.s.a.p.	Email sent	Completed
Meeting of 26.11.25					
8.	RT to distribute full FFT report.	RT	a.s.a.p.		Open
9.	RT to speak to Sutton LA heads about the option of inviting them to mass.	RT	Next week		Open
10.	Present homework strategy to the board.	PB / RT	4.2.26		Open

Outstanding actions list 2024 - 25

	Action	For	Date	Comments	Status
Meeting of 9.7.24					
1.	Careers report	NW	Spring term 26		Open / cf

Part A minutes of the meeting held on 26.11.25 were agreed as a true record and signed by :-

Signed
Name
Date