



The John Fisher School

Teaching, Learning & Standards Committee Part A Minutes – 18th March 2026

Governors	Category	Attendance
Ms G Grabowski (GG) Chair	Foundation Governor	Present
Ms S Nasser (SN) Vice Chair	LA Governor	Absent
Ms J Cole (JC)	Parent Governor	Absent
Mr D Fox (DF)	Foundation Governor	Present
Mr P Hall (PH)	Staff Governor	Absent
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	Absent

Attendees (non-voting) :-

Mr P Bennett (PB)	-	Deputy Headteacher Academic
Mr I Jones (IJ)	-	Assistant Headteacher (<i>for item 5</i>)
Mrs Y Epale (YE)	-	Diocese Observer
Mrs J Beeson (JB)	-	Croydon Education Partnership Clerk

	MINUTES	
1.	Apologies for absence & declarations of interest Apologies for absence were received from SN, JC, PH, NW and TNS - these were accepted. The meeting was quorate. There were no declarations of interests.	
2.	Minutes from the meeting on 4.2.26 2.1 The documents were taken as read. The minutes of the 4.2.26 were scrutinised page by page. There were no comments or amendments. DECISION - 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.	
5.	Quality of Teaching and Learning (presentation by IJ) <i>It was agreed to move this forward on the agenda to allow IJ to leave immediately afterwards.</i> 5.1 IJ outlined the Steplab professional development tool they are using within the school and how this is supports the Fisher Way (FW) as their teaching strategy. The FW is underpinned by the new Ofsted framework in looking at the school's approach of understanding how pupils learn. It has 3 layers – curriculum at the forefront; underpinned by teaching; and the professional development of the teachers to deliver it. It defines what students should know and provides consistent methods of teaching, to have a shared language and give support for reflection and coaching. It is grounded in educational evidence with flexible practice which is adaptable within the subject and context of the school. It is codifying teaching specific to the school. Ofsted are looking at whether teaching is presented clearly, adapted and in a way to help the students retain knowledge. It is for the staff to be masters of their craft and ensure the students are thriving and achieving long term success. Knowing the children and growing the	



	learner. The teachers know they are challenged. This is all based around good relationships with the pupils.	
5.2	IJ has linked all the FW sections to the Ofsted framework e.g. a prayer is said at the start of a lesson, the purpose is that students see they are getting similar actions in each classroom, while JFS is a Catholic school. This also feeds into the behaviour practice. They have also documented the indicators for the teachers to notice to assess if their lesson is effective. In terms of professional development, they have looked at what to do for teachers to support them – documenting routines and practice to use in their lessons, with what features to have in each area. Steplab is to facilitate instructional coaching and have a working relationship with the coach and teacher. There is the ability to deliver whole-school sessions and individualise these for teachers. IJ shared a short video of Steplab in action at John Fisher.	
5.3	IJ said it was about building positivity for staff to become used to having their lessons observed. It includes shout-outs as a public forum and gives public affirmation around teaching and learning. They are taking the learning visit concept of a 15 minute observation to capture things. <i>(IJ showed a specific timeline breakdown example of a history lesson)</i>. The coaching aspect is to get the staff member to self-reflect rather than telling them what to do. They then agree next steps. Whilst this format is time intensive, IJ said it was an insightful way to give feedback and aims to be a factual discussion based on the evidence gained.	
5.4	He said there remains work to be done now they are moving into the second year of using Steplab and they are looking to consider more than just IJ to facilitate it i.e. of a group of people to be designated coaches.	
5.5	They are investigating the union stance which allows 3 observations per year, so that they can navigate one per half term to have more frequent learning visits would be better to raise standards than the statutory requirements. A governor asked how many people IJ had in mind to share this work? Was the idea to have a team? IJ said he had got people in mind, but still needs to have a discussion with RT. Whilst he would not propose paying them more money, it would be a case of having the time allowed as an investment to move teaching and learning on. A governor asked if the union question could be answered by having an open door practice, and to have lesson drop-ins? This would allow teachers to showcase their practice. IJ said they already had that for a short time of 5 mins. He had sought advice and been told that if the staff opt into the practice they can put it into the teaching and learning model. The caveat is they will do the 1 hour per term, but once staff opt in they will have 15 minutes per half term on top of the drop-ins of 5 minutes to capture positive moments. A governor said this was also a good way of sharing good practice and to have lengthier drop ins. IJ said the pattern was emerging of questioning using experienced teachers who are good at it for those who are less experienced therefore less so, to allow them to bring them up to having really high quality questioning.	
5.6	A governor asked about what happens to the data if it remained just between IJ and the teachers or was it used as evidence for their appraisals? IJ said it is all held on the Steplab portal which IJ can access. Just some of it can be made public and allows them to track progress over time and follow up on things worked on and discussed.	



	The same governor asked if there is any kind of expectation for teachers buy in? IJ said the learning visit element requires their opt in. He said the teachers were engaging with this, but the issue of frequency had to be developed. PB confirmed that all staff have Steplab included in their appraisal. 5.7 A governor asked if teachers had support on how to navigate Steplab? IJ confirmed they did and said it was very user-friendly. A governor commented that she was very impressed by how much detail had been captured in the lesson demonstrated. 5.8 A governor asked how much Steplab costs? PB said it was just under £2000 per year. RT added they feel it is good value for money. A governor commented that she agreed how valuable it could be using experienced teachers to model questioning. IJ added that it gives greater gravitas by using John Fisher staff in the videos and he believes it will help to have other staff involved in the videos. Some had been keen, others less so. The Chair thanked IJ for his presentation. IJ left the meeting at 18.10	
2. 2.2	Follow up on actions from the minutes of 4.2.26. 10. Present homework strategy to the board – RT confirmed they are not in a position to present this year – carried forward. 11. Careers lead – to come to the May meeting. 12. Buildings projects list update – RT advised on various projects including :- • over February half term there was work done on IT upgrades, classroom improvements and CCTV was installed where there had been gaps around the building; they had reset up the reprographics department • in terms of future projects for the half million awarded, the replacement of the fire doors and boilers would have to come from this amount, but in addition they plan a dining provision in the quad; sports hall changing room work which will hopefully help with the hire purposes too; to improve the art block; murals for teaching areas with subject-specific murals; cosmetic repairs to the science block; the first aid room; a hardware refresh; solar power to use and sell. • In April they will have a full site survey to support their application for the rebuild. However, they will have to wait until 2027 for the list to be released. A governor commented that any new build work would be possibly be from 2030, but preparatory work and documents prior to this. RT said this was correct, but they will do the prep work. Action – completed list of project works. 13. PB to check with DJ whether 6th form students are taking part in mock panel interviews – PB advised	



	that Danny Jackson had confirmed that these will go ahead in June for the Y12 students, held by DJ and Mr Webb. Students will be offered the option of a job, academic or apprenticeship mock interview. A governor commented this will be good experience for the students, he hoped it might be extended to the Y11 students too. A governor commented that it is a great confidence-builder for students and allows them to learn how to fail and improve. A governor added that she is aware of some colleges who use a speed-dating format of 2 minute interviews with a range of people. Action – completed.	
2.3	The Chair added that she and AT are doing a learning walk on 22.4.26 and if any governors wanted to join them, they should email her.	
3.	KS4 data and PPE outcomes including SEND/disadvantaged data <i>(presented by PB – documents previously distributed with hard copies in the meeting)</i>	
3.1	PB outlined that this Y11 cohort had not had KS2 SATs therefore the comparative information was looking at their KS2 data. In general it was a lower prior attainment cohort than the previous Yr11 last year. He said that column 4 – the 2026 PPE 2 grades – is the one they have used for analysis rather than the predictions column. Things are looking positive at this stage and the different subjects are adjusting their practice to get the maximum improvement for the main exams.	
3.2	A governor asked PB to explain the RE figures, which he said did not look positive. PB said they are confident that the results will be better. Mr Smith is new in role and had set a challenging PPE and this will raise the standard. RT added that in 2024 RE did well, in 2025 the disastrous results were expected because of the staffing problem in the department, this year Mr Smith had been raising standards. A governor asked how many papers they had sat in RE? PB confirmed it was just one exam. RT referenced the improvement between PP1 and 2, but agreed there still needs to be more. DF confirmed that he plans to come into school for half a day with GG to do checks as link governor.	
3.3	A governor asked about the number of students doing French and Spanish and why the 10 difference? He queried the number opting for Spanish at A level. RT said that both French and Spanish have strong results and that MFL is a superb department. The numbers of those wanting to do Spanish look good, and agreed that Spanish generally remains more popular than French. A governor asked if other languages were in demand? RT said they are looking at the possibility of Latin for 2027.	
3.4	A governor asked about the results of humanities subjects which she felt were not looking great?	



	PB said the Heads of Department in those subjects are looking at this data. RT added that with music they are keen to keep it going, but it is recognised that the numbers are always lower. In drama there is no Y10 class because they could not justify it with the numbers and it looks the same will be the case next year.	
3.5	A governor asked about the after school interventions in RE and what have the numbers been like? PB said he was unsure, but would check. He added there would also be interventions over the holidays by some staff, but they are inviting targeted groups and different departments do different things. A governor asked what incentive there was for the staff and students to do this? She said she was aware of some schools offering free breakfasts for those attending. PB said they are not paying staff to run holiday interventions but they will be looking at the uptake. RT added that they do not want to do them for every student, some would be better using the time to study at home so they want it to be targeted.	
3.6	PB continued to explain further the data on page 3 with ethnicity breakdown and page 4 with a PP and SEN breakdown. The Chair advised governors that inclusion forms part of the government White Paper and is being scrutinised tightly by Ofsted.	
3.7	PB detailed that the information on page 5 is the spreadsheet they use to track different sets of data against each other and they are looking at ways to track whole school data in this way e.g. attitudes to learning graded 1-5 is useful to monitor pupils across Y7 through to Y11.	
4.	KS3 data – a brief overview	
4.1	PB advised there is not much to look at yet, other than the pupils' attitude to learning. The Y8 data will come out next week, therefore he will have some comparative data for the next meeting.	
4.2	RT added that they are going back to GLS assessment to have standardized data. There will be a baseline in English, Maths and Science in Y7, a reading age at the end of Y7,8 and 9. They will then be able to see how students perform in the standardised tests over time.	
4.3	A governor asked how numbers were looking for the Y11s wanting to go into Y12? RT said it was very difficult to call. Some will make the entry requirements, but might be better going elsewhere. The school has highlighted a small number of students in this category and they will receive a letter to outline the expectations for the 6th form. The school has to look at the long term strategy for the 6th form culture and results. There has to be a balance with the financial side. The standard for the 6th form is rising and that will bear fruit. The work Danny Jackson has done and the entry requirements have helped and sent a clear message. Currently the number of applications is looking healthy and is in line with the last two years which led to intakes of 102 (2024) and 108 (2025). A governor asked about the applications from external students? RT confirmed there had been applications of serious interest. They are hoping the better raw results at A level will improve if we can maintain or increase the value-added of last year. The results will be more marketable. The school has got better at retaining high fliers although there is still work to be done in this area. It is also about changing attitudes in the school.	



	A governor asked if RT feels that going co-ed would make a difference? John Fisher is one of very few schools in Sutton to have a single sex 6th form. RT said that his initial motivation in proposing Co-ed had been influenced by the culture of the Sixth Form. However, having seen the improvement in the 6th form over the last two years, he has become more agnostic about the question. RT feels that the key priority is to keep improving outcomes at KS5 so that, if and when we launch a co-ed Sixth Form, we are doing so from a position of strength. Otherwise, there is a serious risk that the launch might fail and that we would end up with an unsustainably low number of girls. The Chair reminded governors that when the co-ed option was discussed, the decision had been to leave it to RT to bring it back when he felt the school was ready. However, she queried if the governor wished it to go back on the agenda? The governor said he would like it discussed again. DECISION/ACTION – it was agreed this topic would go back on the agenda for one of the summer TL&S meetings.	14.
6.	Summary of actions and outcomes post CSI inspection (<i>document distributed</i>)	
6.1	RT highlighted the actions around the 3 elements of the inspection :- 1. Catholic Life and Mission – he said there had been changes since the inspection. Some of the plans had been started but now there is prayer at the beginning of the lesson and again at period 4 around 12 o'clock a lengthier prayer, to expose the students to the prayer liturgy. 2. Virtues – the Virtues' programme is in place and is having more impact on the life of the school. All the positive reward points are framed in terms of the virtues to frame the links in the minds of the boys. 3. Catholic Social Teaching – they are working with the subject leaders and are looking at the opportunities to look at CST within the curriculum. It is appearing in lessons for the students to recognise.	
6.2	A governor asked about the current half term's virtue of generosity and how this was evidenced, how was it portrayed? PB replied that it is included in the theme for the assemblies and teachers refer to it in lessons. They discuss about linking the virtue to daily life e.g. how they treat each other. The school is linking it with the reward system and there is already a trace of it becoming part of the learning experience. A governor asked if they could be given a list? RT said that after Easter it would be friendship and service in each half term.	
6.2	A governor asked with regard to deeper learning, how the school proved it? Was it when they were teaching or when it was acted out? PB said it was not so prescriptive yet. In CST some themes lend themselves better to some subjects than others. RT said it had been noticeable this year that there was more consistency in prayer, it is constantly in the minds of the boys because of being linked for them. Also form prayers have been extended and highlight the virtues as well as the liturgical calendar. PB added that the reps from the form groups in Y7 to Y10 is being developed to put forward their ideas	



	e.g. on how to promote some of the virtues. There have been some good ideas and it is allowing them to take responsibility.	
6.3	A governor suggested a prayer garden might be good to give a spiritual focus.	
6.4	RT said the rise in expectations in RE by Mr Smith has given consistency in teacher and they are getting more out of the staff to contribute to the life of the department. This is really taking off.	
6.5	RT added that with regard to collective worship they have a part time chaplain. There are form group retreats each Friday when they are off timetable and take part in a carousel of activities – this is still being tweaked, but ends with a mass. Confessions take place every Friday lunchtime. A governor asked if there was much uptake for confession? FFM said it varies, but there is lots going on. RT added there was a Faith Club run by the chaplain and staff in the RE department also offer other things.	
6.6	The Chair summarised that the school had done a lot of things in a short space of time, but asked how they spiritually nurtured the staff? RT agreed they need to do more in this area, there is little time with the staff other than the weekly briefing and INSET which is already crowded. Directed time is lost because of parents' evenings. However, he thinks they will aim to get outside speakers in.	
6.7	A governor commented that the Head of RE has a lot to do and asked what support he is given? RT said he meets with him regularly, plus he has forged a good relationship with the Head of RE at St Philomena's who has been brilliant in supporting him.	
7.	Pupil roll and applications 2025-26	
7.1	RT outlined the numbers :- • Y7 – 178 • 78 – 178 • Y9 – 179 • Y10 – 184 (they are over PAN in Y10 but due to options can cope) • Y11 – 187 (this was the old PAN) • Y12 – 108 • Y13 – 102	
7.2	Admissions are keeping the PAN for September 26 at 180 and they have a waiting list of 47 this year, which is not quite as good as last year when they have 60+.	
7.3	He said there are some worrying trends – the population of Catholics has noticeably dropped and those putting the school as first preference. To counter this they have appointed a Marketing and Development Officer who will be part time. She will have time to market the open day and will be going into Catholic primary schools to speak to parents. There will also a focus on the school's social media and the website. They are getting another video done. The role will be 18 hours per week term time and 1 week in the holidays, but this will be flexible to fit in with the marketing timetable. They need to get the first preferences up to 180. However, a lot of marketing has to be internal. They have run vision evenings, which were well attended and have	



	regular coffee mornings for parents to attend. They must win over parents and the Catholic community as a whole. A governor commented that the Catholic community in primary schools has also gone down. A governor added that local authorities do not like Catholic schools rather than LA maintained schools. YE commented that there has been a fall in pupil numbers across London.	
8.	The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting closed at 7.20pm Future T, L & S meeting dates in this academic year :- - Wednesday 13th May 2026 @ 5.30pm - Tuesday 30th June 2026 @ 5.30pm (please note this change of date from Wednesday 1.7.26)	

Actions list 2025 – 2026

	Action	For	Date	Comments	Status
Meeting of 26.11.25					
10.	Present homework strategy to the board.	PB	4.2.26	C/f 4.2.26 & 18.3.26	Open
Meeting of 4.2.26					
11.	Careers lead (Jack Greenwood) to present at the May meeting	RT	13.5.26	Agenda item	Open
12.	Buildings projects list update.	RT	18.3.26	Agenda item	Completed
13.	PB to check with DJ whether sixth form students are taking part in mock panel interviews.	PB	18.3.26		Completed
Meeting of 18.3.26					
14.	Co-ed in the 6 th form to be discussed again in the summer term 26.	All			Open

Part A minutes of the meeting held on 18.3.26. were agreed as a true record and signed by :-

Signed
Name
Date