



PRIORY FIELDS
SCHOOL

Priory Fields School

Local Governing Body Meeting

Thursday 4th December 2025

Head Teacher: Miss Casey Hall

Minutes of the Local Governing Body Meeting

held on Thursday 4th December 2025 at Priory Fields School at 4:15pm

Governors Present: Henry Coates (Chair of Governors), Casey Hall (Headteacher), Alison Mackintosh, Keith Woods, Shelley Yalden

Others Present: Kelly Brown (CEO) – 5:15pm – 5:30pm

Governance Professional: Katie Banes

1	<p><u>Welcome, introductions, resignations and apologies</u> Governors were welcomed to the meeting. Apologies were received from Malcolm Bowler, which the LGB accepted. The meeting was confirmed to be quorate.</p>
2	<p><u>Declaration of Business Interests Update/Business Interests Against this Agenda</u> Governors were given the opportunity to declare any new business interests and/or declare any pecuniary interests against this agenda. No new declarations of business/pecuniary interests were raised.</p>
3	<p><u>Minutes from Term 6 LGB Meeting Published on the Website</u> The Governance Professional confirmed the minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 1st July 2025 in Term 6, have been published on the school website.</p>
4 4.1	<p><u>Approve Minutes from previous LGB Meeting in Term 1 –Thursday 9th October 2025</u> Approval of Minutes Previous minutes were made available to Governors prior to the LGB meeting. The minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting held on Thursday 9th October 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record. <i>The Chair of Governors signed the previous minutes to reflect this.</i></p>

4.2	<p><u>Actions</u></p> <p>- <i>Behaviour Pupil Voice to be organised and carried out by MB.</i> <i>Date for Behaviour Pupil Voice to be organised between the Governance Professional and MB.</i></p>
5	<p><u>Ofsted/Local School Updates</u></p> <p>5.1 <u>Writing Framework</u></p> <p>A summary of the new writing framework, which was published in August 2025, was shared with Governors during the meeting.</p> <p>The DfE Writing Framework (2025) provides non-statutory guidance to support high-quality writing teaching from Reception to Year 6. It aims to address national concerns around writing attainment, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.</p> <p>Key Principles of the new framework are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing is cognitively demanding: children must manage handwriting, spelling, vocabulary, grammar and ideas simultaneously. - Strong writing depends on secure transcription skills, (handwriting and spelling). Automating these reduces working-memory load so pupils can focus on composition. - Handwriting should be explicitly taught: grip, posture, letter formation, and fluency. - Spelling should build from phonics to morphology and etymology in a structured, progressive way. <p>5.2 <u>Community of Schools Update</u></p> <p>There are fifty-three (53) communities in Kent; Priory Fields Community Dover Group two (2), which consists of nine (9) primary schools and three (3) secondary schools. The budget allocated for Group Two (which is to be shared across the twelve schools) is ninety-five thousand, nine hundred and fifty-four pounds (£95,954). This is a significant difference in comparison to the funding which was previously accessible for individual schools.</p> <p>Lots of local provisions which have been in place, have been stopped, or will be stopping. Schools are not allowed to bid for money for individual children; it must be allocated to groups of children and the associated resources and training.</p> <p>At the first Community of Schools meeting, one of the schools requested a third of the budget to go towards facilitating a nurture group at the school. Although it was not agreed within the meeting, it was a good representation of how funding could end up being used up quickly by other schools within the community.</p>
6	<p><u>Headteacher Report</u></p> <p>The Headteacher Report was made available to Governors prior to the LGB meeting.</p> <p>The Headteacher expanded on the Behaviour Curriculum which has recently been implemented. It has been introduced to ensure that positive behaviour is explicitly taught, modelled and embedded across the school. Early indications show a positive impact, with noticeable improvements in manners, movement around the school and interactions with staff and pupils.</p>

	<p>There have been nineteen (19) suspensions this academic year involving eleven (11) pupils. Most suspensions were for serious incidents, including threatening behaviour or physical assault against adults, persistent disruptive behaviour and behaviour that compromised the safety and learning of others.</p> <p>Reintegration meetings have taken place after every suspension, with pastoral support plans reviewed and strengthened. The school continues to work closely with parents to minimise repeat incidents and support pupils' return to routines. Six pupils are currently on reduced timetables, which has already led to a reduction in physical incidents for two children.</p> <p>Governors acknowledge the high level of behaviour the school faces at times and the burden this places on the Headteacher. However, Governors support the Headteacher in that high levels of physical and verbal abuse should not be tolerated and disrupt the learning of other pupils. Furthermore, it was highlighted that although pupil needs are increasing, staff retention is the best it has been and staff continue to work hard to provide the best for all children.</p>
7	<p><u>Planned Governor Monitoring</u></p> <p>The following monitoring opportunities were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behaviour Pupil Voice - MB - Monitoring the impact of CPD – Teaching and Learning & SEN Adaptations – HC - Monitor achievement through Class Reviews – HC <p>Governance Professional to liaise with Governors to organise monitoring visits.</p>
8	<p><u>Sports Premium</u></p> <p>The new Sports Premium Strategy was made available to Governors prior to the LGB meeting. A significant change this year will be focussing on vulnerable groups, particularly opportunities for girls engaging in sports and physical activities.</p> <p>The Sports Coach will work with the staff across the trust to engage different vulnerable groups and find opportunities to enhance the learning for those children.</p> <p>A girls only (not mixed) football team will be explored to see a local girls football league can be organised.</p> <p><i>All Governors present approved the new Sports Premium Strategy.</i></p>
9	<p><u>Safeguarding</u></p> <p>Actions and next steps from the external safeguarding audit were shared with Governors, with no additional comments raised.</p>
10	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p>
10.1	<p><u>LGB Governance Structure</u></p> <p>The CEO attended the LGB meeting to discuss and propose some changes to the structure of the Local Governing Bodies.</p> <p>The CEO stressed that this is an initial proposal and that no final decisions will be made without support from those involved.</p> <p>Since the CEO's appointment in 2024, governance arrangements have remained unchanged. However, over time, several issues have emerged that warrant discussion, particularly around efficiency and workload.</p>

	<p>The proposal is to retain the current Members and the Trust Board, but to move from separate Local Governing Bodies to a single Primary Board/Local Governing Body. This would better reflect how the schools already operate within the trust.</p> <p>The key reasons for this proposal include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing workload for Headteachers and the Governance Professional, as current agendas are largely identical across schools. • Allowing governors to take on clearer lead roles while addressing shared priorities collectively. • Recognising that the three schools have similar priorities, curriculum approaches, and shared challenges, making joint governance more effective. • Aligning governance structures more closely with the way the trust already works in practice. • Improving separation of duties, particularly between the different levels of governance. <p>Discussions were held surrounding the current structure and number of meetings across the academic year. The proposed model would reduce this to around five three-hour meetings annually.</p> <p>The CEO explained that other local trust models are being reviewed, including sample agendas, with a focus on avoiding lengthy meetings that repeat the same content. A larger governing body would operate using committees to improve efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>Additional points raised included strong recruitment to the Trust Board, succession planning for the future, and the recent recruitment of a Headteacher from Samphire STAR to the Trust Board.</p> <p>Any changes would require a review of delegation arrangements and terms of reference.</p> <p>Overall, there was recognition that the three schools already work very closely together and that a single governance structure could strengthen collaboration. Headteachers are supportive of the proposal, viewing it as a positive opportunity to reduce workload and adopt a smarter, more effective model of governance. All Governors present were also in agreement and supportive of the suggested changes, as it is felt it will benefit all involved and support workload.</p> <p>The plan would be to start operating under the new structure in September 2026.</p>
10.2	<p><u>Upcoming Events</u> Governors were welcomed to attend the Trust Carol Concert, Christmas Fair and AGM meeting.</p>
11	<p><u>Confidentiality of Proceedings</u> As per agenda item 6.</p>
12	<p><u>Publication of Minutes</u> The next LGB meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th February 2026 at 4:15pm, at which these minutes will be approved and published.</p>

<u>Action Points</u>	
-	<i>Monitoring visits carried out as agreed.</i>

Minutes taken by Governance Professional, Katie Banes

Signed by Chair of Governors: Henry Coates Date: 5/2/26

Henry Coates