

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHITCHURCH HIGH SCHOOL  
GOVERNING BODY HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON 3<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2025**

<b>PRESENT</b>	Sian Hopkins	Partnership (Chair)
	Joyce Slack	Partnership
	Max Vine	Partnership
	David Collins	Partnership
	Dr Paul Bulpin	Community
	David Roylance	Community
	Dr Tessa Bailey	Parent
	Jayne Catherall	Parent
	Paul Lloyd Davies	Parent
	Lisa Williams	Parent
	Stephen O'Hare	Parent
	Andrew Davies	Local Authority
	Jonathan Davies	Teacher
	Noreen Linforth	Teacher
	Richard Burge	Staff
	Nick John	Headteacher
	Ceri Garland	Deputy Head (Observer)
	Wayne Lilly	Business Manager (Observer)
	Steve Williams	Estates (Observer)
	Gareth Coombs	Clerk to the Governors

**27 APOLOGIES**

Maria Boffey; Dr Catherine Bushell; Naomi Pearson; Stephen O'Hare.

**28 MINUTES**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:-

Minute 24 (i): Draft Admissions Policy 2026-2027

**Delete:** "It was agreed that this should be referred to the Admissions Sub-Committee which could consult with the Local Authority if required and report back"

**Insert:** "It was agreed that this should go out for formal consultation to feeder schools, neighbouring schools and relevant local authorities. The report will then come back to the governing body for formal ratification."

**29 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising that could not be covered by the agenda.

**30 GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP**

The re-appointment of Andrew Davies as Local Authority Governor was noted.

### **31 HEADTEACHERS REPORT : UPDATE – Nick John**

A full report had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting.

Work was ongoing regarding Self-Evaluation and Improvement. School, Faculty and Progress team improvement plans are being monitored and updated as progress is being made on identified priorities.

With regard to standards, Year 11 Numeracy Results Update showed positive improvements. Detailed analysis at department and individual class level through SMID is ongoing to help drill down into those performing below expected level in specific subject areas.

Generally there was a positive picture with performance at progress check 2 for Year 13 pupils.

The school had a fourth Estyn progress review meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024 which provided a further opportunity to provide the latest updates relating to accelerated work since the inspection just over a year ago. Things were looking really positive. The work done by Ceri Garland and Lauren Sharpe was commended by the Headteacher and governors.

The school had been selected to be visited as part of a thematic review that Estyn are carrying out, looking at international languages.

An Estates Update was provided. A financial commitment has now been made by the LA for the yard space to be finalised replacing the maths block. Some funding has been made available this financial year to start work on the office relocation. In relation to the lower school site, discussions are apparently ongoing with highways in relation to the exit onto Manor Way and a proposal is being discussed. At present the Headteacher had not received any clarity on the proposal other than the fact that it doesn't involve a slip road or traffic lights at this stage. Further updates will be given via the Estates and Finance Sub-Committees when information becomes available. Some governors posed the question that if this remained a "red" issue and was not downgraded to "amber" then this could put pressure on the LA to progress matters more quickly to solve the health and safety problems outside the lower school site.

A brief Finance Statement was provided by Wayne Lilly in support of the Headteacher's Report. The most recent "end of year" projection put the school at a deficit of £594K and is above the agreed 2024/25 deficit figure of £454K. This projection was based on expenditure to date (which was early January) and only the known expected income. We then estimated the highest likely expenditure up until 31<sup>st</sup> March. Budget changes are happening all the time and we expect, hopefully, more LA funding announcements in the run up to the end of the financial year, 31<sup>st</sup> March. The next Finance Sub-Committee

meeting is on 20<sup>th</sup> February and the budget (together with any up-to-date adjustments) will be discussed in detail then.

Wayne was also pleased to confirm that we have finally secured a meeting to discuss the Split Site Funding set for Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February. We will then be stating our case for a substantial increase for future budgets and an in-year payment for this year. A report on the Ty Calon funding is also being prepared.

A Skills report was given by Lauren Sharpe. It was noted that the school was visited by the Welsh Government interim director for education, accompanied by LA and consortium representatives to learn about the reading strategies that were being implemented across the school and to see it in action as part of a learning to walk.

Emma Aston is the Literary Co-ordinator and has started developing strong links with other schools and the CSC in relation to sharing good practice/use of the Reading Reconsidered strategies via their training programme. A full report was provided regarding the teaching strategies.

Wendy Johnson is the Numeracy and DCF Co-ordinator and a full report was provided on numeracy skills and teaching strategies at the school. The impact of AI would be taken into account. Links were beginning to develop with Primary Feeder Schools and visits to the schools were planned.

The whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing was covered in the report. Claire Hollings, Lauren Armstrong and Sarah Smith have been recognised for their work in this area, with Whitchurch High being nominated as a school that is demonstrating best practice.

All staffing changes were noted. The possibility of advertising in the Times was being considered to try to fill certain posts including that of faculty leader for Technologies and a Mathematics teacher.

A report on Curriculum Updates was provided by Jonathan Davies. Since the last update, the full options process has started for both Year 9 and Year 11. The programme for the options processes were listed in detail.

Student attendance information was provided by Andrew Miles. Attendance statistics were moving in the right direction. Attendance for years 7 to 11 were all above the national average. Governors appreciated the very intensive presentation of the attendance statistics and how they compared nationally with other schools. The data painted a really encouraging picture.

A full report was given on behaviour and exclusions.

It was noted that Dr Tessa Bailey and Naomi Pearson had volunteered to undertake the role of equity and diversity governors. Both were thanked for volunteering.

An interesting report had been published recently relating to the use of mobile phones in schools. The title of the report is "Phones in Secondary Schools". The Headteacher would add a copy of the report to Microsoft Teams for governors to access. The school's policy regarding the use of mobile phones in the school would be reviewed in the light of this report.

The many school activities were included in the Headteachers report and commended by governors. Of particular note were the Young Playwrights Festival; Carol Service and Ty Calon Panto.

The Headteacher referred to Governor Policy Links and proposed that we attach link governors to each member of the leadership team with a view to supporting the scrutiny of policies. A document will be included in Microsoft Teams which provides an overview of the work and responsibilities of each member of the leadership team. The document will be titled "SLT responsibilities – policies dated". Governors were happy with the theories and principles behind the proposed process and procedure.

The following Faculty Updates were provided:-

- Health & Wellbeing : Sarah Smith
- Science : Dave Eyles
- English : Kirsty Price
- Humanities : Noreen Linforth
- Skills and Socio-Economic Studies : Kelly Gambold
- Maths : Fiona Harding
- Performing Arts : Lara Jones-Price
- Languages : Janine Davies
- Technologies : Lauren Saleh
- Sport & Exercise : Gwyn Morris

Year Group Updates were also reported in full.

**32 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

None.

**33 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025 commencing at 4pm.

Meeting concluded.

SIGNED: SR Hopkins  
(CHAIR)