

WEST CROFT SCHOOL

MINUTES FOR FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Autumn Term 2025

9th September 2025, 5.30pm – 7.30pm (SLT office)

Item	Notes	Lead
<p><b>1. Present &amp; apologies</b></p>	<p><b>Present:</b>                      Martha Mills (Chair) - MM                      Michelle Chappell - MC                      Sam McGregor - SMc                      Christina Baldock - CB                      Dawn Ashford – DA                      Doug Bushby - DB                      Lisa Johnston -LJ</p> <p>Rachel Paxford (Clerk) - RP                      Katy Woodward (Subject Lead) - KW</p> <p><b>Apologies (sanctioned):</b>                      James Ebsworthy - JE                      Sam Lewis - SL</p>	
<p><b>2. Declaration of conflict of interests</b></p>	<p>None</p>	
<p><b>3. Minutes of last meeting 24/06/2025</b></p>	<p>Agreed as a true record</p> <p><b>Action:</b> RP to prepare hard copy of minutes for MM to sign before next Board meeting.</p>	
<p><b>4. Matters arising:</b></p>	<p><b>4.1 WRAP forecast and detailed I&amp;E for 2025/2026 – 2029/2030:</b> with staffing levels already at the minimum requirement and no further government funding available, further details needed on the sustainability options first outlined in meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> June.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> roll-over to next meeting Board meeting with Finance Manager to share more information re. session prices; comparisons with East-the-Water school and trend and forecast data for pupil numbers and associated income.</p> <p><b>4.2 Parent Code of Conduct:</b> LJ confirmed language in policy updated as agreed in meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> June.</p> <p><b>4.3 Maternity policy update</b> regards miscarriage and partners: CB confirmed Miscarriage Policy included in Maternity Policy and mirrors the Devon County Council (DCC) policy.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Christina will check with Emily that the extension of compassionate leave from one to two weeks has been reflected in both the DCC and school’s policy.</p>	<p><b>DW</b></p> <p><b>CB</b></p>
<p><b>5. Any actions completed/not completed/next steps</b></p>	<p>As above</p>	

<b>6. Welcome &amp; introduction to new Governors</b>	New Local Authority Governor, Doug Bushby was welcomed to the Board. New Parent Governor, Sam Lewis, sent her apologies and hopes to join the next meeting.	MM
<b>7. Subject Lead Update</b>	<p><b>Katy Woodward: Reading &amp; Oracy</b> Refer to report shared and also uploaded to Governor Hub for full details.</p> <p>Of particular note:</p> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim is that all pupils leave as fluent, confident readers with a love of reading</li> <li>• New <i>Read Write Inc</i> phonics scheme has been introduced to strengthen both the frequency and consistency of content &amp; structure, with monitoring and CPD support for staff as needed.</li> <li>• Regular 1:1 reading, with extra sessions for those below expected standard.</li> <li>• End of KS2 outcomes up 17.2% from last academic year. All KS2 classes showed positive progress from Autumn – Summer last year.</li> <li>• Priorities for this term include encouraging increased school library use; reading rewards for children; parental engagement and using new data system to more effectively monitor progress and rapidly identify pupils who need targeted support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Oracy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim is that all pupils are confident communicators who articulate ideas clearly and respectfully.</li> <li>• Voice 21 benchmarks used to ensure high quality oracy opportunities with 4/5 benchmarks already introduced.</li> <li>• Priorities for this term include consistent embedding of Voice 21 principles across the curriculum.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q1: Can you share an example of a Voice 21 Oracy benchmark?</b> <b>A:</b> Teacher benchmarks include <i>Setting High Expectations for Oracy and Teaching Oracy Explicitly</i>. (Further details can be found here <a href="#">Voice 21 Benchmark Report</a>)</p> <p><b>Q2: what strategies will be used to increase parental involvement and encourage them to be partners in their children's education?</b> <b>A:</b> Focus on the enhancing a love of reading and reading for pleasure rather than seeing it as a chore; share modelling tools such as recordings of staff reading 1:1 with children with parents via Dojo; parent workshops; support parents to appreciate and value reading; invite parents to do 1:1 reading with their children at school; promote the school library service and use Dojo.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> SMC commended the school for the impressive engagement she witnessed during her last walk through the school.</p> <p>Next subject update will be MATHS presented by Leads Mel Hurle and Imogen Floyd.</p>	KW
<b>8. Compliance/annual declarations</b>	<p><b>8.1 Code of Conduct</b> Paper copies distributed during meeting. Signed copies received from DB; SMC; MC &amp; CB</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p>	RP

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ RP to confirm JL’s signed copy already on file.</li> <li>➤ MC, CB &amp; JL to confirm compliance on Governor Hub.</li> <li>➤ RP to share hard copies of this and other compliance documents with new Governor Sam Lewis for signature at next meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>8.2 Register of Interests</b> Paper copies distributed during meeting for annual declaration of no or any changes. Signed copies received from DB; SMc; CB; LJ; DA; MM &amp; MC</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All to confirm compliance on Governor Hub prior to next meeting</li> <li>➤ RP to share hard copies with JE and SL at next meeting</li> </ul> <p><b>8.3 Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2025</b> All Governors reminded of their mandatory responsibility to read Part 1 of the latest statutory KCSiE guidance which can be found here: <a href="#">Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025</a></p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All Governors to read part 1 and confirm compliance in Governor Hub before next meeting.</li> <li>➤ CB to ask Katy Ebsworthy to ensure Governors included in the all-staff weekly Safeguarding email that includes useful 1-pager guides.</li> </ul> <p><b>8.4 Governor Hub Access</b> JL gave RP admin access to Governor Hub during the meeting</p> <p><b>Action:</b> RP to arrange access for new Board members DB &amp; SL.</p>	
<p><b>9. 2025/2026 Board meeting dates</b></p>	<p>Proposed 2025/2026 dates circulated prior to meeting &amp; uploaded to Governor Hub with reminder that Board meetings will start at <u>5.30pm</u> in future.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> Proposed dates agreed. Next meeting scheduled for <u>Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2025.</u></p>	<p>RP</p>
<p><b>10. Head Teacher update</b></p>	<p><b>10.1 Staffing update (verbal)</b> Emily Everett and Lucy Rossiter have both moved on. Temporary contracts for three TAs not renewed due to falling roll. Subsequent changes in staffing and pupil need mean three new TAs have been appointed. Former trainee teacher, Phoebe Harmer, and experienced EYFS teacher Michelle Lake, have both joined the team. Kyle Paine and Mel Hurlle will serve as temporary Assistant Head Teachers for one year (due to falling roll) with associated leadership responsibilities and time allocated to them.</p> <p><b>10.2 KS2 results 2025</b> Refer to circulated report for full details (also uploaded to Governor Hub).</p> <p>Of particular note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two year upward trend in <i>Reading</i> results and increase of 17.3% points V previous year to 65.5%, although this is 9.6% lower than LA.</li> <li>• <i>Writing</i> results in line with previous year (a significant increase on 2022/23) but still lower 25.1% lower than LA.</li> <li>• 10.2% increase in <i>Maths</i> results V previous year, although 9.6% lower than LA.</li> </ul>	<p>LJ</p>

Priorities for this year include:

- Reading Lead to embed and monitor reading lessons.
- RWI intervention (Fresh Start).
- Continue to develop 1:1 reading TAs.
- Writing lead to drip feed training to develop writing planning and assessment.
- New marking and feedback policy implemented.
- RWI implemented from nursery onwards.
- Focus on transcription basics and narrowing of gaps.
- Continue to develop Maths planning and support.
- Embed CAPE.
- Times tables and arithmetic will be focus areas for Maths lead.
- Jurassic Maths Hub – first training on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

**Q1: are writing results adversely affected by texting?**

A: Yes, very likely.

**Q2: Reading results show the biggest gap V LA. Is this being prioritised?**

A: Yes. Writing Lead is also Assistant Head with additional time for monitoring, quality assuring, planning and coaching. Units have been adapted and writing fundamentals introduced. Three writing Professional Development Meetings (PDMs) this half term, breaking writing, planning and assessment into manageable chunks for teachers. There has been a writing training inset day and subject lead support for assessing writing. Baseline assessment moderation will be completed by 26<sup>th</sup> September. Basic grammar and punctuation gaps observed in KS1 will be reduced with RWI embedding from KS1. Internal data suggests significant progress with 2025/2026 expected to be an embedding year that delivers a positive impact on results. Not writing

### **10.3 Phonic results**

Refer to circulated report for full details (also uploaded to Governor Hub).

Of particular note:

- Continued downward trend at 64.4% V 78% and 82.4% in 2023/24 and 2022/23 respectively.
- 17.8% lower than LA average.
- Declining trend means likely to also be below national average once published.

Priorities for this year include:

- New Phase Lead and EYFS teachers.
- RWI implemented from nursery onwards with formation of progress groups.
- Support from Ilsham English hub.
- Appointment of new early reading lead.
- Whole school training.

**Q1: what is the main reason for the continued downward trend?**

A: Previously, school had its own phonic programme and LA feedback indicated they were happy with the practices observed in class. However, an audit conducted by Ilsham English Hub, triggered by LJ, identified challenges and concluded the former programme no longer met children's needs.

**Q2: How does the new approach to reverse downward trend differ from previous years?**

**A:** Former programme followed a whole-class approach. RWI will be targeted to individual pupil progress and progress groups and is assessment-based. Children will move quickly based on their starting points. Interventions will be rapid and immediate – if a child did not show understanding in the lesson, they are picked up that same day. Lessons reduce teacher talk and there will be an increase in consistency and precision - every teacher must follow with absolute fidelity a defined script. The aim is for Phonic results to increase to 90% within three years.

#### **10.4 EYFS results**

Refer to circulated report for full details (also uploaded to Governor Hub).

Of particular note:

- Increase v previous year but still 18% lower than LA average.

Priorities include:

- New, keen and experienced phase lead and EYFS teachers who have already had a positive impact eg. removing the busyness and clutter in classrooms.
- Changing approach to provision to purposeful play.
- Implementation of RWI from nursery onwards.
- Challenging language norms eg what are you learning today v what are you doing?
- Introduction of Jurassic Maths Hub with focus on mastering numbers.

#### **10.5 Westa Coffee update (verbal)**

West Coffee is open again with accumulated profits to be invested in community engagement activities, the first of which is intended to be a Fireworks display on 2nd November delivered by a specialist contractor. Event approval has been submitted to Torridge Council. Children tickets will be free of charge and adult tickets will be £5 each. LJ is looking to recruit staff and Governor volunteers to support event

**Q1: Does Westa Coffee need to be registered as a business if it's profit-making, even if these profits are reinvested in community engagement activities?**

**A:** To be confirmed by Finance Manager, Dawn Wright

**Q2: How many people are likely to attend?**

**A:** 400 children currently enrolled so expecting 500-1,000 to attend.

**Q3: will food and drink be provided?**

**A:** Yes, but this is likely to be contracted out given the scale of the event

**Actions:**

- LJ to email DB with details so he can follow up with Torridge Council
- DW to provide response to Q1 at next meeting.

#### **10.6 Other updates (verbal)**

*Character curriculum* will be launched with the focus for this year the six virtues of respect, kindness, resilience, curiosity, honesty and cooperation. One virtue will be introduced to children each half term, introduced in assemblies and threaded across all curriculum with a Head Teacher award for each virtue.

<p><b>11. CAIRB update</b></p>	<p>School worked closely with the LA to secure suitable placements in its CAIRB for pupils with communication and interaction needs and is now full to capacity with 10 learners requiring specialist provision.</p> <p><b>Q: How does the school's status as a CAIRB base impact performance data? What would results look like if they exclude children with significant needs?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> data can be shared at next meeting but know, for example, that Phonic results would have been 76% if we remove children new to the school or with significant complex needs from the data.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> data to be shared at next meeting</p>	<p>LJ</p>
<p><b>12. HT performance review update</b></p>	<p>HT annual performance review has been scheduled for <u>Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025</u> with MM, JE &amp; MC all due to attend.</p> <p>MM has already completed training in conducting HT performance review but online training is available on <u>Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> September 10-11am</u> for others if necessary.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ RP to confirm time of review with Tina Jackson</li> <li>➤ RP to confirm with JE &amp; MC if they are able to join online training</li> <li>➤ RP to circulate DCC review guidance</li> </ul>	<p>MM</p>
<p><b>13. Pay &amp; Performance Committee</b></p>	<p>Pay &amp; Performance Committee provisionally scheduled for 5-5.30pm on Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> October subject to JE being able to attend as MM not available at this time.</p> <p><b>Q: are pay scales not normally determined by DCC?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> Teachers on main pay scale will go up pay scale points unless there is significant concern regarding their performance. Teacher on MPS6 may wish to request UPS, however, this needs to be carefully considered alongside appropriate guidance with recommendations of the headteacher submitted to governors.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> RP to confirm with JE and share meeting invite.</p>	<p>MM</p>
<p><b>14. Governor school visits autumn term</b></p>	<p>The following visits were agreed as a priority for the Autumn term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading – SMc</li> <li>• Maths – JE</li> <li>• SEND – MC</li> <li>• Early Years - DA</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, SMc agreed to assume responsibility as the Lead Governor for Writing, with MM assuming responsibility for RWI.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Relevant Governors to schedule visits in SDP &amp; Monitoring Calendar</li> <li>➤ DB to confirm/deny interest in Health &amp; Safety role at next meeting</li> </ul>	<p>JL/MM</p>
<p><b>15. Ofsted Committee Formation</b></p>	<p>With an Ofsted inspection likely in February 2026, LJ requested the formation of an Ofsted Committee in order to provide more detailed updates on the school's development and progress and ensure that Governors are prepared for the visit. Meetings will be bi-weekly on Fridays from 10<sup>th</sup> October and the Board will be represented by MM, JE &amp; SMc.</p>	<p>LJ</p>

	<p><b>Action:</b> RP to confirm with JE the best time for these meetings and share invite.</p>	
<p><b>16. Safeguarding Training &amp; Policy</b></p>	<p><b>16.1 Safeguarding Training</b>          LJ delivered important Safeguarding training to the Board, highlighting the need to be professionally curious and to understand that ‘it happens here’. Anonymised, contextual examples shared verbally to illustrate key components of training. Supporting slides shared and uploaded to Governor Hub.</p> <p><i>Refer to KCSiE section above (8.3) for actions.</i></p> <p><b>Q1: Reference made to parents receiving bite-size safeguarding updates via Dojo. Is there any data on the level of parent engagement with Dojo platform?</b>  <b>A:</b> Yes, and this can be shared with Governors at next meeting.</p> <p><b>Q2: How many parents attended online Safeguarding training workshop?</b>  <b>A:</b> 15</p> <p><b>Q: How many did you expect/hope for?</b>  <b>A:</b> 200</p> <p><b>16.2 Updated Safeguarding Policy</b></p> <p>Circulated prior to meeting &amp; uploaded to Governor Hub. Requires formal ratification by MM as Safeguarding Lead Governor.</p> <p><b>Action:</b>          MM to ratify by email within one week of meeting.</p>	<p>LJ</p>
<p><b>17. AOB</b></p>	<p><b>Skills audit</b>          MM asked for a copy of the last skills audit and with new Board membership, also asked for this to be updated.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> RP to locate document and arrange follow meeting with MM to discuss further.</p>	<p>MM</p>

**Next meeting: 5.30pm Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2025**