

MERTON INFANT SCHOOL AND MERTON PRE-SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held online on Monday 25th November 2025

MINUTES

Present Board Members:			Attended:
	Larissa James	Headteacher	Y
	Lee-Ann Dirienzo		Y
	Carly Jones		Y
	Jan Beard		Y
	Gaye Dove	Chair	Y
	Janel Richards		Y
	Sophie Wells	Vice Chair	Y
	Tracy Ferguson		Y
Also in attendance as non-governors:	Laura Relf	Deputy Headteacher	Y
	Paula Bennett	School Business Manager	Y
	Mark Livesey	Clerk	Y

The meeting started at 6.00 pm.

		ACTION
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence Apologies: were received from JR who was unable to attend because of work commitments. There was an expectation that LJ, LR & LD would be attending the meeting but might be a little late joining it.	
2.	Declaration of Pecuniary Interests or Conflicts of Interests None.	
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 13th October 2025 Agreed as a true record.	
4.	Matters Arising 140725_16_1 Send TF a link to the website so that she can book herself on to the governor induction training (GD): TF advised that she had completed one session of New Governor Induction training and will be undertaking the second session tomorrow. Completed & closed. <i>LJ & LD joined the meeting at 6.03 pm.</i> 140725_16_2 Produce a report on the Strategic Planning training that she had undertaken (LD): LD advised that she had not completed this action yet. ACTION C/F. 140725_23 Upload the final version of the GB Self Evaluation document to the HSS system (LJ): Completed & closed. 131025_11_1 Find out if there is a detailed description of what WGBT on the topic of Early Years would include (Clerk): the Clerk apologised as he had not completed this action although he will do so very soon. ACTION C/F. 131025_11_2 Think of a form of words or a list of sub-topics, relating to WGBT Early Years training, that the Clerk could minute when Governor Training is discussed again at the November FGB meeting (ALL): GD advised that the GB had already received some WGBT in Early Years and that the question is now whether another WGBT session would cover the same topics or whether another WGBT session would cover some additional topics that could possibly be followed up in any future WGBT Early Years training. It was agreed that this can be discussed later in the meeting under item 9. Closed. 131025_14 Consider a name change to 'Merton Infant School and Nursery' and email their thoughts regarding this potential name change to the rest of the GB (ALL): it was agreed that this matter can be discussed later in the meeting. .	LD Clerk ALL

5.	Propose amended Budget Plan (input on SAP by 30th November) PB talked the committee through the amended Budget Plan, the main points being summarised below: D Budget (Pre-School) - the revised budget figure is £49,106 - there has been a large increase in expenditure on agency staff, although this has been offset by the school not needing to employ additional staff - there is an additional line in the budget for a lunchtime supervisor; a lunchtime cover person for the nursery was appointed on Friday, which allows the nursery to admit more children during the afternoon; Kelly (Pre-School Finance Manager) has produced a breakdown showing that this arrangement could provide the school with an additional £8,000 between now and the end of the financial year - Kelly had advised that an additional member of staff is starting this week, with another 3 children starting during w/c 8th December; Kelly had also advised that another 4 children are starting in January, with the rest of the children on the waiting list wanting to wait until April - she is hoping that the number of children in the nursery will increase - there has not been a great deal of change in the budget except for staffing - the original budget had a Carry Forward of £31,000, which has now increased to £49,000 and does not even take into account the additional pupils; if the Pre-School can attract pupils between now and the end of March, then the £49,000 figure will increase - this budget is generally healthy Y Budget - the budget ends with a balance of £92,446, this being the revised 'Cumulative Surplus / (Deficit) C/Fwd' figure for the end of the current financial year - there are not many incomings or outgoings in this budget, although she has made a few increases & reductions - she has slightly reduced the Catering Provisions line - she has reduced the Income from the After School Club from £32,000 to £28,000, which has had the effect of reducing the overall Carry Forward by £2,259 - this budget appears generally quite healthy, and is needed, along with the D Budget, to offset the O Budget O Budget Expenditure - she believes that there will be some savings in the region of £3000 - £4000 on staffing costs due to unpaid leave, time off to care for dependents, staff taking unpaid days off and periods of time when the school does not have certain staff such as a lunchtime supervisor and cleaner - the PE Funding has increased by £10,000, as it was only announced that this funding would continue after the original budget had been set - the Catering line is a large part of the budget at £70,445; based on the current number of meals being taken, there is a chance that not all of this sum will be spent, although the catering company may wish to discuss, with the school in 2026, possible ways of increasing the number of children taking meals - she has increased the School Curriculum Software line by £500, as LJ is looking to introduce a new assessment tool - regarding the Grant Aid for Donations line, she has removed the £480 as this sum is the figure remaining from a grant that was given to the school approx. 5 years ago; the line was retained in case anything was needed for an ELSA, although the school does not have an ELSA at present - she has reduced the Fundraising Purchases line, having calculated that the figure needed will be significantly less than the figure originally set - there is an additional cost of £4,875 for private tutoring for an EHCP child who does not currently attend Merton Infant School in terms of being physically present in the school building although the child is on the school's roll; the school receives funding for the child and she is in the process of calculating whether the EHCP funding that the school has received for the child and the tutoring funding costs until the end of the year will match, as if not then the school will need to contact the SEN department and carry out a costed provision map to ensure that the school receives all the funding; for now, the funding received because of the EHCP has matched the expenditure on private tutoring Income - the Miscellaneous Income line, 7203, is much higher than it was at budget setting, predominantly due to receipt of £1,000 for Maths Mastery; in addition, the school received	
----	--	--

	some money for one of the LSA's who is undertaking an apprenticeship • she has reduced the income from Day Trips as it has been calculated that, based on the number of trips planned between now and the end of the year, the school will not receive £5,000 and therefore this figure has been reduced • regarding the PE Funding line, the income & expenditure have cancelled each other out • the Additional Allocations line has increased because of the addition of a School Budget Support Grant that was given to all schools to help with the increase in staffing costs General • the deficit has been reduced by £26,000; taking into account the surpluses from the D and Y budgets, and the O budget deficit, the overall deficit across all 3 budgets is £1,931, although she does not currently believe that the school will end this financial year in deficit; she has reduced the gas & electricity expenditure slightly • it would be beneficial to the school if pupil numbers increased in September, although September's pupil numbers will not be known until the figures are published in April • she will closely monitor the income from the Breakfast and After School clubs, as if it starts to look as though the income from these clubs will not amount to the figures expected, she will need to look at reducing expenditure to compensate Q. A governor asked if the children on the nursery waiting list are of all ages. A. PB advised that she believes that the children are of all ages. The revised budget figures for the D Budget are shown below. Total Expenditure: £156,823 (One Hundred and Fifty Six Thousand, Eight Hundred and Twenty Three Pounds) Total Income: £181,158 (One Hundred and Eighty One Thousand, One Hundred and Fifty Eight Pounds) In Year Surplus / (Deficit): £24,335 (Twenty Four Thousand, Three Hundred and Thirty Five Pounds) Surplus / (Deficit) Brought forward: £24,771 (Twenty Four Thousand, Seven Hundred and Seventy One Pounds) Cumulative Surplus / (Deficit) C/Fwd: £49,106 (Forty Nine Thousand, One Hundred and Six Pounds) The revised budget figures for the Y Budget are shown below. Total Expenditure: £32,447 (Thirty Two Thousand, Four Hundred and Forty Seven Pounds) Total Income: £43,600 (Forty Three Thousand, Six Hundred Pounds) In Year Surplus / (Deficit): £11,153 (Eleven Thousand, One Hundred and Fifty Three Pounds) Surplus / (Deficit) Brought forward: £81,293 (Eighty One Thousand, Two Hundred and Ninety Three Pounds) Cumulative Surplus / (Deficit) C/Fwd: £92,446 (Ninety Two Thousand, Four Hundred and Forty Six Pounds) The revised budget figures for the O Budget are shown below. Total Expenditure: £1,380,086 (One Million, Three Hundred and Eighty Thousand and Eighty Six Pounds) Total Income: £1,339,380 (One Million, Three Hundred and Thirty Nine Thousand, Three Hundred and Eighty Pounds) In Year Surplus / (Deficit): (£40,706) (Forty Thousand, Seven Hundred and Six Pounds deficit) Surplus / (Deficit) Brought forward: (£102,777) (One Hundred and Two Thousand, Seven Hundred and Seventy Seven Pounds deficit) Cumulative Surplus / (Deficit) C/Fwd: (£143,483) (One Hundred and Forty Three Thousand, Four Hundred and Eighty Three Pounds deficit) It was agreed to approve the D, Y and O budgets based on the figures above. It was then arranged that GD, as Chair of Governors, will visit the school to sign off the budget.	
6.	Monitor spending of Devolved Capital allocation There were no significant developments regarding Devolved Capital to report.	
7.	Review Staff Absence The GB discussed staff absence. <i>PB left the meeting at 6.27 pm.</i>	
8.	Receive Headteacher Written Report LJ advised some additional information to her written HT report, the main points being summarised	

	below: - the IDSR (Inspection Data School Report) has been published and will be included in the agenda for the February FGB meeting; the Report includes some new elements on the school context, although most of the new elements are included in her written Report - current attendance is 95.4% although if PA pupils are excluded the attendance is 97.5% - there is a new toolkit available on the DfE website - the SEND and FSM groups are the lowest, although the SEND group has increased since Autumn 1 - there are 41 PA children, amounting to 24% of the total NoR, although some of these children are not of statutory school age; she showed a graph showing the differences between the current half-term and the same period for the last half-term, the green areas being positive; she is very pleased with the data - regarding her written Report, she shared the Early Years data via her computer screen; the national difference for the comparison between 2024 and 2025 is 0.6, there being no change for the LA but for the school a 2.2% rise is shown, this being positive data - there is a slight drop in the Phonics data, although 6 children from the Y1 cohort had left the school, with all 6 children having been predicted to pass the Phonics test; the school has regrouped the children and Quality of Teaching has already started for the different groups - even before the school was assigned to the project by Hampshire, she believes that the school data would have increased in any event - the adviser, when working with CJ, had suggested not changing to any particular scheme at this point, as the adviser could see the benefit of the school's current strategy in the children's writing books, meaning that the school's writing data will improve; it is therefore important to give the children more time to develop their blending skills - the school is generally operating in a satisfactory manner, with the usual Christmas events planned and rehearsals being held for the plays - she has started using the new Ofsted framework <i>LR joined the meeting at 6.30 pm.</i> Q. GD advised that she knew that LJ and LR attended a course recently and asked if there was enough room to manoeuvre, in terms of the tight budget situation, to allow for any additional training that may be required regarding the Pre-School, Ofsted Maths Mastery and the Phonics project. She also advised that she is really asking whether there are enough staff in the school to cover these priorities. A. LJ advised that the school has sufficient staff at present, including an HLTA who covers LR's non-contact time; she also advised that she believes that the school can be flexible and that this is the way the school is going to have to work moving forward; she also advised that the school prioritises training courses for staff, when the curriculum managers attend their network meetings, information is drip-fed to them. LJ advised some additional information as summarised below: - her current understanding is that the new framework will go back to data and it will be important for the school to understand how to present its data Q. GD asked if it is thought that the new Ofsted framework has new implications for WGBT. A. LJ advised that she believes that it will be important in 2027/28 for the GB to receive some WGBT on the new Ofsted framework in a dedicated training session. She also advised that LR has carried out some excellent work on updating the school's Progression of Skills & Knowledge in the EYFS prime areas to include the nursery which is a positive step forward of the actions from the previous Ofsted. Regarding SEND, she has been carrying out a lot of research on Sensory Circuits; she would like to make the 2 discovery rooms between Y1 and Y2 the school's SEND unit as it is likely that the school will be receiving more children with complex needs in the future; she believes that the 2 rooms can be used in a better way than they are being used at present. With the £10,000 from the PE funding, she would like to fund the equipment for that room and also new playground markings outside the back of the school. This has been shared with staff. Regarding SEND, the school has undertaken ASC training, ADHD and Intensive Interaction training. Dyslexic training is planned for the Spring Term.	
9.	Discuss Governor Training, including WGBT if necessary Governor training was discussed, with GD advising that she and the Clerk will check what WGBT is available, and LJ advising some information as summarised below: she believes that it would be beneficial to explore how the school can market itself; some training, guidance or ideally recruitment of a governor with knowledge & experience of marketing would be very useful	

	the school has 3 visits to local pre-schools and nurseries in Hampshire booked, to learn from their practice & see if there is anything that the school can learn from their curriculum; these visits will be an opportunity to ask these settings what marketing strategies they have used to attract more children	
10.	Discuss reports from Governor Visits Q. GD asked if any Governor Visit Reports had been received. A. LJ advised that she had received some reports on the Governor Monitoring Day and will upload them to the HSS system. Q. LJ asked if there is a problem uploading reports from governor visits to the HSS system. A. The Clerk advised that he understands that some governors have had problems uploading such reports to HSS, although if any governors want any visit reports uploaded and they are unable to upload them themselves, he would be happy to upload them if he can be given any particular instructions, such as which folder to create to put the reports in.	
11.	Review Policies according to review schedule: – Site Security, Low Level Concern, Home-School Agreement, Data Protection, Drugs and Substance Abuse, Healthy Eating Agreed: to approve all the policies listed above.	
12.	Safeguarding LJ advised some information as summarised below: - she has attended the new Martyn's Law, which is the new guidance on Prevent; the guidance is about whether the setting is Standard Tier 1, or not, and what other additional measures have to be put in place if events are being held - there is a new term 'invacuation', where people are invacuated in the school building; the term 'lockdown' is still valid and is apparently very similar to invacuation; the guidance covers how 'invacuation' or 'lockdown' is communicated to everyone in the various areas of the school; the remaining term is 'evacuation', where everyone is evacuated externally - she will work with the SLT and go through the Lockdown Procedures, although some common sense will be required and it is expected that the school will ensure that the telephone system is used and that each area is managed to the best control measure achievable; however, it is not possible to define an exact procedure for every possible scenario that could occur - she will report again on the new Martyn's Law - other Safeguarding updates are included in her HT Report - the school is well below national figures on the number of CIN and CP plans in a school - there were 2 places in the school that did not have fingerguards, although these were not places that the children went into a great deal; fingerguards have now been installed in both areas and school is fully compliant with the recent LA guidance. LJ will complete the online reporting system by the end of term. Q. GD asked whether communications around the school are working well. A. LJ advised that communications are working well, especially around lunchtimes, e.g. if someone wants to come into the school building, the school can arrange for someone in school to go out and cover them; there are now telephones in all areas. Q. GD asked if the new security arrangements for the library are working well. A. LJ answered in the affirmative.	
13.	Discuss GB Membership GD advised that she had made a number of approaches to people with a view to seeing whether they might be interested in becoming a school governor. Agreed: that the school will send out a text message every half-term, advising that the GB is still looking for governors and asking interested people to contact GD or LJ if they require further information; ideally the text message will make a reference to the school's desire to find people who would be interested in supporting children and their learning and wellbeing.	
14.	Notification to the GB & Clerk of any events (i.e. the name of the event, date & start time) during the current academic year for which some governor presence is required JB advised that the school had produced a list of events covering everything that will be happening over the Christmas period and that once LJ has checked the list it can be sent out, perhaps tomorrow; she also advised that this list will also be emailed to the governors. LJ advised that Pupil Progress Meetings will take place as follows: YR: Tuesday 9th December after school Y1: Wednesday 10th December after school Y2: Thursday 11th December at 1.00 pm	

	LJ also advised some further information as summarised below: - any governors who would like to attend any of the Pupil Progress Meetings would be most welcome to do so - there will be a new newsletter in December for GD to add Governor News GD advised that if any governors would like to add anything to the governor newsletter, they should let her know.	
15.	Correspondence None.	
16.	Any Other Business There was a discussion regarding the timing of meetings within each half-term, with one idea being the rethinking of which items should be included in the agendas, with a view to the meetings being more focused on activities that need to be carried out and with budget reporting possibly taking place during shorter meetings. Q. LJ asked the Clerk if it is statutory for the GB to hold 6 meetings per year. A. The Clerk advised that he understands that the budget has to be discussed at least 6 times per year. LJ advised that giving some thought to what is included in the agendas and possibly grouping the agenda items for each meeting might be beneficial. GD advised that it would be possible to have the revised budget and the Headteacher Report in November at the Autumn 2 meeting, as has occurred during this meeting; she also advised that she believes that the first meeting of the academic year, i.e. the Autumn 1 meeting, could possibly be a short meeting looking ahead to the rest of the academic year as a whole and considering a possible focus for monitoring days and perhaps talking about training. Agreed that: GD and LJ will discuss the possibility of reorganising and focusing the agendas for the Autumn Term meetings while still ensuring that the statutory budget monitoring & reviews and important areas for discussion are included. ACTION. Q. A governor (TF) advised that she had been approached by another school about the possibility of her being a governor at that school, and asked whether it would be a conflict of interest if she became a governor of that school. A. LJ advised that she did not believe it would constitute a conflict of interest, subject to confidentiality of all Merton Infant School and Merton Pre-School matters discussed at FGB meetings being maintained. Agreed that: the Clerk will check with Governor Services whether a governor of the Infant School serving on the GB of another school would be a conflict of interest. ACTION.	GD / LJ Clerk
17.	Date of next FGB Meeting – Monday 9th February 2026 at 6.00 pm in person.	

The meeting closed at 7.16 pm.

These minutes are accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed _____ Chair Date _____