



LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES
Orleans Primary School
 Hartington Road, Twickenham, TW1 3EN
Draft minutes of Full Governing Board meeting on
Wednesday 9 July at 6.30pm at school

Constitution, Membership and Attendance

LA - 1	PARENTS - 2	CO-OPTED - 8	STAFF – Headteacher
Mike Dormer – MD (chair)	Marta Grane- MG	Rosalind Orchard - RO (Vice Chair)	Phoebe Du Parcq - PD (Headteacher)
	Julia Shute - JS	Rob Long – RL	Loretta Lau (LL)
		Dinaz Zaq – DZ	
		Philip Moshi - PM	
		Siobhan Moynihan (SM)	
		Ian Patterson (IP)	
		Vacancy	
		Vacancy	

Apologies accepted: Rosalind Orchard, Dinaz Zaq, Ian Patterson, Caroline Green and Helen Tonge

Also attending: Charlotte Howe (CH), Balsheel Beeharry (BB), Alex Jones (AJ), Julie Duffy (Clerk)

Papers issued for review:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft FGB minutes of 19 March 2025 • Draft FGB minutes of 24 April 2025 • Draft minutes for Q&S - 20 May 2025 • Draft minutes for PC&C – 11 June 2025 • Headteacher’s report • LBR SPPG 24 June 2025 • Governor’s Code of Conduct 2025-6 • Governance Panel summary notes • Draft Agenda Planning 2025-6 • Exploring Federation: Enhancing Excellence for Chase Bridge & Orleans
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No	Discussion	Action by
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OPENING ITEMS

1.	Apologies: Rosalind Orchard, Dinaz Zaq, Ian Patterson, Caroline Green & Helen Tonge	
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2.	Declaration of interest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	
3.	Membership and constitution (Statutory) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MD was elected as chair • MD thanked KT for her contribution as governor. • MD thanked ZB for her contribution as governor. • MD thanked CG for her time as governor and associate member. • MD thanked AJ for her time as associate governor, deputy HT & SENCO. • MD thanked PD for her time as ex-officio governor and HT. • Charlotte Howe and Balsheel Beeharry were nominated as co-opted governors. Their 4-year term runs from 9 July 2025 to 8 July 2029. 	
4.	Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minutes of the FGB on 19 March 2025 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting • The minutes of the extraordinary meeting on 24 April 2025 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. • The action items were either completed or would be covered in this meeting. <p>ACTION: Approved minutes to be signed by the chair on Governor Hub.</p>	MD
5.	Committee Meetings: <p>F&P 6th July 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had made an impressive turnaround from a six-figure deficit (£165,000) two years ago to a £5,000 deficit this year. • There were 13 places still available in reception. • Going forward, the financial plan is tight and F&P would be looking to have robust forecasting of agency spend in the next financial year. • F&P would look to develop the school income strategy incorporating all fundraising routes. <p>Governors had a discussion about the pressure on staff as result of the cost cutting measures.</p> <p>Q: How much of an impact does low numbers have on the school's finances?</p> <p>A: It is significant. The school receive around £5,000 per child in funding. With 13 pupils short this comes to around £65,000 which is the price of a teacher with oncosts, or the price of couple of TAs with oncosts. Funding is set by the previous October's census so these figures will appear in next year's funding statement. The budget we reviewed was based on these lower number but there is often a lot of movement over the summer holidays.</p> <p>MD advised governors that as we go into the soft federation it would make sense to rearrange the committees slightly to match the model at Chase Bridge which aligns with Ofsted's area of interest. Personnel moves from PC&C to F&P which will become Finance, Personnel & Premises. Governors were in agreement. PC&C will become Behaviour, Attitudes and Personal Development.</p>	JD

	ACTION: Clerk to add Chase Bridge governing body structure to Governor Hub. (Done)	
STRATEGIC ITEMS		
6.	<p>Long term model options and timetable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MD presented the SIP's federation presentation. • Governors discussed the expected five-term timetable and consultation process. • Governors are looking to make a decision regarding a potential federation for the long-term beyond DB being the EHT for the soft federation. • Some of the joint working group have a longstanding, professional relationship with DB which was acknowledged and the governors ensured there would be objectivity and full awareness. • The key benefits of federation include stronger business management and the chance to save money on training, etc. • Staff can share expertise and people wanting to move up can do so within the federation allowing for a more stable workforce. • Orleans are getting the benefit of being part of a successful education group and teachers can share best practice knowledge. • Strong leadership in the EHT model has worked well in other schools. • Governors need to decide how to organise themselves – would it be two separate governing boards or would they amalgamate into one single board? • Federation would aid increased financial resilience. One-form entry schools are finding it difficult to make the numbers work (as discussed below in 11: Termly Business). • Governors confirmed their commitment to explore a soft federation and nominations for three governors to sit on the Joint Working Group were discussed. • RO, MD and PM (chair) would form Orleans' part of the group. <p>Q: The federation document is really clear and we can buy into the positives but what are we losing? We as governors need to have an honest discussion about this so that we can mitigate. For example, we are not the same as local schools in the presentation such as Heathfield, Trafalgar and Hampton Hill who have federated their Infant / Junior schools.</p> <p>A: We have a five- term trial period coming in which to test out a soft-federation. If, after a couple of terms, the joint working group aren't comfortable with the way things are going, we need to be able to say we don't think this will work. However, we need to bear in mind that we may need to allow enough time to interview a new HT (which has to be advertised nationally for three weeks minimum and usually takes at least three-terms to arrange in practice).</p> <p>Q: If we want to go ahead can we keep the existing Heads of School?</p> <p>A: If we wanted to continue beyond the five terms we would need to be aware of employment law. If the federation works then the Head of School position could become a permanent contract (it is currently only for five terms) and we wouldn't have to readvertise that position.</p>	

	<p>Q: How will the working group keep the rest of the governors informed on progress? A: One of the great strengths of this FGB is that everyone has a voice. The working group will share feedback at committee meetings and the FGB.</p> <p>Q: Do governors need to do our own research on it? A: Everyone needs to commit to this and it is going to be quite hard work. You need to know and understand the implications and I would recommend reading around this. The Federation Academy Toolkit document which was written by the educational advisor for the Clifton diocese is comprehensive. The DfE also have guidance which can be found online. ACTION: MD to share the Federation Academy Tookit document (done).</p> <p>Q: In terms of what is consulted on, do parents get a vote? A: The first step is a soft federation. We need both governing boards to be in agreement on moving forward with a formal federation and then it will go to public consultation. This is not the same as a public vote or voting. Instead, it is about saying this is what we will do and inviting questions from parents.</p> <p>Q: Should we get a consultant in to discuss this with governors? A: It could be a good idea to get advice from HTs, EHTs and governors who have gone through this process already. If we move towards a federation we will engage an experienced and independent consultant to help us plan how we will move forward.</p> <p>Q: Can we get the consultant engaged earlier? A: If after two or three working group meetings there is a strong desire to move forward we would get a consultant in straight away. But the FGB has to decide to move forward, not the consultant, so it may be wiser to ensure we are ready for federation before engaging someone.</p> <p>Q: Have we considered academisation? A: The local landscape is not one that favours academies. This government is not promoting wholesale academisation. Previously half of the costs were paid by the government in big grants which gave incentives to academise. In terms of our financial position at the moment, Richmond Upon Thames would need to give us permission to academise and at that point any debt is written off. We would then have to find a trust who are willing to take us on with our finances and reserves as they stand. The DfE also has to give permission so there a lot of hoops to go through and for a community school like this it would not be advisable to academise.</p>	MD
7.	<p>Headteacher's report: The report had been shared in advance and was taken as read. PD summarised and asked governors if they had any questions.</p> <p>PD read out the Indicative KS results. Three new to country students would be removed. Although we don't know the national results yet, the results are strong. Teachers would go through each paper to see if there were any more marks to be found. These would be added to the FGB folder in Governor Hub. Governors commended the school on the great results.</p> <p>Q: Why do low marks in one subject lower the combined score?</p>	

	<p>A: Some students will have missed out on a higher combined score because they have 99 in one of their tests and so were on the cusp of a better combined score.</p> <p>Q: Is nursery full next year? A: Yes it is looking positive for nursery.</p> <p>Q: How is attendance? A: Emma Smith the SIP visited two weeks ago and she commended us because she noted that we track attendance really closely and are above local and national for every group. Governors agreed with this commendation.</p>	
8.	<p>SDP and SEF: This would be addressed when the new Head of School was in place in the autumn term.</p>	
9.	<p>Policies: The Governors Code of Conduct had been updated slightly to incorporate social media.</p>	
10.	<p>Governor training, visits and development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DZ had done a Health & Safety visit. • PM had undertaken a PPG pupil voice visit and would send in his report. • RL did an EYFS visit • MD had undertaken online safeguarding training. 	
	<p>Termly business: School Places Planning Group (SPPG)</p> <p>MD talked governors through the slides from AfC which had been shared in advance. It is very difficult for schools to stand alone at the moment. AfC are trying to manage falling roles. There has been a permanent reduction in classes in the borough and this group had representatives from schools (governors, chairs and HTs). Reception applications have reduced by 33% and the birth rates are getting lower (although this year is better than last). Many schools are reducing forms but still have the same fixed site costs.</p> <p>Q: Is there a contingency? A: This was just the first meeting of the SPPG which was more of a terms of Ref meeting. I will report back.</p> <p>Q: How can we market ourselves better to future parents? A: Other schools such as St Stephens had an open evening. They have created wonderful Instagram videos for parents.</p> <p>Q: Could we market ourselves as a SEN specialist school? A: The problem is that the EHCP funding from the LA never matches the costs. We have currently 7 EHCPs which is low and ours is a small school site so numbers will always be low. The school have to pay the first £6,000 of any EHCP. We used to overspend by around £100,000 each year on SEN support. In the last few years we have bought the staffing structure down to get within budget as we were spending so much more over and above what we were getting from the LA.</p> <p>The governors had an in-depth discussion about SEN and funding for EHCPs and it was agreed that the system is broken.</p>	

	<p>AOB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor pages to be updated in the 'Welcome To Orleans' slides. • Safeguarding Inset training takes place on Monday 1st September from 9– 12 and governors are welcome to attend. • The updated KCSIE is available to read: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/686b94eefe1a249e937cbd2d/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2025.pdf <p>The date of the next FGB is Wednesday 15th October.</p>	JD

No.	Item.	Action.	By whom	When	Status
1.	4.	Sign minutes on Governor Hub	MD	31.7.25	Done
2.	5.	Governing Body Structure	JD	31.7.25	Done
3.	6.	Share Federation Academy Toolkit	MD	31.7.25	Done
4.	12.	Update Welcome To Orleans slides	JD	31.7.25	