



MINUTES OF MEETING OF GOVERNING BOARD

Monday 13th July 2026, 7 pm

Oathall Community College

Present: Toby Houghton (TDH) Head Teacher; Rowena Chalk (RC) Chair; Brenda Brown (BB); Nicky Wastie (NW); Carol Mactaggart (CM); Sarah Wild (SW); James Horsman (JH); John Parry (JP); Emily Lomax (EM); Steve Hall (SH).

Minutes: Donna Murdoch (DM) Clerk to Governors.

No	Item
1.	Apologies and absence. VC gave their apologies.
2.	Declarations of interest. None
3.	Senior Leadership Presentation – Attendance & Behaviour Review. Ofsted Inspection Preparation and Learnings Uncertainty exists regarding the next Ofsted inspection timeline. It could happen sooner than the previously anticipated September 2027, as a neighboring school was inspected earlier than expected. This means the current strategic objectives may be the ones in place during the inspection. The heads of two recently inspected local schools will present their experiences to all Mid Sussex heads to help them prepare. The team will review inspection reports from similar schools (Downlands, WP) to understand Ofsted's new reporting style. Strategic Planning and Curriculum Development The strategic objectives, drafted at a leadership team planning day, were reviewed. Work from the recent Governor's Day has been embedded into the action plan, which will be finalised into a single document for governors to access and will be followed up in September.

	The leadership team will work on key objectives from September, with a major focus on the continuation of literacy (reading, writing, numeracy) from primary school, emphasizing disciplinary literacy within each subject. Intervention for students with reading deficits will be implemented early, without waiting for a formal SEN diagnosis. Q: Has the curriculum review already happened? A: The curriculum review was this year, a new curriculum leadership structure is in place. The focus for next year is ensuring consistency in quality and delivery. There isn't an even representation of subjects, so for example life learning hasn't got a formal lesson in the Year 9 curriculum, which will be addressed. "Every lesson every day" is our core teaching and learning strategy. There's a headline strategy, and then behind each of these there's training and professional development, and that informs our professional development programme over the year. We quality assure what is going on in lessons under those headings as well. Behavior, Belonging, and Inclusion A key objective is fostering a "stronger sense of belonging" for all students. The behavior policy is being reviewed to shift from a punitive-driven approach to one focused on positive inclusion, belonging, and relational management. This includes considering the "why" behind behavior and giving students time to regulate. This relational approach will also be applied to attendance to understand the root causes of absence. Safeguarding and Pupil Support The school is considered strong in safeguarding. Collaboration with a geographic group of schools is underway to ensure a consistent, joined-up approach to community safeguarding challenges. An issue was raised regarding the lack of visits to students in alternative provision (off-site education), with practical challenges cited (e.g., transport). A new process is being addressed to improve quality assurance and reduce the number of students requiring off-site provision.
4.	Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th June 2026. The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2026 were approved and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
5.	Actions: None.
6.	Business and finance reports. The business report for the period of June 2026, along with the budget monitoring report for the same period were provided to the governors. A confidential report was also submitted for governor's approval which has been recorded as Part II minutes.

7.	Policies to be approved.
7.1	Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions: reviewed and formally approved by the governing body.
7.2	Suspensions and Exclusions Policy: reviewed and formally approved by the governing body. The need for more governors to be trained for exclusions panels was highlighted.
7.3	Behaviour Policy: The current policy was reviewed and approved with no changes, but a new draft is expected early next year.
7.4	Governor Code of Practice: reviewed and formally approved by the governing body.
7.5	Mobile Phone & ICT Policies:
7.6	ICT & Social Media Acceptable Use Policy: A conflict was identified between the “Mobile Phones and Devices Policy” (banning student phone use) and the “ICT Acceptable Use Policy” (allowing personal devices with permission). It was clarified that “personally owned devices” can include laptops for students with SEN, but not phones. A proposal was made to add a safeguarding clause allowing staff to ask a student to use their phone in exceptional safety circumstances. The policy was approved in principle, pending these clarifications and final approval in September.
9.	Chair’s Report RC attended the Federation Chair’s meeting on Wednesday. RC spoke of the next Governors Day on September 22nd.
10.	Headteacher’s Report Hot Weather: Recent heatwaves, with classroom temperatures reaching 34°C, required operational changes like early closures and trip rearrangements. TDH raised the issue to governors that the DfE support is almost nonexistent for schools when they’re going into those extreme weathers. The school’s communication with parents was praised. The group committed to reviewing and updating the hot/cold weather management policy to establish clearer contingency plans and thresholds. Long-term solutions like air conditioning were discussed but noted as expensive. Enrichment Days: A “do not travel” instruction forced a change of plans. Most trips went ahead but some have been rebooked. This will incur additional costs to the school. The governing body would like to pass their thanks to all staff involved in the enrichment trips for such excellent work.
11.	Governor Areas of Responsibility & Monitoring Visits. Achievement report provided by CM & JH who met with Laura Griffiths, assistant headteacher and Joe Radmore, assistant headteacher on Friday 19th June. Personal Development & Wellbeing report provided by EL who met with Zoe Froud, assistant headteacher on Wednesday 1st July. Behaviour & Attendance report provided by SW & JP who met with Zoe Froud, assistant headteacher on Thursday 18th June. Safeguarding report provided by BB & VC who met with Laura Gyngeell Assistant Head and DSL on 2nd July. SEND report provided by BB who met with Joe Radmore Assistant Head SEND and Inclusion on Tuesday 16th June.

12.	Any other business. Richard Carter’s term as a governor expired on the 10th July and he has resigned as a governor due to external commitments. Governors are required to read Part One of the “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (KCSIE) update for September 26th. The updated training link will be sent when available. Governors were asked to submit strand reports at least one week before meetings.
13.	Date of next meeting – Monday 7th September 2026 at 1900 hours.