

Wednesday, 08 July 2026 at 17:30
Sixth Form

Present
Laura Parfitt (LP) - Governor, Behaviour, Safeguarding & Attendance
Jim Prior (JP) – Governor, Enrichment and Careers (MS Teams)
Rachel Wickham (RW) - Headteacher, TCS
Michael Wigmore (MW) – Governor for Leadership & Management Delivery, Chair
In Attendance
Rachel Hill (LGO) - Local Governance Officer
Laura Milsom (LM) – Head of Sixth Form
Gaby Willis (TGO) – Trust Governance Officer and Company Secretary
Apologies
Karl Devincenzi (KD) - Governor, Curriculum & Delivery
Lauren Fletcher (LF) - Parent Governor, Parent Engagement
Samantha Horne (SH) - Governor, Inclusion (Disadvantaged & SEND)
Jane Russell (JR) – Governor, Curriculum & Delivery

1.1	Meeting Opening - Welcome and Apologies
DISCUSSION	
The Chair welcomed attendees and noted that the meeting was not quorate. The LGB agreed to proceed as no formal decisions were anticipated. Apologies were received from LF, KD, SH and JR	

1.2	Meeting Opening - Declarations of Interest
DISCUSSION	
MW invited declarations of interest. None were declared.	

1.3	Meeting Opening - Nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair
DISCUSSION	
MW announced the process for nominations for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair. The LGO affirmed that the formal elections would be announced at the September meeting, but nominations were required beforehand. MW stated his willingness to stand for re-election as Chair and believed JR would do likewise for Vice-Chair, but noted both were willing to step aside if other candidates came forward.	
QUESTION AND ANSWER	
A query was raised about the timing of the most recent election for the Chair and Vice-Chair roles.	It was clarified that the previous change had occurred mid-term when MW took over the role of Chair after the

previous incumbent became a trustee.

ACTIONS

Send an email to the LGB to collect nominations for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair by the end of the Summer Term. Elections will take place at the September meeting.

LGO

2.0 Ofsted Prep - Personal Development & Wellbeing - Laura Milsom (Head of Sixth Form)

DISCUSSION

LM introduced her presentation on the school's progress in personal development and wellbeing, referencing a handout and outlining the goal of achieving a 'strong' Ofsted rating. She detailed the universal provision from Year 7 to Sixth Form, including extra support for disadvantaged and SEND students, and highlighted new government enrichment benchmarks in areas like arts, sports, and civic life.

Examples of enrichment were provided, including trips to the Houses of Parliament and Plymouth University. The updated PSHE curriculum was also covered; it has been 50% adapted to incorporate new statutory guidance on topics like online harms and AI, and will be supported by three new specialist teachers. It was noted that British Values are linked to school values in form time.

New talent development pathways were described, including a Music Academy offering free tuition, a football talent development centre with Exeter City, and the 'Tim's Scholars' pathway for the top 30 Year 7 students.

According to LM, post-Key Stage 4 progression to education and employment stands above the national average. Two areas for improvement have been identified following a Compass Plus evaluation: 'addressing the needs of each pupil' (at 89%) and 'learning from labour market information' (at 96%).

It was explained that the personal development programme is an entitlement for all. Costs are kept minimal, and disadvantaged families are proactively offered free places on trips, which has significantly increased participation. Successful partnerships with The Brilliant Club and a planned collaboration with the Colleton Foundation were highlighted, with participation tracked via the Absolute Education platform.

To achieve a 'strong' Ofsted rating, the school's focus is on enhancing engagement with local and national employers, such as Barclays Bank and Dell, through The Talent Foundry. Following the sixth form's closure, colleges like South Devon College and Exeter College will be invited to speak to students, and the PSHE curriculum will be supplemented with guest speakers on topics like personal safety.

The constant challenge of balancing these demands was acknowledged by LM, who noted that a tight budget requires opportunities to be taken at short notice. MW commented that a well-developed student is not just academic, a view supported by the new benchmarks.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Clarity was sought on whether directed careers support was available to all students or only specific groups.

It was explained that while there are universal events like Careers Week, specific signposting is used to ensure at-risk groups, such as SEND and disadvantaged students who may not sign up independently, access the provision. This was part of a wider effort to increase employment encounters for all students.

The feasibility of balancing academic lessons with extracurricular trips and enrichment activities was

It was noted that while there is a constant tension between academic lessons and enrichment activities, the

questioned.	new enrichment benchmarks emphasise the importance of a well-rounded experience. The school is working to balance these demands, though it remains a challenge due to budget constraints and the need to seize ad-hoc opportunities.
The feasibility of selecting students for the Scholars programme in the first term of Year 7 was questioned, with the concern that some able students might not yet have settled in and come to the fore.	It was explained that this was the first time the programme was being run for Year 7, partly as a marketing tool to attract students to the school. The selection would be based on attitude. It was also noted that it was not a closed group.
SUPPORT	
MW and RW acknowledged the significant progress made in Personal Development and Wellbeing, with RW noting the school had been rated 'inadequate' in this area three years prior.	
JP endorsed the report, stating that Personal Development and Careers had improved by 'leaps and bounds'. He credited LM and her colleague Natasha Milsom for achieving rapid progress despite changes to benchmarks.	
ACTIONS	
Develop an action plan for PSHE to enhance parent consultation and ensure the curriculum aligns with community needs.	LM
Conduct student voice activities to assess understanding of British Values and ensure alignment with Ofsted criteria.	LM
Enhance communication with parents regarding labour market information to meet careers benchmarks.	LM
Implement an aspirations tracking programme for Year 7 students to inform careers education and opportunities.	LM
Refine the selection process for the Scholars programme to ensure engagement and suitability.	LM

3.1	Minutes of Previous Meeting - Matters Arising from meeting held on 29.04.2026
DISCUSSION	
The LGB reviewed the action log. It was confirmed that actions were complete regarding the review of the single central record.	
The LGB discussed the action concerning the sixth form closure. MW reported closing the action, viewing the matter as a ratified operational decision. The TGO clarified that such strategic decisions are made at the Trust Board level and that communication had been released to all stakeholders simultaneously.	
In response to a query from MW, the TGO confirmed that the former Chairman's meetings had been discontinued and would be replaced with a different form of engagement in the next academic year.	

3.2	Minutes of Previous Meeting - Agree as a true and accurate record	
DISCUSSION		
MW asked the LGB if they were happy to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 29.04.26 as a true and accurate record, and the LGB confirmed they were.		
4.0	Feedback from IET	
DISCUSSION		
MW raised the topic of the Ivy Education Trust (IET) to LGB communications sheet, which had been uploaded to GovernorHub prior to the meeting. The TGO clarified that this sheet is a two-way communication tool between the IET board and the LGB, analogous to the comms sheet sent from the LGB to the board, and is circulated following the Trust board's meetings to keep the LGB informed of relevant updates.		
5.0	Chair's Update	
DISCUSSION		
MW provided a verbal update, confirming that a process to address a £530k gap in the next year's budget had concluded. The discussion highlighted the significant financial impact of reduced pupil numbers, with each pupil equating to approximately £6,500.		
RW noted the increased 'in-year traffic' of pupils since the pandemic, citing an example of four students who had returned to the school from Dawlish College. The LGB discussed the challenges of managing pupil numbers, which RW identified as the biggest risk to the school. The importance of marketing, recruitment, and engagement with primary schools was also discussed.		
Broader demographic challenges in the South West were discussed by MW, who pointed to reduced birth rates affecting both primary and secondary school intakes as evidence of a long-term trend. MW placed the recurring annual budget gap at approximately £150-200k, a figure compounded by rising salary and operational costs.		
The benefits of being part of a Trust were discussed as a mitigating factor against financial pressures. The TGO highlighted advantages such as a single funding pot and an automatic capital allocation of around £700-800k. MW noted efficiencies from centralised IT. RW added that the school was now making more forward-looking decisions compared to previous years.		
The TGO and RW discussed wider demographic factors in the South West contributing to falling pupil numbers, such as the area being a popular retirement location, expensive housing, and new housing developments elsewhere drawing families away.		
The absence of a formal financial update was explained by MW, who cited the finance meeting scheduled for the following week, while expressing confidence that the school remained on budget.		
LP raised concerns about the safeguarding team's capacity, noting they appeared 'very stretched'. RW acknowledged this was a widespread issue, also affecting the SEND team, explaining that schools were increasingly shouldering responsibilities previously managed by the local authority.		
QUESTION AND ANSWER		
The potential for increased engagement with primary schools was queried.		It was explained that a significant amount of engagement already takes place and that this is part of Laura Milsom's

	remit. It was noted that the school had recently presented to parents of Year 4 and 5 pupils at Shaldon Primary, a school they had not previously engaged with.
The feasibility of selling school land to raise funds was questioned.	It was clarified that covenants prevent the sale of land, but there is potential to rent or let spaces, such as the sixth form building, in the future. However, it was noted this would not generate a great revenue.
SUPPORT	
The TGO supported the discussion on financial challenges by highlighting the advantages of the school's trust membership, including centralised financial management, capital allocation, and operational efficiencies. She noted that these measures had improved financial stewardship and reduced duplication of costs.	
DECISIONS	
The LGB agreed to adopt a more inclusive approach to safeguarding and SEND provision from September, in response to systemic pressures and reduced local authority support.	
ACTIONS	
HT to provide the LGB in September with data on pupil numbers in local primary schools and projected intake for the next academic year.	RW
HT to monitor and formally track pupil numbers, including in-year admissions and losses, to inform budget planning.	RW

6.1	Headteacher's report - Headteacher's report
DISCUSSION	
RW presented the Headteacher's report, noting a very successful exam season with exemplary student behaviour, which was a significant improvement from previous years. Positive feedback was received from invigilators, and there was high attendance from Year 11 students, with even those who had not been attending school turning up for their English, Maths, and Science exams.	
RW discussed the challenges of KS3 assessment following the government's removal of national curriculum levels. To address this, the school trialled new assessment papers from the United Learning trust for Years 7 and 8 in English, Maths, and Science. This was intended to provide a more robust measure by benchmarking students, curriculum, and teaching quality against a large national cohort. The trial was free for the current year, with a decision on future adoption to be made after reviewing the outcomes.	
RW confirmed that the school is fully staffed for September. Restructuring of two support staff roles had been undertaken to better meet inclusion requirements and budget constraints: the deputy designated safeguarding role was redefined to an inclusion lead, and the librarian role was reduced to part-time. These changes would support the creation of an inclusion hub in the Winterbourne building.	
Funding from Devon had been secured to open an alternative pathway for a small group of complex Year 7 students working at pre-key stage two levels. An inclusion hub in the Winterbourne building would be created to meet legal obligations under Section F of children's EHCPs, supported by this uplift in funding. As the funding was not agreed until after the 31st of May deadline recruitment for a primary trained teacher was delayed.	
RW shared positive feedback from two external quality assurance visits. Lee Sargeant (LS), a link trustee,	

Headteacher of Devonport High School for Girls, and an Ofsted inspector, who had provided a report noting a noticeable positive impact on student engagement, behaviour, and attitudes, with the site being calm and orderly. The TGO confirmed that LS had reported this very positively to the board. Another positive end-of-year review was received from Sam Johnston (commissioned by the Trust CEO), who commented on exemplary practice. Both reports are available on GovernorHub.

Year-on-year attendance has increased, representing the highest increase among secondary schools in the trust. It was noted that the school had just met its ABIE target by 0.01%, assuming the Department for Education uses data from the end of half-term five. The Headteacher's report on GovernorHub includes the full data.

In concluding her report, RW acknowledged the very busy year and the significant progress made, expressing gratitude for the hard work of her team and staff. The LGB was directed to read the full documentation relating to her report on GovernorHub. It was advised that any resulting questions could be addressed at the September meeting.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

A query was raised on how positive comments from qualified external visitors could be used for publicity.	It was explained that quotes were already being used in presentations, such as one from LS at a recent event. It was suggested that a banner with a quote could be placed on the school fence, and that Rise funds could potentially be used for such purposes.
The status of the school newsletter was questioned.	It was confirmed that the newsletter was no longer being produced as the task had fallen to the Headteacher, who lacked the capacity to continue it, and there were no other staff available to take on the responsibility. LP offered to edit the newsletter in the future.

SUPPORT

MW acknowledged the significant progress and change achieved under tough circumstances. The TGO, being based on-site, agreed that the feel of the school was now completely different and much more positive. LP thanked RW for the clear update and on the vast improvements and the hard work involved.

6.2 Headteacher's report - Review annual progress towards SIP

DISCUSSION

RW presented an update on the school's progress towards the School Improvement Plan (SIP) as part of the RISE (Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence) programme. The LGB was informed that TCS is classified as a "stuck" school under the RISE framework due to previous inadequate Ofsted ratings. As a result, TCS is partnered with Windsor Academy Trust as its supporting organisation, a unique arrangement approved by the Department for Education. RW outlined the two-year action plan, noting the first review on 17th March resulted in a 'green' rating. The school had also self-assessed as 'green' for the upcoming review on 14th July. RW shared several documents on GovernorHub for the LGB to review, including the March review outcomes and a curriculum review conducted by Windsor Academy Trust's curriculum expert, Kat Howard. RW also detailed additional support from Windsor Academy Trust, including a study tour, an inclusion summit, an attendance summit, and a visit from Windsor's attendance lead, Emma Dodds, to shadow the TCS attendance team, all aimed at identifying improvements for the

next academic year.

ACTIONS

Add an update on the RISE programme and progress towards the SIP, including the results of the 14th July review, to the agenda for the September meeting.

RW/LGO

7.1 Reports from Link Governors - Safeguarding, Behaviour & Attendance to include SCR check

DISCUSSION

LP reported that she had completed the Single Central Record (SCR) check with Ellie Walker and found it to be well-managed and internally monitored. Due to time constraints, a planned behaviour visit was replaced with an email exchange with CD. LP included this correspondence in her report, which noted successes, such as a three-year improvement in conduct, and areas for development.

RW mentioned that current survey data indicated staff felt behaviour was a problem, while students felt staff consistency was an issue, and suggested LP could monitor the impact of the new strategy to be started September 2026.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Clarity was sought on whether staff had provided input for the reframed Conduct policy to be discussed on INSET days.

It was confirmed by RW that staff had already contributed to the values behind the new policy. The September INSET day would focus on training for the new, more restorative approach, which had been developed from this feedback and further research.

The method of communicating the new conduct strategy to students was questioned.

Reassurance was offered by RW that a comprehensive communication package was planned, including assemblies, to explain the new approach and the rationale behind it to students.

DECISIONS

TCS will adopt a reframed conduct approach starting in September 2026, focusing on three core rules: be ready, respectful, and safe.

ACTIONS

Share recent staff and parent survey data on behaviour with LP. *(Meeting note, could this information also be shared with Lauren Fletcher, link role Parent Engagement)*

RW

7.2 Reports from Link Governors - Enrichment & Careers

DISCUSSION

MW invited JP, the Link Governor for Enrichment & Careers, to comment on the report. JP confirmed that his report had been shared in full and that he had nothing to add as the points had already been covered. He affirmed his full support for the contents of the report, which aligned with his observations and written findings.

7.3	Reports from Link Governors - Inclusion (Disadvantaged & SEND)
DISCUSSION	
MW noted that the item could not be discussed as the relevant link governor was not in attendance.	

7.4	Reports from Link Governors - Curriculum & Delivery
DISCUSSION	
The LGO noted that a report from JR was available on GovernorHub. The focus of the visit was the strategy for the sixth form closure, the timeframe in relation to the curriculum, and whether the curriculum had been affected by the closure.	

7.5	Reports from Link Governors - Leadership & Management Delivery
ACTIONS	
TGO to send RW an HT's template for meetings.	TGO/RW

8.1	Policies and Procedures - Provider Access Policy Statement
DISCUSSION	
MW raised the issue of pending policies, specifically noting that the Provider Access Policy Statement and the ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy had not yet been received from the school. RW remarked that such policies could be standardised across schools, and it was noted that Dawlish College's recently updated policies could be a useful reference.	
ACTIONS	
Follow up with Dawlish College ref. the Provider Access Policy Statement.	LGO

8.2	Policies and Procedures - ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy.
ACTIONS	
Follow up with Dawlish College ref. the ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy.	LGO

8.3	Policies and Procedures - Phone Policy
DISCUSSION	
RH noted that the Phone Policy had been uploaded to GovernorHub for governor approval prior to the meeting.	
DECISIONS	
The Phone Policy was agreed by a quorum of governors.	

8.4	Policies and Procedures - RSHE & Health Education Policy
DISCUSSION	
It was highlighted that the RSHE & Health Education Policy had undergone a complete rewrite to align with best practice guidelines from the PSHE Association. The consultation process, including parental feedback, was detailed	

within the policy itself, with a minor amendment made to paragraph 2.6 in response to one parent's comment.

DECISIONS

The RSHE & Health Education Policy was agreed by a quorum of governors.

8.5 Policies and Procedures - CEIG & Work Experience Policy

DECISIONS

The CEIG & Work Experience Policy was agreed by a quorum of governors.

8.6 Policies and Procedures - Conduct & Expectations Policy

DISCUSSION

The LGO summarised the Conduct & Expectations Policy, explaining that it was for the information of the LGB and required no action. It was noted that the policy had been reviewed by Deputy Head Chris Darvill following DfE guidance.

8.7 Policies and Procedures - Exclusions Policy

DISCUSSION

The TGO advised that the Exclusions Policy had not yet been changed and was expected on 26th July. It was noted that this is a trust model template received from the law firm, Browne Jacobson, which sits alongside the letters used by headteachers.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Clarity was sought on the approval process for the policy.

It was confirmed that the policy did not require approval by the LGB as it was a trust-wide model template, which would prevent any delay in its publication on the school's website.

8.8 Policies and Procedures - Attendance Policy

DISCUSSION

The LGO stated that the Attendance Policy was for the information of the LGB and required no action. It was noted that the policy had been reviewed by Deputy Head Chris Darvill following DfE guidance.

8.9 Policies and Procedures - Uniform Policy

DISCUSSION

The LGO reported that the Uniform Policy was for governor information and required no action from the LGB. It was noted that the policy had been updated to include details of where second-hand uniform could be purchased and that financial support for the purchase could be sought, in line with new regulations.

9.0	Governor Training
DISCUSSION	
The Chair and Vice-Chair will undertake DES training in November for Leadership of the governing board. It was noted that the NGA also offers this training module. The LGO noted that LF, a newly appointed governor, had completed new governor training, safeguarding training, and a parent engagement module. Level 2 Safeguarding and KCSiE update will take place on Wed. 09 September 2026, 4.30 to 6pm in Ivy Board Room, Exeter Road. Presenter Claire Fleming DSL, attendance in person or via Teams. Numbers ideally before end of term please.	

10.0	Dates of next meetings
DISCUSSION	
The LGB discussed the proposed meeting dates for the next academic year.	
ACTIONS	
Date for the November LGB meeting to be 25/11/2026	LGO

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