

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Strathmore School Local Governing Body held on 12 May 2025 at 5.00pm at Strathmore School (Grey Court Campus) and virtually on Teams.

[Link to Teams Meeting](#)

[Link to Papers STR-24-4 120525](#)

Members of the Local Governing Body in attendance: Ayushi Bagga, Rebecca Branch, Jane Curzon (Chair), Sarah Hurtado (Headteacher), Alex Lee, Mitch Pender and Sarah Terrey.

Members of the Local Governing Body in attendance virtually: Marc Dodi,

Members of the Local Governing Body absent: Dev Desai, Laura Dyer, Michael Jacob and John Nicholl.

Also in attendance: Assistant Headteachers: Adriana Martyr, Laura Wigglesworth and Amy Upton and Paul Roberts (Trustee).

Clerkin attendance: Julie Adams

1. Welcome, apologies, declarations of interest and items from the Clerk.

- 1.A The Governing Body **received** apologies from Dev Desai, Laura Dyer, Michael Jacob and John Nicholl and **agreed** to consent to their absence.
- 1.B The Chair **reminded** all governors that they must abide by the Auriga Academy Trust Declarations of Interest Policy and should **declare** if they have an interest in any matter that comes before them. There were no declarations made. .

2. Minutes

- 2.A The Governing Body **noted** the draft minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2024 would be presented at the next LGB meeting. **(ACTION)**
- 2.B The Governing Body **received** the draft minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2025 and the associated set of Confidential minutes [STR-24-4-03B Previous Draft Minutes 240225.pdf](#) [STR-24-4-03B Confidential Previous Draft Minutes 240225-CONF.pdf](#) and **approved** them as an accurate record of the meeting. The Governing Body **agreed** that the confidential minutes could now be combined and published alongside the general minutes.
- 2.C The Governing Body **noted** completed actions from the previous meeting.

Number	Extract	Owner	Status
2	Report from pupil Exclusion Committee to be circulated	JA	Completed
3	Chair to contact Chair of Trustees re governor attendance at the AGM	JC	Completed
4	Headteacher to circulate full SEF to all governors within the next 2 weeks	SH	Completed
5	Chair to discuss the complexity of the format of the Headteacher Report template with the CEO	JC	Completed
6	Committee Summary report to the Board to include * suggestion of standardisation of language used within Carecalc and potential for use of AI to support this * proactive support which can be offered by the Trust to schools to deal with the increased workload should the number of Tribunals increase. * celebration of the impact of the Family support workers on attendance with the EWO now advising they do not need to buy in their support.	JC	Completed

Number	Extract	Owner	Status
	*celebration of the impact of the behaviour lead's of focus on behaviour reducing the number of concerns being raised.		
7	Guidance on interpreting the Risk Grid (Risk Management Policy) to be shared with all governors	JA	Completed
13	Sarah Hurtado to send information on Educating for Equality Level 1 programme to governors	SH	Completed
14	Reporting on the surveys to hear stakeholder voice would be included in next meeting	SH	On agenda

Action #2 - The Governing Body **asked** the why governors were no longer invited to the AGM. Paul Roberts, Trustee **explained** that the AGM is primarily for Members to hold Trustees accountable and is not a public event. This year's AGM saw increased engagement from new Members, with successful outcomes including review of the accounts, auditor reappointment, and discussion on the Trust development priorities and KPI's.

Action #5 The Governing Body **discussed** improving the format of the Headteacher's report, its length, and the need for it to be concise for governance purposes while still providing key information for the CEO's report. A new process was proposed, involving governors submitting questions in advance, allowing the Headteacher more time to prepare comprehensive responses. This aimed to streamline discussions and improve communication. The report will be circulated with other documents, and governors can add comments directly. A deadline of three days after publishing is suggested, with the Headteacher responding by Thursday morning.

Action #7 The Governing Body **asked** how the risk ratings are interpreted, specifically the descriptions associated with the numerical scores. Paul Roberts, Trustee, as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee **explained** that the Risk Management Policy contains all the necessary information, including risk appetite and actions. Only the numerical scores hold significance. Each risk has a raw score (without mitigation) and a residual score (with mitigation). The CEO moderates scores across all schools for consistency.

2.D The Governing Body **noted** actions arising from the previous meeting that were incomplete.

Number	Extract	Owner	Status
1	Governance Professional to draft minutes of 25 November 2024 and share with Chair all governors for approval before the next meeting	JA / JC / ALL	asap
8	Headteacher to present proposals / transition plans to change timing of Annual Reviews / the school's assessment cycle) to the May LGB meeting	SH	Summer
9	Governors contacts who may be able to provide support materials for male puberty to be sent to the HT	RB/MD/	asap
10	JC to share parental letter / email survey regarding educational visits with RB	JC	asap
11	ALL governors to ensure that they arrange their Curriculum Link visits before the next meeting including safeguarding	ALL	12/05/25
12	Alex Lee to arrange his Link Governor meeting with Catherine Penn ?? re receptive learning ??	AL	asap
15	Attendance Policy to be redrafted following the closure of Darrell	SH	01/07/25

The Governing Body **discussed** outstanding actions from the previous meeting, including the information on the Education for Quality Level One program, the parental letter/email survey regarding educational visits, and the Curriculum Link visits and **agreed** to complete these by the next meeting. **(ACTION)**

The Headteacher **provided** an update on the Education for Quality Level One program, with further information to be shared in the autumn term. She also **noted** that the Attendance Policy would be re-drafted following the closure of the Darell campus. The Headteacher .

2.E The Governing Body **received** the latest published Board meeting minutes and other updates from the Board.

2.F There were no other matters arising that are not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Supporting Papers: [Trust Board Minutes](#), [Strathmore School Minutes](#).

3. Presentation of Annual Assessment Data

The Governing Body **received** the pupil progress information for Strathmore Learners for 2024-25 [STR-24-4-03 Strathmore Pupil Progress Annual Data Report 24-25.pdf](#).

The Headteacher **presented** the annual assessment data, highlighting a 94% target achievement rate, similar to the previous year. She **explained** that Strathmore assesses learners on targets rolled out from spring to spring, covering areas such as literacy, maths, expressive and receptive communication, social, emotional and mental health, and occupational therapy. The assessment data is compared across various demographics, including primary/secondary, gender, autism diagnosis, and pupil premium status. This year, six learners will transition to Clarendon due to accelerated progress, and another cohort of approximately twelve learners are expected to move to the new build in Petersham.

The Governing Body **highlighted** the potential impact of the departure of higher-ability learners on the remaining learners, particularly in terms of modelling verbal communication and social skills. The Headteacher **explained** that mitigation strategies, such as strengthening inclusion links with other schools, were being explored. The Governing Body **suggested** that the shift in demographics may lead to fewer learners being set literacy targets in the future, potentially affecting overall literacy outcomes. The Headteacher **acknowledged** that this may occur especially due to the loss of peer models for less verbal learners.

The Governing Body **asked** if the school understood why learners were able to move to Clarendon School. The Headteacher **explained** that this success could be attributed to several factors, including better use of specialist strategies, a broader curriculum, improved curriculum delivery, and the embedding of the curriculum developmental framework over the past five years. The Headteacher **emphasised** the need to document and highlight these successes on the school website. In addition, linking proactively with the Therapy provision and other professionals around the family had a positive impact. This has been recognised in the communication from Troy Hobbs, Head of SEND at Achieving for Children (AfC) included in the Headteachers Report.

Following a query from the Governing Body, the Headteacher **clarified** that 83% of learners met all their targets, with the main reasons for not meeting targets being absence, behaviour, and medical conditions. The importance of ongoing target motivation and review was emphasised, as well as the need to adjust targets when necessary. The introduction of "chronic absence" as a new category for attendance monitoring was also noted.

The Governing Body **asked** if the learners who did not meet their targets were spread across all cohorts, or concentrated within specific groups. Amy Upton, Assistant Headteacher, **explained** a small number of learners in Early Years and Secondary did not meet their targets. In Early Years, this was primarily due to new language processing assessments and the use of 'colourful semantics'. In Secondary, a group of five learners at Greycourt Campus had their targets adjusted after review meetings with parents, as the initial targets were deemed too high.

The Governing Body **asked** if the wording of targets will change with the introduction of Carecalc and harmonisation with the trust. The Headteacher **explained** the wording of the targets themselves will not change, as they are derived from the curriculum development framework. However, the wording used in reports to AFC will be adjusted to reflect the support needs of learners more accurately.

Supporting papers: [STR-24-4-03 Strathmore Pupil Progress Annual Data Report 24-25.pdf](#)
Assessment cycle and presentation (Nov2023), full data analysis.

4. Headteachers Report

The Governing Body **received** a report from the Headteacher [STR-24-4-04 Headteacher Report.pdf](#).

4.A General Update and key risks

The Headteacher **noted** that improvements had been made in all risk areas with the exception of Finance. The Headteacher **explained** that a strategic plan to address the deficit had been created. This would be explored further at the upcoming Strategy session. **(ACTION)**

The Governing Body **noted** the successful recruitment of a Headteacher for September 2025, Toni Edmonds-Smith. Ms Edmonds Smith had been a previous Strathmore employee and since had leadership roles in two successful special schools. The Chair **added** that in addition those schools operated on multiple campuses.

The Chair and Assistant Headteachers **explained** the process of recruitment for another Assistant Headteacher which had seen five internal and one external applicant apply. This was seen as a positive sign of teacher confidence and ambition. The interviews were viewed as a development opportunity for staff, providing them with experience and feedback for future growth. The successful candidate was Vicky Baker, a Senior Teacher at Clarendon School. The Headteacher **advised** that this appointment commenced from 2 June (after the half term break) and was temporary until December, giving the incoming headteacher an opportunity to decide whether to make the position permanent.

The Headteacher **reminded** governors that the 'Grapevine' newsletter was a good showcase for activities within the school and requested that governors suggest any other community links which may benefit from receiving it by emailing info@strathmore.org.uk. **(ACTION)**.

4.B Pupil Numbers for 2024-25 and Attendance

The Governing Body **noted** that four new learners are transferring from the Darell Campus and there is some pupil mobility all years. Seven pupils are expected to join in September. The Headteacher **explained** that over two hundred consultations had been received, and a letter had been drafted as consultations had to be paused at Easter due to oversubscription. The CEO and Central Team had supported this. The Governing Body **noted** that this could risk an increase in tribunal cases.

Due to the prior discussion of impact of attendance on achievement of targets, the Governing Body **requested** that the Headteacher's report identify both persistently (>90%) and chronically absent (>50%) learners. **(ACTION)**

4.C Safeguarding and behaviour

The Governing Body **noted** that safeguarding numbers change often. Laura Wigglesworth, Assistant Headteacher and DSL **explained** that is now being evaluated in conjunction with the Behaviour Lead, Luis Ferriera. She **reflected** that the effectiveness of the family support workers is building capacity by supporting families in accessing SPA, Children and Disabilities team and Early Help referrals. This has enabled a number of children to be stepped down from Child Protection category. She also acknowledged the work of the other AHT's.

The Headteacher **added** that the spring staff survey asked if they were content with safeguarding arrangements in the school and were confident about raising a concern about a child or adult. Some staff did say that they were dissatisfied, but as the responses had been anonymous, they could not be addressed individually. AHT's during staff briefings with raised this with their staff at each campus and had requested that should anyone have any concerns they should come forward; no staff member had done so.

The Governing Body **suggested** that the Headteacher should consider creating case studies to highlight the partnership working with professionals, therapists and families.

4.D Pupil progress and achievements

4.E School Development Plan and School Self Review

The Governing Body **received** the [STR-24-4-04E Strathmore School Self Review \(SSR\) 24-25 \(May LGB\).pdf.url](#) and [STR-24-4-04E SDP 24-25 \(May LGB\).pdf.url](#)

The Headteacher **explained** that discussions with the incoming headteacher had taken place regarding the format and content of the SDP. The SDP for the coming year would be more focused.

The Governing Body **asked** if any of the three-year plans would change. The Headteacher **explained** that they will continue as part of a three-year process, but the content within the four priority areas will change.

The Governing Body **noted** that the school remains in a window for an Ofsted inspection, but as the new framework has not been confirmed yet, there is some uncertainty in this area as to when and what format this will take. A governor who had experience of a pilot Ofsted inspection **advised** that the inspectors focus had been on leadership and management and ensuring SLT had the knowledge and tools to identify and deliver

continuous school improvement. The Governance Professional **advised** that she would share some information on governor's role in Ofsted inspections she had provided to the Clarendon School LGB to governors. **(ACTION)**

4.F Visitors Reports

The Governing Body **noted** the comments from the School Improvement Partner [STR-24-4-04F 2025 Spring SIP Report Strathmore.url](#) and **noted** they would be explored in more depth at the Strategy session.

4.G Partnerships and community links

4.H Staffing

In addition to the previous discussion about the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher recruitment, the Governing Body **noted** that the music teacher had resigned. The Governing Body **asked** how the gap left by the departing music teacher be filled, especially given budget constraints. The Headteacher **explained** existing staff will utilise a scheme of work and lesson plans created by the departing teacher, supplemented by CPD to boost their confidence in delivering music instruction. The possibility of collaboration with a co-located school was also discussed. The Governing Body **highlighted** the need to address the gap in music provision, particularly for pupils proficient in instruments.

4.I Learner, Family and Community Voice

The Governing Body **reviewed** feedback from learner, staff, and parent/carer surveys. [STR-24-4-04I FSW Spring Parent Survey 2025 responses.pdf](#)

[STR-24-4-04I Staff survey feedback Spring 2025.pdf](#)

[STR-24-4-04I Strathmore School Learner Survey Analysis April 2025.pdf](#)

The Governing Body **noted** pupils expressed desire for quieter environments, better food, and less noise. The need to refine the survey process and focus on specific themes was identified. The importance of communicating to pupils that their feedback is being heard was also emphasised. The Governing Body **asked** how the school will communicate to pupils that their feedback from the surveys is being heard and acted upon. The Headteacher **explained** this will be discussed with the relevant staff members to ensure appropriate communication with the school councils and pupils.

The Governing Body **noted** that Central Team staff had visited schools for a day and worked in the class teams. Feedback from this had been shared and placed into the staff newsletters.

Noting the pupils' high regard for music and art, as revealed in the learner survey, the Governing Body **asked** if replacing the music teacher would be a better course of action. The Headteacher **acknowledged** this point, however given the significant deficit, there were measures which were needed to save costs, whilst maintaining quality and safety.

4.J Finance Commentary

Noting the previous discussion, the Finance Link Governor gave a verbal update on his meeting with the Headteacher and Finance Director. He **confirmed** that the school's current deficit is approximately £450k.

Paul Roberts, Trustee, **explained** recalled the presentation in the previous meeting from the Trust Finance Director and reiterated the Trust's budgeting process and challenges posed by external factors like pay increases and National Insurance changes. The Governing Body **asked** if the school had been asked to find a specific amount of savings in the budget planning process. The Headteacher **advised** that she had been asked to save £350k. The Governing Body **asked** what the trust's actual liability regarding the deficit was, and if there are strategic discussions about partnering with other trusts to address viability. Mr Roberts **explained** that the Trust's viability is primarily dependent on staffing costs, which comprise 85% of expenses. Strategic options, including potential partnerships with other trusts, are being explored.

The Governing Body **noted** the impact of Carecalc and the management time involved in reviewing the bandings to ensure provision for learners is accurately funded. The Headteacher **advised** that whilst AI may provide some assistance with this time constraints do not allow for more creatively solutions.

The Governing Body **asked** if the new build at Hampton High was affecting expenses. The Headteacher **advised** that there had been no firm agreement for the Hampton High campus, however any associated costs and income would be included in the budget and would therefore be ringfenced and are not yet included in this budget.

Supporting paper: [3J. The Auriga Trust 24.25 P4 Mgt Accs.xlsx.url](#)

4.K Health and Safety / Premises Update / and GDPR

The Governing Body **noted** that the mini-bus was no longer operational. The Headteacher **advised** that ongoing cost analysis was being conducted with the Estates Lead. Operational leases and other alternatives were being explored. The Governing Body **noted** that the timing of this in the summer term may affect a number of activities. The Headteacher **advised** that this should not affect any planned activity.

The Governing Body **discussed** the potential introduction of government-funded breakfast clubs and the need to explore funding options, as the school is currently unable to fund such an initiative independently.

5. Governance

- 5.A The Governing Body **noted** the membership overview. [STR-24-4-05A Governor Overview inc. Training.pdf](#)
- 5.B The Governing Body **noted** the Governance Development Plan for 2024-25 would be discussed in detail at the Strategy Session.
- 5.C The Governing Body **noted** the process for LGB self-evaluation and the LGB Strategy Day on 23 June 2025. The Chair **explained** that the initial morning session for SLT, the Chair and Vice Chairs would be in the SRR Conference Room. This would be followed by all Governors joining for lunch at about 12.30pm with the afternoon session lasting to

3.30pm. The Chair **requested** governors confirm attendance as soon as possible.
(ACTION)

5.D There were no other Link Governor Visit Reports since the last meeting.

6. Approval of Policies / Statements

6.A The Governing Body **reviewed** the [STR-24-4-06A Strathmore Draft Intimate Care Policy May 2025.pdf](#).

The Governing Body **asked** how often parents would be consulted about their child's intimate care needs. The DSL **explained** that this would be done routinely as they move into Key Stage 2. If there were significant medical or physical need changes or potentially a safeguarding concern (trauma) which may impact their needs, then an immediate change may occur. Parents of any new child would also be consulted on joining.

The Governing Body **advised** that they felt the policy was well written very well easily understandable and the policy was approved.

7. Review impact, planned actions and agree feedback to the Board of Trustees

The Governing Body **agreed** to highlight to the Board of Trustees the positive achievements of learners in the year evidenced by some pupils to moving to Clarendon School, positive comments from the School Improvement Partner on behaviour and staff wellbeing and senior appointments. The Governing Body would **raise concerns** around benchmarking and finances and the potential impact of tribunals which could affect pupil numbers.

The Governing Body **noted** the actions arising from the meeting.

Number	Extract	Owner	Due Date
1	Governance Professional to draft minutes of 25 November 2024 and share with Chair all governors for approval before the next meeting	JA / JC / ALL	01/07/25
2	Headteacher to present proposals / transition plans to change timing of Annual Reviews / the school's assessment cycle) to the July LGB meeting	SH	01/07/25
3	Governors contacts who may be able to provide support materials for male puberty to be sent to the HT	RB/MD/	asap
4	JC to share parental letter / email survey regarding educational visits with RB	JC	asap
5	ALL governors to ensure that they arrange their Curriculum Link visits before the next meeting including safeguarding and to undertake required mandatory training.	ALL	01/07/25
6	Alex Lee to arrange his Link Governor meeting with Catherine Penn ?? re receptive learning ??	AL	01/07/25
7	Attendance Policy to be redrafted following the closure of Darrell	SH	01/07/25
8	Strategic Plan to address deficit to be explored at the Strategy Session	SH	01/07/25
9	Governors to suggest community links which may find it useful to receive the 'grapevine' newsletter to the info@strathmore.org.uk	All	asap
10	Headteacher report to identify numbers of Persistently and chronically absent learners separately	SH	ongoing
11	Ofsted inspection information for governors (Clarendon) to be sent to all governors	JA	01/07/25
12	Governors to confirm attendance at Strategy Session	ALL	asap

8. Confidentiality

The Governing Body **agreed** that the discussion at the meeting the background papers and the reports identified as confidential above should remain confidential and excluded from the published minutes and papers.

The date of the Strategy Day is **23 June 2025**.
The date of the next meeting is **7 July 2025** at **5pm**

Chris Buckley-Reynolds

Chris Buckley-Reynolds (Nov 24, 2025 10:46:20 GMT)

Chris Buckley-Reynolds

Chair of the Strathmore School LGB

24/11/25






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Final Audit Report

2025-11-24

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