

Approved Minutes of the meeting of the Strathmore School Local Governing Body Meeting held on 7 July 2025 at 5.00pm at St Richard Reynolds Campus and virtually via Teams

[Link to Teams Meeting](#)

Link to Papers [STR-24-5 070725](#)

Key:- ➤ Note; ⦿ Discussion; ☑ Discussion and Decision; **XX** Sponsor/Lead; **X mins** allotted time.

Items in square brackets are references to documents related to this agenda found in the folder STR-24-5 070725.

Members of the Local Governing Body in attendance: Rebecca Branch, Jane Curzon (Chair), Dev Desai, Marc Dodi, Laura Dyer, Sarah Hurtado (Headteacher), Mitch Pender and Sarah Terrey.

Members of the Local Governing Body in attendance virtually: Ayushi Bagga, Michael Jacob Chris Reynolds

Members of the Local Governing Body absent: John Nichol and Marc Dodi,

Also in attendance: Assistant Headteachers: Vicky Baker, Adriana Martyr, Amy Upton and Laura Wigglesworth; Andy Whiteside, Trustee: Chris Buckley-Reynolds, Krystyna Tsochlas and Sach Sharma, Observers.

Clerk in attendance: Julie Adams

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

- 1.A The Governing Body **received** apologies from Marc Dodi and John Nicholl and **agreed** to consent to their absence.
- 1.B The Chair **welcomed** Chris Buckley-Reynolds, Krystyna Tsochlas and Sach Sharma who were prospective governors.
- 1.C 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.

The Governance Professional **advised** that new AI software, 'Scriba', would be trialled to produce minutes more. This would involve audio recording and necessitate an update to the privacy notice, for which she asked for any objections. There were none.

2. Minutes

- 2.A The Governing Body **received** the draft minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2025 STR-24-5-02A Previous Draft Minutes 251124.pdf and approved them as an accurate record of the meeting
- 2.B The Governing Body **noted** the draft minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2025 would be received at the next meeting.

- 2.C The Governing Body **noted** that all action from the previous meeting had been
- 2.D completed or were on the agenda for this meeting.

- 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 were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

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

3. Headteachers Report

The Governing Body **received** a report from the Headteacher [STR-24-5-03 Summer 2 Strathmore Headteacher Report to Governors.pdf](#)

3.A General Update and key risks

The Headteacher suggested that for future meetings, reports should be circulated more than one week in advance to allow governors sufficient time to read them, add comments, and for responses to be prepared, particularly to support the incoming Headteacher next academic year.

The Headteacher **informed** the governing body of the devastating news that a learner had tragically died. It was also **noted** that the sibling of another learner had passed away, acknowledging the profound difficulty for all involved and the upcoming funeral. The Governing Body **reflected** on the processes for handling such situations in the future.

The Headteacher **reported** that a key risk on the risk register, 'unable to maintain the capability and skills to develop strategic priorities', had been lowered due to a positive staffing situation. All teacher roles were filled, with only two agency vacancies, representing a significantly lower number of overall vacancies compared to the previous year.

The Headteacher **advised** that as Jane Curzon had been elected to a Parent Trustee role in the Trust this may impact the quality of leadership and governance risk area, which would be addressed later in the meeting.

The Headteacher **described** the current period as a busy transitional phase, focused on closing the current academic year and preparing for the new one. Efforts were highlighted to ensure leaders' confidence, wrap up current activities, and onboard new staff. It was noted that many activities and events, such as sports days and summer events, were triplicated across the three, sometimes four, campuses. She **provided** a general update on ongoing school operations, confirming that class lists had been sent out, consultations had been completed, and both the staff and parent surveys were live.

An update on staff appraisals was **provided** by the Headteacher confirming the completion of teaching assistant and higher-level teaching assistant appraisals, with

teacher appraisals currently in progress. She **explained** that recommendations from appraisals are graded and sent to HR, and that she would complete all paperwork and send recommendations for the new headteacher to present to the LGB in September. The Chair and Headteacher **clarified** that governors were not invited to appraisal presentations this year due to new recommendations, but offered to send presentation examples to governors with teacher permission. The Governing Body **asked** if the financial implications of successful staff appraisals had been included in the budget. The Headteacher **advised** that this was incorporated into the financial plans for the coming year.

The Headteacher **reported** on a recent collaboration day held with peers from across the Trust. The session focused on the curriculum programme, the Education report, and learners' careers, addressing an Ofsted question about how learners know they are important contributors to their community. The Headteacher **noted** that formal reports from the day were still pending.

3.B Pupil Numbers for 2024-25 and Attendance

The Governing Body **noted** the incredibly good attendance figures for Strathmore School in relation to both national and local special school data.

The Governing Body **noted** that current pupil numbers are 20 over PAN and **enquired** if there were any further issues with space or quantity of consultations being received. The Headteacher **advised** that there had been over 200 consultations received, and responses had been paused. Amy Upton is handling one Tribunal case at the moment, and it is expected that there will be another one soon.

3.C Safeguarding and behaviour

The Governing Body **noted** that the full annual safeguarding report would be received at the September LGB meeting, alongside the Safeguarding Link Governor report (**ACTION**)

The Headteacher **advised** that Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 had been released earlier today and whilst there were no wholesale changes there were areas of refinements which would be incorporated into training and the Safeguarding Policy.

The Headteacher **noted** the work of Luis Ferreira, Behaviour Lead and impact it is having on the school which had been highlighted in the School Improvement Partner's report. The Governing Body **noted** that the support given to re-engaging pupils who may be close to exclusion and alongside the Family Support Workers, enabling access to families for Early Help. This had been particularly successful with male learners with autism who are also approaching puberty.

The Governing Body **noted** that the role of Behaviour Lead ends in December 2025 and the incoming Headteacher should review that impact in the Autumn term (**ACTION**).

Andrew Whiteside **suggested** that collaboration with other Behaviour Leads across the Trust may support the capacity of the individuals in the same way that the DSL network works.

3.D Pupil progress and achievements

Noting that a full update on pupil progress had been given at the last meeting, the Headteacher **confirmed** that targets continue to be met or exceeded at approximately 94%. Highlighting that 3 learners at the St Richard Reynolds class who have not had a regular class teacher, for a significant length of time. This will be rectified in September 2025 and should be monitored during the coming year. One pupil is not currently in school.

The Governing Body **discussed** that whilst acknowledging that some pupils are not meeting targets, others are moving through and will start at another Trust School Clarendon, in September, highlighting the amazing progress of pupils into a school for moderate learning disabilities.

3.E School Development Plan and Self Review not previously shared at the Strategy Session

The Governing Body **noted** their extensive discussions and updates at the Strategy Session on 23 June. There were no further updates to provide to this meeting.

3.F Visitors Reports

The Governing Body discussed Marie Newman, the School Improvement Partner's report. [STR-24-5-04F 2025 Summer SIP Report Strathmore.url](#) and **noted** its quality. The Governing Body **noted** the concerns raised that the leadership team may not be able to always meet the proposed SDP priorities alongside, and additional to, leading a busy school.

The Chair of Governors **reflected** that the reports emphasis on ensuring the theme raised during the last Ofsted visit of capturing learner voice in the development and embedding of the curriculum is something they will need to address in the coming year. It is expected that this may be done through the continuation and strengthening of school councils, but would always prove challenging in a school with approximately 75% of learners are pre- or non-verbal.

The Governing Body **suggested** that this should be added to the existing Link Governor Report template to ensure that it is addressed at every visit. **(ACTION)**

3.G Partnerships and community links

3.H Staffing

The Headteacher **reported** that work is in progress to plan the CPD for the coming year. The INSET days at the start of term will be mainly planned with compliance with training and setting up for the year.

The Chair of Governors **reminded** governors that the Board of Trustees had approved the additional InSET training days in November with a proviso that robust evidence would be provided on the impact on pupil outcomes. The Headteacher **confirmed** that this would be able to be demonstrated through in-year reporting of learner outcomes, appraisal feedback and though expected improvements on supporting complex behaviours.

Following a **question**, the Headteacher **confirmed** that there are a lower number of staff leaving than in previous years, and those that are leaving are primarily staying in education, but moving to a school closer to home or to explore other interests.

The Headteacher **advised** that in addition support staff are ambitious with some exploring occupational health or psychology courses. The Governing Body **noted** that a benefit of being in a Trust is that these opportunities are available, and that they may not have the same opportunities in a mainstream school. The Governing Body **suggested** that providing a case study exemplifying support staff career development may be a useful tool for recruitment.

3.I Learner, Family and Community Voice

3.J Finance Commentary

[STR-24-5-03J 25.26 Budget Support Workbook - DRAFT Strathmore.pdf](#)

The Finance Link Governor **explained** that the key focus was now more looking forward as the in-year budget is looking to finish with a minimal underspend to forecast budget.

He **explained** that the Governing Body would need to carefully monitor the impact of a more pressured budget in 2025-26 and ensure that there is not an impact on the Quality of Education or on morale or the positivity within the schools. The Headteacher **concerned**.

3.K Health and Safety / Premises Update

Staff and pupils at the Darrell Campus had been notified that the campus would close seven days before the end of the summer term to allow for classrooms and equipment to be removed and other activities to be undertaken.

The Headteacher **explained** that the new build at Hampton High was still on track for the planned 1 June 2026 handover. The Governing Body **asked** if the Headteacher was starting to think about which pupils will move to the new site and **expressed concern** if there was any delay in the build. The Headteacher **explained** that she was confident that all the spaces available would be filled. Andy Whiteside, Trustee, **explained** that the Board was monitoring the build schedule at both Clarendon and Strathmore Schools closely and was working to ensure that AfC had contingency plans in place and that AfC would assume the reputational risk. The Board was awaiting confirmation of the place funding for both sites before they fully agreed to proceed. The Board was adamant that they would not assume any reputational risk associated with delayed delivery and had requested that AfC have alternatives in place should a contingency be needed.

The Governing Body **reflected** that whilst they understand the Board's position, the Strathmore School will be most at risk of reputational damage should the project be delayed. The Governing Body **agreed** that their concerns should be emphasised to the Board of Trustees.

The Governing Body **noted** that other projects were being considered including re-doing the playroom at Grey Court Campus and other redevelopments of the learning environments and car park. There was a discussion about finding funding options for these including grants from local organisations, such as the Victoria Foundation.

Supporting Papers – P9 Management Accounts,

5. Governance

- 5.A The Governing Body **reviewed** the membership overview and noted the completion of mandatory governor training was as it should have been. The Governing Body **agreed** to rectify this in the new academic year.
- 5.B The Governing Body **received** a presentation from the Chair providing an overview of the current state, historical context, and future direction of governance. The Headteacher **expressed** a desire to leave an organised and safe environment for incoming leadership. The Chair **noted** that 2024-25 was a very strong year with a full governing body, which the Headteacher agreed had a noticeable positive impact compared to previous years when there were often one or two vacancies.

The Chair **presented** an overview of the current Local Governing Body (LGB) membership and highlighted the importance of succession planning for the coming year. The Governing Body **noted** that four of the eleven governors (three non-staff and one staff) would conclude their terms by 2026. The Trust intended to appoint two new governors to fill two board positions before the start of the academic year, indicating a significant change in membership. The Governing Body **noted** that new faces bring new ideas and motivation.

The Governing Body **discussed** the self-evaluation results, noting a significant number of 'green' ratings indicating areas of strength and the pleasing absence of any 'red flag' areas, which the Headteacher also commented on positively. Key areas identified for improvement included the induction process, which the Governing Body **agreed** needed scaffolding.

The Chair **reminded** the group that following a consultation in September of the previous year, the governance structure had been changed. This resulted in a phased reduction to one parent and no staff governors. The Governance Professional **clarified** that did not prevent parent of a learner holding a co-opted governor position. The Governing Body also **noted** that Headteachers would no longer be governors across the trust from the next year and queried the implications of this. The Governance Professional **confirmed** that this enabled a clear reporting line and should not affect decision making or the impact of the LGB.

The Chair **praised** the diverse skills and experience brought to the table by the current LGB members, noting it was evident from feedback and participation.

- 5.C **The Governing Body received** the following Link Governor Visit Reports.
[STR-24-5-05C LG DD-AB Maths Visit 0625.pdf](#)

6. Update from Strategy Day (Planning for 2025-26)

- 6.A The Headteacher **thanked** governors for their input to the Strategy Session and **advised** that the School Development plan for 2025-26 had been shared with the incoming headteacher. These were
- SDP 1 The Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) Curriculum is extended to include Key Stage 3 learners, ensuring clear skill development from Year 7 to Year 14.
 - SDP 2 Systems and strategies are in place to support and develop all learner's communication skills in less structured class-based learning environments e.g. lunch halls, playgrounds, outside learning areas, sensory rooms and during educational trips.
 - SDP 3 Play opportunities across all Strathmore learning environments will be further refined to incorporate neurodiverse affirming research and practice which promotes learner voice, engagement and autonomy.
 - SDP 4 As a result of strategic and reflective change management, school leaders will maintain excellence in all areas and strengthen leadership capacity during a period of transition.
 - SDP 5 Strathmore will transition from using Microsoft to Google as their IT platform.
 - SDP 6 As a result of strategic planning and leadership, Hampton High Campus will successfully open, without negatively impacting existing campuses

The Governing Board **formally agreed** the areas of focus for the School Development Plan for 2025-2026 ([see Slide Pack P15](#)), arising from the Strategy discussions.

- 6.B The Chair **introduced** the discussion, referring to the SWOT analysis from the Strategy Session and the creation of a development plan to support areas for improvement.
- 6.C There were various areas of the development plan Vision and Strategic Direction; Accountability and Effectiveness in Governance; Visibility and Stakeholder Engagement; and Oversight, Monitoring, and Evaluation and these aligned with the model document. Some of the highlighted areas are 'business as usual' items and would form part of the terms of reference or agenda plans as the year progresses and may be tweaked during the year. The Headteacher praised the extensive work that had gone into the Governance Development Plan, stating that it was a strong document to support the school and governing board in the next year. The Governing Body **agreed** and **formally adopted** the governance development plan.
- 6.D There were not other matters arising from the Strategy Day.
- 6.E The Governing Body **agreed** calendar of 2025-2026 meetings, subject to confirmation from the incoming Headteacher [STR-24-5-06D Meeting calendar for publication.pdf](#)

Supporting papers: Strategy Day papers

7. Election / Appointment to key LGB roles for September 2025-26

- 7.A The Governing Board **noted** that there had been no nominations for the Chair of
- 7.B Governors position, however, the co-vice chairs, Marc Dodi and Rebecca Branch had agreed to continue in their roles. The Governance Professional **advised** that the Trust's Governance Nominations Committee was actively seeking a replacement, with the intention of appointing a new Chair by the September meeting, or by October at the latest. **(ACTION)** Should a new Chair not be found before the start of the new academic year, the co-vice chairs would 'Act' as Chair until an appointment was made. The co-vice chairs had provisionally agreed to this should it be necessary. The Governing Body **agreed** to appoint Marc Dodi and Rebecca Branch as co-vice chairs, noting that Rebecca would serve for the autumn term, and Marc would serve until he steps away in July 2026.

The Governing Body **discussed** the workload associated with senior governor roles. It was **observed** that the workload often felt like a full-time job, and noted that the co-Vice Chair model was effective for those in full-time work. The Governance Professional **added** that the trust was looking at ways to make roles more manageable, such as distributing workloads and offering training in 'bite-size chunks'. The Governance Professional **requested** suggestions from governors on how to make the most effective use of their time in their roles and their personal aspirations within the LGB. **(ACTION)**

The Governing Body **re-emphasised** that succession planning would be a key item on the Governance Development Plan for the next year

- 7.C The Chair **detailed** the proposed governor curriculum links and responsibilities for 2025-26,
- 7.D which had been discussed at the Strategy Session.
- 7.E

Key Links included

- Finance Link Governor - Mitch Pender and Michael Jacob the new Chair and Vice-Chair Safeguarding Link Governor – New Chair and Rebecca Branch
- SEMH - New Chair and Rebecca Branch
- Communication and Interaction and SDP 2– Marc Dodi
- Cognition and Learning – Dev Desai
- Sensory and Physical – Michael Jacob
- Exploring the World – Ayushi Bagga
- Wellbeing (pupils and staff) and behaviour – Sarah Terrey
- SDP 3 – Ayushi Bagga, Dev Desai, Michael Jacob and Sarah Terrey

8. Approval of Policies / Statements

- 8.A [STR-24-5-08A Strathmore Behaviour Policy July 2025.docx](#)

The Headteacher and Adriana Martyr **introduced** the updated Behaviour Policy, describing it as a comprehensive document that aligns with the Auriga Academy Trust's safeguarding policy. It was **noted** that the policy was structural and required time for

review, and governors were asked to provide comments on the draft by 16 July. The Governing Body **agreed** to review via email and that subject to comments and a final review delegated to the Chair the policy could be approved and published by the end of term. **(ACTION)**

8.B [STR-24-5-08B Draft Strathmore School Uniform Policy Jul 2025.pdf](#)

The Headteacher **explained** that the Uniform Policy had been updated to give learners aged 16 and over in sixth form the right to choose whether or not to wear the school uniform, aligning with their mainstream peers. The Governing Body **approved** the policy.

8.C [STR-24-5-08C Home Visits Procedure.pdf](#)

The Headteacher **introduced** the Home Visit Procedure, which was drafted by Sarah Terrey. It was presented for information rather than for sign-off. The procedure is for safeguarding purposes and to build a relationship with new children and their families from the beginning of their time at Strathmore School. It involves a staff member, such as a class teacher, visiting the home with a colleague to complete an 'All About Me' document with the family. The Governing Board **noted** the procedure and **agreed** that it was an important part of joining the school.

8.D [STR-24-5-08D Strathmore School Attendance Policy.pdf](#)

The Headteacher **noted** that the Attendance Policy had been updated to remove references to Darrell Campus, which will no longer be in place from September. An anticipated review date of July 2026 was added, and the current attendance codes were included for reference. The Governing Board **approved** the Policy.

The Headteacher **advised** the Governing Body of further policies and documents which would be prepared for the coming academic year

- Safeguarding Policy would be brought to the September LGB meeting after being updated in line with the KCSIE 2025. **(ACTION)**
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy had been updated and was in draft form, awaiting the final publication of the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance and input from the new Headteacher. **(ACTION)**
- The PE and Sports Premium statement would be submitted by the July deadline, which had been brought forward by the DfE and it would be presented for discussion at the September LGB meeting. **(ACTION)**
- The Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) statement, SEND Information Report and Home Communication Policy would be ready for the November meeting with input from the incoming Headteacher. **(ACTION)**

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

The Governing Body **noted** the successes of the school including the strong attendance data and feedback from the School Improvement Partner and the collaboration and engagement of governors during the strategy session.

The Governing Body **agreed** the need to highlight their concerns regarding the risks associated with the opening of the Hampton High campus including the reputational risk which could be directed towards the school and staff.

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

Number	Extract	Owner	Due Date
1	Annual Safeguarding Report to be presented to the September LGB	JC /RB	01/09/25
2	Impact of the Behaviour Lead role to be reviewed in the Autumn Term	TES	01/12/25
3	Add specific prompt re capturing learner voice to Link Visit report template	JC	01/09/25
4	Governance and Nominations Committee to secure new Chair of LGB for September 2025	G&N Cttee	01/09/25
5	Governors to provide suggestions on effective use of their time and personal aspirations with Governance Professional	All	asap
6	Behaviour Policy to be reviewed by all governors by 16 July to enable approval by the Chair and publication by the HT	All / JC / SH	16/07/25
7	Safeguarding and PE and Sports Premium statements to be brought to the September LGB meeting	TES	01/09/25
8	Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy , PPG statement , SEND Information Report and Home Communication Policy to be drafted for the November LGB meeting.	TES	01/11/25

At the close of the meeting governors **expressed** their thanks and gratitude to Jane Curzon and Sarah Hurtado as they stepped down from their respective roles as Chair and Headteacher of Strathmore School. The Governing Body **highlighted** their amazing work, commitment and dedication to the school.

Supporting Papers – [15. Committee reporting template.docx](#)

10. 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.

Chris Buckley-Reynolds

Chris Buckley-Reynolds (Oct 2, 2025 09:57:14 GMT+1)

Chris Buckley-Reynolds

Chair of the Strathmore School LGB

02/10/25






STR-24-5-00 Approved Minutes 070725

Final Audit Report

2025-10-02

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