

Approved Minutes of a meeting of the Strathmore School Local Governing Body held on 29 September 2025 at 5.00pm at Grey Court Campus.

[Link to Teams Meeting](#)

[Link to Papers STR-25-1 290925](#)

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-25-1 290925.

Members of the Governing Body in attendance: Mitch Pender and Sarah Terrey (except Items 2.4 and 3.8).

Members of the Governing Body in attendance virtually: Ayushi Bagga, Michael Jacob and Krystyna Tsochlas.

Members of the Governing Body absent: Rebecca Branch, Chris Buckley-Reynolds (Chair), Dev Desai and Marc Dodi.

Also in attendance: Toni Edmond-Smith, Headteacher; Assistant Headteachers (excluding Item 3.8): Vicky Baker, Adriana Martyr, Amy Upton, Laura Wigglesworth and Andy Whiteside, Trustee.

Clerk in attendance: Julie Adams, Governance Professional.

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

- 1.1 The Governing Body **noted** apologies had been received from Rebecca Branch, Chris Buckley-Reynolds (Chair), Dev Desai and Marc Dodi and agreed to consent to their absence. The Governance Professional **advised** that the meeting was quorate however, due to the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, Mitch Pender had **agreed** to chair the meeting.
- 1.2 The Governing Body **noted** Krystyna Tsochlas has been appointed as a Trust Governor by the Board for a period of 4 years from 19 September 2025.
- 1.3 The Chair reminded that all members of the Committee 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.

Supporting Papers: Personal Details Check (Hard copy to be given out at meeting)

2. Minutes

- 2.1 The Governing Body **received** the draft minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2025 [STR-25-1-02.1 Previous Draft Minutes 120525.pdf] and 7 July 2025 [STR-25-1-02.1 Previous Draft Minutes 070725.pdf] and **approved** them as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 2.2 The Governing Body **noted** the completed actions from the previous meeting.

Number	Extract	Owner	Due Date
1	Annual Safeguarding Report to be presented to the September LGB	JC /RB	Complete
3	Add specific prompt re capturing learner voice to Link Visit report template	JC	Complete
4	Governance and Nominations Committee to secure new Chair of LGB for September 2025	G&N Cttee	Complete
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	Complete
7	Safeguarding and PE and Sports Premium statements to be brought to the September LGB meeting	TES	On agenda

2.3 The Governing Body **noted** actions arising from the previous meeting that were incomplete. The Governing Body **noted** that these would be rolled forward to future meetings. The Headteacher added that a number of other policies may also need to be tweaked and brought for approval to future meetings.

Number	Extract	Owner	Due Date
2	Impact of the Behaviour Lead role to be reviewed in the Autumn Term	TES	01/12/25
5	Governors to provide suggestions on effective use of their time and personal aspirations with Governance Professional	All	asap
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

2.4 The Governing Body **received** the latest published Board meeting minutes and other updates from the Board and noted that a confidential update would be given by Andrew Whiteside at the end of the meeting.

See also Confidential Appendix A to these minutes.

2.5 The Governing Body **noted** there were no other matters arising that are not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Supporting Papers: [Trust Board Minutes](#), [Capella House School Minutes](#)

3. Headteachers Report

The Governing Body **received** a report from the Headteacher STR-25-1-03 Strathmore School Headteacher Report.pdf to include Items 3-11. The Headteacher **presented** the report and advised that its preparation had been commenced two weeks into the term and thanked the SLT for their input into its compilation.

The Headteacher **thanked** governors for the questions posed on her report in advance of the meeting and **invited** questions.

3.1 General Update and key risks

3.2 Pupil Numbers for 2025-26 and Attendance

The Governing Body **asked** if attendance rates at the very start of term was a cause for concern or similar to previous years. The Headteacher **confirmed** that attendance was generally good. One or two pupils had been absent due to illness at the start of the year but were now in school, and there were no significant causes for concern at present.

The Governing Body **noted** the slight decrease in pupil numbers due to the closure of the Astra class satellite at Darrel. The Headteacher **advised** that some pupils from the satellite had moved either into Strathmore School or into Clarendon School. The Headteacher **stated** that the school was at capacity, with all classrooms having a maximum of eight pupils, and some having nine or ten. Addressing the financial impact of being two pupils below the budgeted number, the Headteacher **confirmed** that a meeting was scheduled with the Chief Executive Officer later in the week to analyse the budget and assess any budget implications during her first monthly monitoring meeting. The Finance Link Governor **advised** that he had previously attended these meetings with the Headteacher and would be happy to continue doing so (**ACTION**).

It was **noted** that the upcoming Hampton High development would create more places in the future, and the school did not wish to exceed current class sizes.

The Governing Body **highlighted** the positive news of Strathmore leavers progressing to Clarendon School. The Headteacher **celebrated** this as a testament to hard work and interventions, noting it indicated Strathmore School was no longer the most suitable setting for those pupils. She **added** two pupils from Clarendon School had moved to Strathmore for secondary education, highlighting one of the benefits of being in a Trust to find the most appropriate setting for students.

3.3 Safeguarding and behaviour

The Governing Body:

- **Received** a report from the DSL on Safeguarding for 2024-2025 STR-25-1-05A Safeguarding Report to LGB 24_25.pdf
- **Noted** the limited changes to KCSIE 2024.
- **Note** safeguarding arrangements and training within the school for 2025-26.
- **Received** Safeguarding Link Governor End of Year report [STR-25-1-03.3 LG JC Safeguarding EOY report]
- **Received** Safeguarding Link Governor Update [STR-25-1-03.3 LG RB Safeguarding 190925]

Laura Wigglesworth, Designated Safeguarding Lead **noted** that the Keeping Children Safe Policy had been updated with the main changes being to the personnel included in the policy, but there had not been the significant changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 which had been expected, however it did also require amendments to the Intimate Care Policy which also needs to be reapproved. She **advised** that Ivan Pryce, CEO and Trust Safeguarding Lead, has developed guidance for Safeguarding Link Governors to support them by outlining questions they could ask throughout the year and methods for targeting their visits to focus on different safeguarding areas.

The Governing Body **noted** the visit report from the Safeguarding Link Governor which had reviewed recommended actions from the local authority's end-of-year safeguarding audit and discussed staff training.

The Governing Body **asked** if there was a correlation between an increase in behaviour incidents and the first half of the autumn term, as pupils might be dysregulated after the summer holiday. The Headteacher and SLT **acknowledged** that such a correlation could potentially exist due to the six-week break and the transition to new classes and teams. The Headteacher had **observed** the significant strength of interventions, put in place to help pupils regulate and prepare for these changes. These preparations, including sharing information about September placements, class team collaboration, and working with therapists, had led to a very good start to the term, which she described as one of the best starts ever observed, despite only being four weeks in.

The Governing Body **asked** if there was any additional support being offered to staff following the implementation of the dedicated behaviour support email address. The Headteacher **confirmed** that the behaviour lead uses this to respond to specific instances and will use that to inform trends etc. SLT **confirmed** that as they have access to this email, they are also able to respond or consider other actions required, which may involve a wider team including therapists. The Headteacher **stated** that she wants to start half termly multidisciplinary meetings focussing on one or two learners to ensure there is a holistic plan for each learner in place.

The Governing Body **noted** the reduction in suspensions was largely due to one student leaving the school.

3.4 Pupil progress and achievements

The Governing Body **asked** for a reflection on the pupil assessment data from the summer term, and whether this positive pupil assessment data reflected the general situation. Adriana Martyr, Assistant Headteacher, **explained** that achievement had been maintained in the autumn term, although different pupils had made progress compared to the previous year. She **noted** that while a couple of pupils who had not achieved their targets last year had improved, another two or three had not made the expected progress, resulting in similar overall data. She also **highlighted** an issue with three pupils in one campus not achieving due to a new teacher's approach to grading, which was being addressed with the head of campus through extra sessions and learner progress training.

The Governing Body **queried** the threshold at which the school becomes concerned about pupils not meeting objectives, specifically asking if it was 2% or 20% of the 120 students. Ms Martyr **explained** that pupils are flagged if they achieve a grade of three across three areas, meaning they have not achieved 75% of their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) targets. She **clarified** that very unique cases, often due to medical needs or personal circumstances, might see a child not achieve targets at all. The SLT added that the data is also interrogated for patterns, such as in specific classes, for Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) learners, or across subject areas, which can lead to further investigation and interventions such as learning walks or class visits. It was further **noted** that pupil progress meetings are held every half term with campus heads and teachers

to monitor progress and plan support. Teachers are expected to record the reasons for progress not being as expected.

The Headteacher **expressed** her satisfaction that the school does not remove pupils from progress data due to poor attendance, **explaining** that by keeping them in the data allows the school to demonstrate progress over time with the right interventions and show the school's impact, even if not achieved in a single term. Amy Upton, Assistant Headteacher **advised** that she was only aware of one learner failing to make progress due to not being in school. The Headteacher **discussed** the need to tweak targets if pupils miss significant school time due to illness, noting that returning to school itself can be considered a suitable target. The Governing Body **noted** the systematic approach to reviewing progress and factors which may affect it, such as shorter terms, seasonality and interventions tailored to individual pupil needs.

The Governing Body **noted** that the school clearly has a good understanding of the factors driving performance and the trends involved and asked if the school had a specific performance target for the percentage of pupils not achieving progress. The Headteacher **stated** that there was no specific target at the moment, but the SLT actively monitors this by comparing to previous years / terms. If a drop is observed, the reasons are investigated, with the aim always being to sustain and improve pupil progress. Andy Whiteside, Trustee, advised that for special schools, pupils are judged against individual EHCP targets, not national averages. He **noted** that Ofsted does not measure special schools in the same way as mainstream schools regarding this. The Governing Body **noted** the importance of ensuring targets are aspirational, as 100% achievement might suggest they are not challenging enough.

3.5 School Development Plan and School Self Review

The Governing Body **received** the School Development Plan and **noted** that the Headteacher and SLT were meeting w/c 3 October to review the detailed actions and ownership as well as to consider monitoring arrangements for each. The Governing Body **asked** if any of the headline priorities had changed. The Headteacher **advised** that a priority which had related to transitioning to the 'google' platform had been removed as it was considered an operational matter, not a strategic one.

The Headteacher **advised** that the School Self Review document would change format based on a new template from the CEO, which would align with the new Ofsted Framework. This would be presented to the next LGB meeting **(ACTION)**.

The Governing Body **asked** if the arrangements for the School Improvement Partner, Marie Newman's visits for 2025-26 had been planned. The Headteacher **advised** that a date had not been arranged yet for the Autumn term to allow her to settle into the school. The Governing Body suggested that it would be useful to have her report in advance of the November LGB meeting. The Headteacher would check if this was achievable **(ACTION)**

Supporting Papers: SDP, SEF, SIP Reports

3.6 Visitors Reports

STR-25-1-0.3.6 2025 Summer SIP Report Strathmore.pdf

3.7 Partnerships and community links

STR-25-1-0.3.7AfC letter to all Headteachers Sep 2025

The Governing Body **noted** the letter to Headteachers from Achieving for Children (AfC).

The Headteacher **stated** that there had been limited community engagement so far, but the Parents and Friends Association (PFA) groups had started.

Amy Upton **advised** that a volunteer programme with Grey Court and Tiffin Girls Sixth Forms were commencing. The checking and DBS process had been streamlined for checks on volunteers over sixteen new to prevent previous delays. She hoped they would start in the autumn term. A Grey Court teacher also intended to run an inclusion programme using Strathmore's resources, and the **VIPs** programme was expected to start soon.

Adriana Martyr **outlined** the St Richard Reynolds community programme, noting that secondary students would engage with the community as early as possible. Paperwork for educational visits had been updated, and a central consent system on Arbor was now speeding up the process for parental consent. Learners would visit the local high street. The PE programme had started, including swimming sessions and horse riding. Inclusion meetings with the mainstream SENCO at St Richard Reynolds had taken place, and assemblies for the VIP programme were being conducted in both primary and secondary schools. St Richard Reynolds School's Design & Technology department have a project for their Year 10 students to design adapted cutlery. The goal of these programmes were to establish opportunities between the schools.

Adriana Martyr **explained** that the careers programme also fostered community links through work experience and activities, primarily in Twickenham. A group of students from the Grey Court and St Richard Reynolds campuses will be helping at an event at Twickenham Stadium by making goodie bags for an event. Students would also undertake work experience and participate in the final celebration of the City Harvest Festival. An 'Access to All' session for post-sixteen learners from SRR and Grey Court was scheduled for the end of October in Twickenham.

The Headteacher **mentioned** her participation in the AfC New Headteacher Induction programme and advised that she would host a meeting at Strathmore covering how inclusion was managed on co-located sites and how to support mainstream colleagues.

3.8 Staffing

The Governing Body **noted** that the Pay Progression would be covered as a confidential item later in the meeting.

See also Confidential Appendix A to these minutes.

The Governing Body **asked** if there were any specific staffing issues to highlight at the start of term. The Headteacher advised that all new staff had started as expected but that she had received two resignations from a Higher-Level Teaching Assistant and Teaching Assistant, and action was being taken to address this.

Following a question from governors, the Headteacher **explained** that she had conducted one-to-one meetings with senior leaders and teachers at the Russell and Grey Court campuses. Meetings with staff at St Richard Reynolds campus were planned for the current week. The purpose of these meetings was for her to better understand the school's current position, future direction, and how she can support staff development, with the discussions feeding into teacher appraisals. The Headteacher **advised** that class representative meetings had been introduced, with agreed terms of reference to gather solution-focused feedback from Teaching Assistants (TAs). She noted the process was providing a valuable and rapid overview for her 30-day reflections and aiding in planning. SLT advised that the one-to-one meetings had been very well received with positive feedback from staff.

3.9 Learner, Family and Community Voice

3.10 Finance Commentary

The Finance Link Governor **reported** that he had reviewed the P11 management accounts and was awaiting the P12 year-end report to 31 August. He **noted** the ongoing pressure to be more efficient and operate with fewer resources. He **stressed** the necessity of monitoring operations closely during the first few months of the year to ensure the school maintains its high standards, runs well amidst required changes, and provides a safe and happy environment for pupils. As mentioned previously he was happy to participate in the regular finance meetings with the COO and Headteacher.

Andy Whiteside speaking on behalf of the Board, **expressed** gratitude for the work undertaken by the school during the benchmarking exercise and subsequent staffing readjustments. He **acknowledged** this was a significant task for all schools and commended the leadership teams for their impressive handling of the process, management of the process and understanding of the rationale for.

The Headteacher **advised** governors that there was a school lunch debt outstanding of £72.90 outstanding for a parent who had experienced difficulties and been supported to claim for free school meals. This was now in place. As per the Finance Policy she required the LGB to confirm their recommendation to the CEO to write off the debt. The Governing Body **agreed** to recommend the write off of this debt. **(ACTION)**

3.11 Health and Safety / Premises Update

The Headteacher **reported** that there had been no major works over the holidays. She advised that her first health and safety walk was scheduled for this week but that no key issues had arisen from her initial discussions with the estates and premises team.

The Headteacher **advised** that the school's boilers needed replacing, which was the main upcoming premises project and would incur costs. She noted that the current boilers were over ten years old and whilst having performed well, had not been designed to last as long. Mr Whiteside **confirmed** that the Trust Board had already approved the expenditure for the new boilers in principle, as it was a major, unexpected spend outside the usual budget.

The Governing Body **observed** the progress based on photographs of the new campus at Hampton High. The Headteacher **confirmed** that progress was good and that she had further meetings scheduled to discuss recruitment and future plans, including timelines. The school was already receiving consultations for places and enquiries about available places.

Mr Whiteside informed governors that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) had been signed between the Trust and AfC for the Strathmore and Clarendon expansions, which included guaranteed funding. He **commended** CEO and COO for their work in securing favourable terms, allowing for confident planning without relying on every seat being filled immediately. The expansion would involve a three-year staggered intake, starting with twelve pupils rather than the full twenty-four which had been demonstrated to work when setting up Capella House School.

The Governing Body **enquired** about the impact of the school expansion on the Headteacher's role, acknowledging that she had joined with the expansion already underway. The Headteacher **described** it as an exciting time and **expressed** gratitude for the work already initiated. The Governing Body **noted** that a key challenge for management would be staffing the new site effectively and efficiently. The Headteacher **added** that her main challenge would be ensuring consistency of the 'Strathmore' ethos across four separate sites, building on the already impressive work done across three sites.

Supporting Papers: SDP, SEF, SIP reports, Management Accounts, HR Summary

4. Governance

- 4.1 The Governance Professional **noted** an increased uptake in governor training across the Trust and **advised** that a full membership overview would be presented to the next LGB meeting **(ACTION)**

Concerns were **highlighted** about the governing body's quoracy, particularly with more governors intending to leave this academic year. The Governing Body **noted** the need to recruit new governors. It was also noted that both the Headteacher and Chair were new to role and required support during their induction period and that succession planning was a priority for the coming academic year.

- 4.2 The Governing Body **received** the governance documentation approved by the Board of Trustees at their meeting on 18 September 2025. The Governance Professional **advised** that the changes to the governance documentation were explained in the notes and the full documentation detailed how governance was delegated and operated in the Trust. She

drew attention to the Code of Conduct, which governors would need to sign. She **explained** that the main change outlined in the overview document was the removal of the suspension of governors and trustees. She **advised** that if a governor breaches the Code of Conduct, they will be automatically removed or asked to leave, rather than suspended.

Supporting papers – [Governance Documentation]

4.3 The Governing Body **noted** the annual Governance Report for 2024-25. [STR-25-1-04.3 *Annual Governance Report for 2025-26*] which had been completed by the previous Chair of Governors and published on the school's website.

4.4 The Governing Body **noted** the Governance Development Plan for 2025-26 [STR-25-1-04.4 *Governance Development Plan 2024-25*] which had been developed by the previous Chair. The Governing Body agreed that this should be reviewed ahead of its presentation to the next LGB meeting along with the Link Governor Roles to align with the discussions between SLT and the Headteacher referred to in Item 3.5.

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

5. Approval of Policies / Statements

5.1 The Governing Body **approved** the STR-25-1-05.1 Strathmore School Keeping Children Safe Policy.pdf policy.

5.2 The Governing Body **approved** the STR-25-1-05.1 Intimate Care Policy

5.3 The Governing Body **noted** the PE and Sports Premium Statement and commended the excellent use of the funding which was demonstrated within it.

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

The Governing Body **noted** the extensive discussion on pupil progress, community engagement and the progress shown on the Hampton High campus. In addition, the Headteacher had developed a good understanding of the schools needs and had considered further developments on processes to support pupils and staff.

The Governing Body agreed to highlight their concerns on GB membership and recruitment going forward to the Board of Trustees.

The Governing Body **noted** the actions arising from the meeting, which include two items within the Confidential Appendix A to these minutes.

Item	Extract	Owner	Due Date
1	Impact of the Behaviour Lead role to be reviewed in the Autumn Term	TES	01/12/2025
2	Governors to provide suggestions on effective use of their time and personal aspirations with Governance Professional	All	asap

Item	Extract	Owner	Due Date
3	Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy , PPG statement , SEND Information Report and Home Communication Policy to be drafted for the November LGB meeting.	TES	01/11/2025
4	Regular meetings to be arranged with Finance Link Governor, HT and COO	TES, MP , SC	asap
5	School Self Review document to be shared at next LGB meeting	TES	01/11/25
6	Discuss with School Improvement Partner if Autumn term visit report can be completed to be received by the GB in their November meeting	TES	01/11/25
7	Recommendation to the CEO to write off the outstanding school lunch debt of £72.90 for a parent	TES JA	
8	Governor Training and membership overview to be presented to the next LGB meeting	JA	01/11/25
9	Confidential action	AW / JA	asap
10	Confidential action	IP / JA	08/10/25

Supporting Papers – [17. Committee reporting template.docx](#)

7. Confidentiality

The Governing Body **agreed** that the discussion at the meeting, the background papers and the reports identified as confidential above, {and the minutes contained in the confidential appendix to the minutes relating to Items 2.4 and 3.8,) should remain confidential and excluded from the published minutes and papers.

The date of the next meeting is **25 November 2025**

Chris Buckley-Reynolds

Chris Buckley-Reynolds (Feb 25, 2026 12:25:15 GMT)

Chair of the Strathmore School Local Governing Body

25/02/2026







STR-25-1-00 Approved Minutes 290925

Final Audit Report

2026-02-25

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