

ST MARTIN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS

Local Governing Body – PART 1 Minutes of Meeting held on 6th May 2026 from 5.00 pm

Governors present:

Name	Initial	Present	Role	Appointed responsibility	Governor type
Mrs M Down	MD	Yes	Headteacher		Headteacher Governor
M N Baker	NB	No			Foundation Governor
Mrs C McNab	CM	Yes		Finance Lead Governor	Parent governor
Revd N Parish	NP	Yes		Lead Governor Chrisian Distinctiveness	Ex Officio, Foundation Governor
Mrs P Roy	PR	Yes		Lead Governor SEND	
Mrs H Rattos	HR	Yes			Staff governor
Mrs J Taylor	JT	Yes	Chair of Governors	Lead Governor, Safeguarding; H&S	Foundation Governor
Mr D Wilkinson	DW	Yes		Lead Governor, Teaching and Learning	Parent Governor
Ms C Wynn-Mackenzie	CWM	Yes		Lead Governor, Attendance	Foundation Governor

In attendance:

Mrs T Jones (TJ) Clerk to the Governors
Mr P Cooper (PC) Teacher, AI lead (to 5.20 pm)

Apologies received

Mr N Baker (NB)

Presentation from staff – Use of AI in school

1. PC was in attendance to present on the use of AI in school and the Trust driven/proposed project to achieve AI certification at St Martin's. PC was not able to show the examples he had wished to on account of technical issues, but his presentation would be shared with Governors. **Action: TJ/PC**
2. A poll of staff indicated that AI was mostly being used at St Maritn's in lesson planning, resource generation and for administrative tasks. HR said that as well as lesson planning and generating resources, it was useful for drafting emails to parents and MD highlighted the opportunity of AI in recording safeguarding incidents, which could be directed into the tool (Microsoft Co-pilot) for staff to check the written text and upload directly to CPOMS. Potential future use included for mapping curriculums, for example to support understanding of prior knowledge and ensuring inclusion of required golden thread, for administrative tasks and, within parameters, report writing. The potential was noted for AI to free up teachers' time to enable this to be devoted to core provision.
3. PC said that the Trust was developing policies and key would be to ensure that AI was being used in a safe, moral and ethical way. Governors were invited to raise questions.
4. HR asked **whether AI could be used in the moderation process**; PC said that there was a role to play in finding extra evidence if a teacher was uncertain about their judgement of the level a child was working at. However, it was should not be used to take away from teacher judgement;
5. DW asked **whether template commands had been developed to ensure a uniform approach to questions asked by teachers**; PC said that this would follow after the Trust had developed the central

policies required for using AI. DW cautioned that AI is a 'people pleaser' and leans towards delivering the response that is suggested in how the question is framed and that from his experience templates were needed to ensure consistent use across a group of people. PC said that the School used Teachmate AI which includes filters to support consistency in what is generated.

6. DW said that consistency would be particularly key for moderation and if the commands used by teachers were different, a very different outcome could be generated; PC assured governors that the judgement of staff was crucial to moderation. MD said that the expertise of the teacher remained paramount and noted a parallel with use of schemes of work, where teacher's input remained essential.
7. HR said that Year 1 teachers were using AI for guided reading and **asked whether other year group staff were using it for year group approach for specific areas**; year 6 was also using it for guided reading.
8. JT asked **if PC was working with leaders from other schools and within the wider Trust**; PC said that there was a working group but schools were at very different levels. For example, LP schools had had lots of training but there had been little training at St Martin's. MD said that PC had delivered initial staff training to alleviate anxiety.
9. JT asked **how much support PC was getting as the AI lead for St Martin's and how governors could help**; network sessions had been helpful and he was doing what he could with day to day working. JT asked governors to feedback further feedback to PC after the meeting. PC said that to achieve accreditation at AI Explorer level, evidence would be needed of how all levels of the School community, including leadership, was engaging in AI. Governor agreed to keep this subject on their agenda and requested regular updates from PC on progress on the project. **Action: TJ**

PC left the meeting at 5.20 pm.

Apologies for absence

10. Apologies for absence from this meeting had been received and were accepted from Nick Baker (NB). The meeting was in quorum. ZL did not attend the meeting but the Finance Lead Governor had discussed the finance and budget papers with her beforehand.

Declarations of Interest and confidentiality

11. JT reminded the LGB of the need to for confidentiality of items raised at the meeting and drew attention to St Martin's Vision, which was highlighted in the agenda and central to all that was done at the School. No governors updated their interests or declared interests in the agenda items for this meeting.

Finance

12. Finance Link (Lead) Governor, CM, had reviewed the finance documents and raised questions with the CFO prior to the meeting. CM provided a written report with papers for this meeting and reported key points from her review of the finance papers. The current accounts forecast a £50k deficit which was adverse to the original budget and the Trust had completed variance analysis to understand reasons. Further information had been received about SEND funding reform starting in April. The costs of supporting pupils with SEND would be put against this funding. The Schools were carrying reserves and overall position was not concerning. There were plans this year to use the capital balance which the Schools had been building up on planned capital projects. Sports premium was being deployed on the active play lead and forest school provision and most of the £100k pupil premium was being spent on staffing for interventions to close the attainment gap. There was uncertainty regarding the final increase to staffing salaries.
13. CM reported that draft 2 of the budget for 2026-27 had been provided and showed little difference to draft 1, but now included the increase of 1.6% confirmed for GAG funding and, as the budget was based on 609 pupils on roll (from the capacity of 630), there would be a gap in funding. 83 pupils were currently anticipated to join Year R in September 2026 which was an improvement to the previous year's admissions. No further update had been received regarding the teacher pay settlement, and the budget was being held at 2%, reflecting the DfE's announced increase that salaries would rise 6.5% over three years. The reduction in the Local Government Pension Scheme charge had been included in the figures and costs were shown to increase by 3% with a slightly higher figure for utilities but there were lots of uncertainties in these assumptions.
14. CM felt that the fact that the budget was in surplus in years 1 and 2 (deficit in year 3), indicated the Schools were quite financially resilient. The picture would be closer to final by draft 3 of the budget which was expected at the summer 2 meeting.

15. CM said that the proportion of reserves held to revenue indicated that there could be scope to deploy some reserves on developing the school site and asked **about the School's wish list**; MD said that plans included to use some reserves on the office move, toilet facilities accessible from outside the school, and to invest in modernising the year 6 classrooms as well as to support repairs to the roof.
16. PR asked **about the implications of the White Paper on SEND funding and the 11 EHCP applications being progressed**; MD reported that it was believed that LPAT had secured additional funding for each Trust school, including members of ELT, to have a specialist teacher and LSA to support changes to SEND provision envisaged by the White Paper. This was confirmed on 21 May 2026 but what this would mean for St Martin's was not yet clear and it was noted that there are two schools at St Martin's Schools. MD said that recruitment would be started by the half term break and highlighted the need for certainty regarding the financial information as ideally schools needed a three-year agreement in order to recruit the right level of quality of staff and that although St Martin's had already restructured to ensure that teachers could meet needs in class, with 7 pupils with EHCPs on the list for entry to Early Years in September and 11 applications for EHCPs being progressed to address the backlog, it could be necessary to recruit further staff to meet the escalating need.
17. JT asked **whether there was a common need amongst the new EHCPs**; the major need was for speech language and communication.
18. Governors asked **if MD was optimistic about the White Paper**; MD confirmed this but said that there would be significant period of change, as schools developed to be able to deliver the policy of every child having a right to a place in mainstream school which supports their needs.
19. JT thanked CM for her full report.

Leadership report

20. MD highlighted from the Leadership report for summer 1 2026 which included spring term data, in particular the news regarding the building of an outdoor classroom, which would support outdoor learning for 60 pupils at a time, as well as be a resource for lunch times. Governors recorded thanks to the PTFA for their contribution of £5k, supporting the £7k grant funding, and their ongoing fundraising efforts in support of the Schools.
21. MD reported some unpleasant exchanges in the local community related to traffic and carparking by parents. A meeting with representatives of the local Council had been held in summer 1 about measures to address parking issues.
22. MD reported that the updated school self-evaluation suggested judgements of expected in all areas with some areas of strength. The key focus was on driving consistency on delivery of provision and inset training was planned to support this, including through ensuring the consistent application of the core 8.
23. Governors noted the Headteacher's decision not to continue as an Ofsted inspector.
24. CM asked **whether the data supported the desired improvements**; this was work in progress and CPD was now also being delivered to LSAs as well as teachers to support consistency of teaching and learning approaches. However, the impact was not yet shown in the data and an additional data drop was scheduled which it is hoped will demonstrate impact of the teaching and learning initiatives in place. Data would be shared at the next LGB meeting. **Action: MD/TJ**
25. JT said that the mantra 'Every lesson, all the time' supported the drive for consistency and MD said that inconsistency affected vulnerable learners in particular.
26. JT **welcomed the strength in maths shown in the data, especially data for pupils with SEN or who were persistently absent**. MD highlighted practical application in play to build solid maths foundations.
27. JT asked if **the calm corners were effective** and HR was asked to give her view; HR gave an example from her class demonstrating that the calm corners were working and said that pupils were not directed to use them as they were a positive space and it was important that pupils did not view access to them as a punishment.
28. H&S data for spring term updated presentation in the folder and PR welcomed the fact that health and safety incidents had been shown as zero.

Safeguarding

29. Governors were invited to raise questions on the data provided prior to the meeting. NP noted that TAF was high and **sought clarification of this term and the number of pupils with this support**; Team

around the Family referred to the multi-agency approach to supporting pupils and families, and school staff were involved in TAF meetings. Approximately 20 pupils were supported by TAF, some of whom were medically vulnerable.

30. CM asked **how Young Carers were defined**; these pupils had carer responsibilities at home, for example supporting parents with mental or physical health needs or with siblings with needs. At St Martin's pupils were only defined as young carers if advised by parents. A smaller proportion of pupils qualified for support through Surrey Young Carers.
31. HR asked **whether there was regular communication to parents to encourage them to identify if their children were young carers**; this category was highlighted regularly in newsletters and at the young carers' assemblies.
32. JT said that her summer term safeguarding monitoring visit would include speaking with pupils in KS1 and KS2 about feeling safe.

Governance information

33. The LGB noted the constitution summary on the agenda; no governors' terms of office were due to expire before the next meeting or the end of the academic year. There were vacancies for up to two additional foundation governors to be appointed, although the minimum requirement was already satisfied.
34. Governors considered the application form for a prospective Foundation governor who had been interviewed by JT and MD.
35. The meeting clarified that Foundation governors are appointed to safeguard and promote the ethos, values and Christian character of the school (its *distinctive Christian character*). Discussion noted that the School's values and vision were rooted in Christian teaching and underpinned everything that was done at St Martin's Schools.
36. It was noted that apart from the incumbent of the local parish church, who was an ex officio foundation governor, appointments were now made by the Trust Board, rather than the responsibility of the Diocese or the Parochial Church Council (PCC).
37. The LGB explored the requirement in the application form for applicants to confirm their *commitment to supporting the principles underlying the Trust Deed of the school in accordance with the doctrines and practices of the Church of England and (I) acknowledge the responsibility to uphold the faith and beliefs of the Church of England within the school*
38. JT highlighted the challenges of recruiting active church attendees as governors, as had been demonstrated from visits over the last 2 years to address the congregation of St Martin's, and thanked PR and NB for the interest they had shown on these occasions and for volunteering to support the Schools by becoming governors.
39. NP said that being willing to engage with other local churches would support this commitment.
40. JT said that governors were given opportunities to see evidence in school of the schools' Christian distinctiveness, for example during learning walks which included attendance at school assemblies, at their monitoring visits, where they could see Christian distinctiveness in classrooms, and through the regular LGB evaluation item in which governors discussed how the values had been demonstrated within the LGB meeting. An action had been suggested at previous meetings for NP to meet with candidates to explore the role of Foundation Governor more fully.
41. Turning to the application for a prospective governor, Members commented that the candidate's supporting statement and reasons for wanting to volunteer as a governor at St Martin's showed alignment with the School's ethos. JT felt that the diversity of the LGB would be strengthened by the addition of this candidate and that commitment to supporting young people's development and direction and to community impact supported the application.
42. Governors welcomed the candidate's statements about their commitment to help pupils develop and thrive and ambition for pupils to reach their potential. All governors confirmed their support for this candidate. The LGB would advise the Trust Board of their support for the candidate.
43. The LGB agreed to record through their meeting report to the Trust Board the challenges being faced in recruiting governors who were church-goers and the request to consider clarification of the box on the Foundation Governor application form about church attendance as 'if applicable'. **Action: TJ/JT**
44. TJ encouraged governors to continue to look for a prospective Foundation governor who was a church goer. **Action: All**

Reports from Governor monitoring and visits

45. The LGB received a report from PR on her monitoring of SEND and highlighted that although not many attendees, the SEND coffee morning had been positively received, lots of pupils with needs assessed as meeting the criteria for EHCPs and progress in addressing the backlog of applications for EHCPs, transition from Meerkat and managing communications with parents and carers. MD commented in respect to progressing EHCP applications, that the School was already working to support pupils with their needs.
46. HR asked **whether the impact of the meetings with parents of SEND pupils was being monitored.** PR said that there had been positive feedback, for example about the transition from Meerkat to The Burrow but was not aware of any formal monitoring in place.
47. In response to a further query, governors discussed potential reasons for the low turnout at the meeting for SEND parents. MD said that there had also been lower than hoped for attendance when the School had arranged a meeting for EAL parents. Developing a more embedded culture of attendance at meet and greet sessions was a target. Governors suggested that other reasons for the low attendance might include the challenge to working parents of attending meetings during the school day, that being a parent of a SEND pupil was challenging in itself and parents may therefore choose not to give up some of their free time by coming into school, that parents may be worried that they would be 'lectured at' when attending such meetings. PR suggested thought be given to seeking feedback and to other ways of engaging parents, including scheduling such meetings at different times, and after school.
48. JT asked HR about the reason for her question; HR said that she had raised the question in respect to the time that it had taken the SENDCo to arrange the meeting. JT commented that impact may have been greater than realised given that parents may be sharing the information and sharing the messages amongst each other.
49. The LGB recorded thanks to the SENDCO for arranging and PR for attending the meeting.

Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

50. The draft part 1 minutes of the previous meeting of the Local Governing Body held 9 March 2026 were approved as an accurate record for signature by the Chair. The update on actions arising from the previous minutes was noted.

Chair's Actions and other Urgent Business

51. JT reported that she had agreed as a Chair's Action the budget for roof repairs should the CIF bid not be successful, noting that the School had put aside 10% of the cost of the roof renovation required to secure the CIF bid. The Local Governing Body ratified this action.
52. JT had not had to take any further emergency or urgent decisions as Chair's Actions on behalf of the Governing Body since the last LGB meeting.

Policies

53. The Local Governing Body noted the approval by the Trust Board of the policies on Freedom of Information and Publication Scheme, Records Management, Complaints, Trips and Visits and Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Intervention Policy.
54. Governors asked **if staff had seen the poster to support the changes to the policy on use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Intervention;** the poster was part of the suite of training materials on the changed approach, which had been shared with governors in the sub-folder for this meeting, and acted as an aide memoire for the key points. No questions were raised on the policy.
55. Governors agreed the Relationships and Behaviour Policy and the St Martin's Health and Safety policy, with confirmation that it was consistent with the approved Trust policy (approved with no substantive changes) and that a table had been added to track review and update to the policy.
56. The LGB noted confirmation that the Relationships and Health Education Policy, which included the RSE policy, and curriculum had been updated to ensure compliant with DfE guidance effective from 1 September 2026 and the policy agreed by the Headteacher.
57. The Lettings procedure was due for review in June 2026 and as part of this consideration would be given to hiring out the school hall and field for parties. A party package would be put together.

Governor update

58. Governors noted the following updates to the training log; HR had completed NGA training on Ofsted, CWM had completed the NGA training on understanding the Expectations of Governors. JT would complete training on allergies.
59. Governors were asked to add any governor training they had undertaken to the log of governor training which can be accessed from the link provided ([Governors Training Log.xlsx](#)) **Action: All**
60. MD suggested that as part of their self-evaluation, Governors consider the attributes and descriptions that they would like other stakeholders to apply to them in their role as governors.. The following were agreed to be desirable attributes and descriptors:-
 - Visible
 - Approachable, supportive
 - Committed
 - Curious/open minded
 - Fair
 - Responsible
 - Adding value
 - Integrity in terms of resource monitoring and deployment
 - Knowledgeable
 - Child- centred
 - Challenging in the sense of raising appropriate questions to challenge and support
 - Supporting the Christian values
 - Trusted
 - Reliable – a safe pair of hands – to navigate the changes
 - Values-focused.
61. Governors agreed that MD could share these with other stakeholders and welcomed feedback from staff about what they would like to see in the governors.

Confidential matters

62. No part 2 confidential matters were raised at this meeting .

Meeting evaluation

63. Governors confirmed that their discussion at today's meeting had maintained focus on the St Martin's vision and highlighted in particular their robust discussion of the foundation governor and an application for this role.

Date of next meeting

64. The next meetings of the LGB were confirmed as Monday 22 June 2026. NB had previously given an apology for absence from this meeting on account of pre-existing commitments.
65. JT thanked governors for attending the meeting and noted that it was clear that governors felt safe and able to share their views in this forum.

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm.

Signed.....Chair Date.....