



ST MARGARET'S CE JUNIOR SCHOOL

DRAFT MINUTES OF ST MARGARET'S CE JUNIOR SCHOOL LGB MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 09:45

1. **Welcome and Apologies for Absence led by the Chair and a prayer by the Headteacher**

Present – Chrissy Hornby (Chair), Liz Malyon, Malcolm Neville, Pat Williams, Tony Woodhouse, Oliver Jackson, Clare Dixon, Ian Kennedy, Harry Holmes

In Attendance – Natalie Hobbs (MAST Governance), Ben Hulme (MAST CEO, online), Natasha Rodger (AHT)

Apologies – Davina O'Brien

2. **Approvals:**

Declarations of Interest (Item 3) – No new declarations of business interests were declared that were pertinent to the agenda.

Chair's Correspondence (Item 4) – None

Minutes of the Meeting (Item 6) held on 25 September 2025

Date of Next Meeting (Item 20) – 29 January 2026

3. **Challenge:** (in direct response to governor questioning)

Governing Body Membership (Item 5)	The Chair welcomed the newly appointed Parent Governor, Harry Holmes, to the Governing Body. Harry has governance experience with the Infants School already and the LGB are pleased to have him join the St Margaret's LGB as a parent governor. Harry introduced himself and the LGB members did the same.
Minutes of previous Meeting (Item 6)	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved in terms of content and accuracy.
Matters Arising from LGB Meeting 25 September	The actions from the previous meeting had been carried out.

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<p>2025 (Item 7)</p>	
<p>Headteacher Report (including SDP and SEF) (Item 8)</p>	<p>HT REPORT</p> <p>The governors had been provided with the HT Report in advance of the meeting and they had raised the following questions:</p> <p><u>HT Report</u></p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked, looking at the key successes, the pass figure for those who sat the Medway test is good. I could not check back, but think this is an improvement since last year? Does the School have to get involved with appeals?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded usually around the same number pass each year. In addition, we have run 11+ familiarisation club for the second year running now and that seems to be effective. Regarding appeals, Medway no longer has an appeals process – the Medway test has changed its format. We are consulted for the Kent test and can submit appeals for the children who we think could pass on appeal – these are children who are short on a couple of points but have passed on the aggregate score. The appeals process is usually more favourable for the vulnerable groups of children.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked, Two coffee mornings are listed. I have two dates for Inclusion ones for this term; Is this all correct?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded that there have been two for Inclusion, plus a Healthy Bladder one and a McMillan one.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked, the Rivermead Trust package of SALT & OT intervention is listed as a success. How have the visits been assessed at this stage? We no longer use the same Professionals as the Infants and it seems that the new providers are not keen to have governors sitting in, which is concerning.</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded that the reports we have received back are of a very high standard. The point regarding governors not being able to sit in anymore is more to do with parental consent which has not yet been obtained.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked, in view of the SIAMS next steps and our new knowledge of the date of the next Inspection, what records do we keep about pupils' increased involvement in the Acts of Worship?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded that we have the rotas that show when different groups of children are involved in Worship, however, we need to plan how we expand what records we hold.</p>

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	<p><i>Q – A Governor asked what effect will the Climate /Sustainability Policy have on school life?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded for Students: Active roles in environment labs, data collection, building gardens, for Teachers: Curriculum redesign, new extracurriculars, linking subjects to sustainability, for School leaders/governors: Developing climate action plans, tracking emissions, budgeting, for Support staff: Managing recycling, composting, repairs, and green procurement, and for the Wider community: Parent and local involvement through green committees and events.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked, looking at the Local Authority Comparison, our Un Authorised Absence of just 1.7% makes us 53rd. Are all schools now measuring in the same way? Congratulations to the Team on our Persistently Absent figure!</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded that this was the Compare my data website. All schools can access this to look at schools within the area and nationally.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked are the racist incidents related to the ones last term?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded they were not and a governor followed up by asking about the reporting of the incidents.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked if these CPD events that are listed have been undertaken by all staff?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded that the CPD events were all different and for different members of staff.</p> <p>A question was also raised about the phrase ‘change of circumstances’, used for the ‘staff absence’. As the HT could not place the context, the phrase will be removed from the Report.</p>
<p>SEND and PP (item 10)</p>	<p>The Inclusion Manager presented to the LGB and provided a handout about Key Priorities for Inclusion. He also answered questions from governors’ reports.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked if parents of children in the Nurture groups are visiting yet?</i></p> <p>A - The HT responded that the parents visited for parents evening and there was very positive feedback from them all.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor noted that the Nurture UK website highlights a Nurturing Kent programme. Is St Margaret’s in touch with schools using a similar approach? Could this be good support for our Nurture Lead?</i></p> <p>A – Our subscription came through today!</p>

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	<p><i>Q – A Governor asked, the Boxall Profiling tool is also mentioned and it is understood that there are plans to use this imminently to assess pupils’ social, emotional and mental development: would this initially be used across the whole school?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded we are currently in the process of profiling the current cohort. Once these profiles have been completed and analysed (The Governor with previous experience and staff have discussed working together on this), we will consider extending the approach across the school to identify children’s SEMH needs. However, it is important that we use the tool effectively on a smaller scale within the provision before rolling it out school-wide.</p> <p>The Tool would initially be used in the Unit, with those who access the provision. However, eventually it could be used for the whole school, but this is not a key priority.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked will the School Development Plan now be rewritten to incorporate the Inclusion priorities?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded that there will be a separate plan for Inclusion which will run alongside the SDP.</p>
<p>Safeguarding / Online Safety / Filtering & Monitoring (Item 11)</p>	<p><i>Q - A Governor asked do the very low numbers in the above data mean that concerns are not being reported by staff?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded all staff are fully trained and follow our procedures rigidly, they report concerns – even the smallest ones.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked given that the policy is out of date does this reflect that safeguarding is not important?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded No, just that the wrong policy was uploaded and that the website was then down so could not be amended.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked the data quoted on the Report shows very few referrals: Is this usual in a school of our size? Hopefully, staff are retaining their professional curiosity? Do they use the Low Level SG Concerns policy? (This is also overdue a review.)</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded that we can refer, for example, to The Early Help Team, but not all families will accept the support offered. Additionally, Social Services are now very quick to downscale families.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Audit will be discussed at a separate meeting, to be arranged.</p> <p>Just prior to the Meeting, GDPR was also discussed by the Chair and Governance Professional, having been raised by a concerned governor, with the decision made</p>

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	<p>that future HT reports would itemise this subject more thoroughly, outlining not only breaches but any received subject access requests.</p>
<p>MAST Update (Item 12)</p>	<p>The CEO provided an update following the recent Trust Board meetings. He advised that MAST have been providing interim leadership support to another church school in Medway. This had meant various members of MAST and Compass have been lending support in various capacities. The Due Diligence process for Compass schools joining MAST would be starting shortly and would be carried out by an independent company.</p> <p>A Governor asked what the focus of the Due Diligence Process would be? The CEO responded that it would be fairly general – covering Finance, HR, Estates, Procurement, Health & Safety etc.</p> <p>The Governor then asked if the process would be carried out separately? The CEO confirmed it would (MAST then each of the Compass schools individually).</p> <p>Across MAST and Compass we have 151 spaces for children. This equates to nearly £1m of funding. We have recently recruited 7 new governors across MAST to provide assistance in the other LGBs. In addition to this we have had 5 new websites built – whilst they are still in their infancy, these will be really good for the Trust.</p> <p>Other initiatives being discussed include changing the Published Admission Number at St Johns to make it a through Primary.</p>
<p>Governor Monitoring Visit Reports (Item 13)</p>	<p><u>Attendance Governor Report</u></p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked are we following our Equality/ Inclusion Policy with regard to the pupil who is currently not attending the School or the appropriate alternative provision.?</i></p> <p><i>A – The HT responded unfortunately, not, however we have spoken with the Local Authority inclusion team and the pupil’s father is sourcing a tutor, as he was the one who withdrew her from the place that we had procured for her. We continue to maintain regular contact for wellbeing checks. Once a tutor is found, the school will then fund this.</i></p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked if parents have decided to ‘Home School’, when should we remove the pupil from our roll?</i></p> <p><i>A – The HT responded we are following the policy for EHE – elective home education, where the Parents have the right to return the child. The process is</i></p>

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that the parents inform us in writing and the HT responds, allowing them time to reconsider before removing from roll.

Q – A Governor asked are we getting value for money from ASSA if they are now providing less support to the school? Are there alternatives?

A – The HT responded we are getting a lesser service but this is being looked into. However, we need the service.

Act of Worship Report:

Q – A Governor noted that the sang Lord’s Prayer, with its introduction as being a prayer ‘said by millions’, was joyful and up beat and could perhaps be sung when the Diocesan staff visit?

A – The HT responded that this was the first time that we had sung this as a prayer – we need to rehearse a little bit more before it becomes fluent.

Q – A Governor asked about the overall impact of Collective Worship?

A – The HT responded it is for the whole school to come together each day to reflect on Spiritual and Moral Development. It provides an opportunity for reflection on values, beliefs, and ethical principles. Offers a take away for the pupils to think about for the rest of the week. Encourages respect for different faiths and worldviews, fostering inclusivity and tolerance. Additionally, it creates a sense of belonging and shared identity among us all. The Educational benefits are that it enhances understanding of cultural and religious traditions and supports personal development by encouraging empathy, gratitude, and mindfulness. For some it offers moments of calm and reflection, which can reduce stress and can inspire hope and positivity, contributing to mental health.

Nurture Provision Report

Q – A Governor commented and asked, This is a new and exciting development providing support for some very vulnerable children. How will it be developed that it doesn’t lose its effectiveness?

A – The HT responded that the service is reviewed constantly , with activities changing depending on the children who currently attend. Their needs are regularly reviewed and changed once progress is seen.

Health & Safety Report

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Q – A Governor asked, the high fencing to the south of the playing field has failing supports. What are the long term plans here?

A – The HT responded that we are obtaining 3 quotes to have it replaced before the summer when it is used again.

Q – A Governor asked how are the outstanding H & S concerns prioritised for repairs? Do the risk assessments come into play?

A – The HT responded that all maintenance issues are raised and passed through finance and our estates team, who look at priorities and similar issues throughout the Trust.

Q – A Governor asked have the uneven paving slabs on the path to the rear of Year 4 been risk assessed?

A – The HT responded Lisa is on top of all H&S and writes all our RAs. She has completed her IOSH training.

Q – A Governor asked has the situation whereby the automatic fire door shutters needing frequent battery changes improved? (? Noise levels?)

*A – The HT responded Are we talking about the door boots? There are **different types of fire door retainers** (e.g., magnetic, acoustic, electromagnetic) Need to ensure that we have ones that work and don't need replacing too frequently – being mindful that we don't prop them open in any other alternative ways*

Q – A Governor asked looking at the cloakrooms outside the Library, and thinking about the longer term plans for more intervention space, why was the seating above the pipes removed at this stage? The pipes can be hot and are now, for the moment, exposed.

A – The HT responded September was a fresh start, with new décor and new set-up and this meant we wanted to have the most visual impact as possible.

Removing all unnecessary items was a way of doing this. In discussion with the CEO, we removed all that could be easily removed at this point. Exposed pipes are commonplace in other schools and not viewed as an issue.

Q – A Governor asked, thinking of the assessment of the risk, is the corridor area now more hazardous than before? Has it been added to the Risk Register now?

A – The HT responded that, as previously stated, Lisa completes all our RAs.

Curriculum Governor's Visit

Q – A Governor asked is the establishment of a Cornerstones User Group across MAST/Compass schools to share knowledge & experience appropriate?

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	<p>A – The HT responded no, not yet, as not all MAST and Compass schools use Cornerstones and there are changes due for the curriculum framework that may change the format of our curriculum.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked is there a straightforward ‘getting started’ guide to Cornerstones available via Maestro?</i></p> <p>A – The HT responded yes there are User Guides. The Help centre has user guides available. Online training is also accessible for new users.</p> <p><i>Q – A Governor asked does the school need contingency arrangements, to be followed in the event of a system crash? Is the recovery time known?</i></p> <p>A – The HT confirmed that we do and that a check with our online security manager noted that we have a Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plan that states Maestro should be restored within 24 hours. We regularly test our back ups and run practices tests to ensure this would be possible.</p>
<p>LGB Impact (Item 14)</p>	<p>We are pleased to have been joined by our new Parent Governor, who had expressed his interest to the HT.</p> <p>Our Ethos Governor expressed her appreciation and thanks for the flowers that she received .</p> <p>The LGB had raised several questions about how policies had been presented on the new website and asked about a possible schedule to ensure that they are reviewed, but were not aware that the web content was currently inaccessible. The questions were not therefore raised.</p>
<p>Training (Item 17)</p>	<p>The Training Governor explained the new Training OneDrive area she had set up to facilitate the sharing of completion certificates and the AHT offered to assist governors if needed. New training modules were discussed and it was agreed that the focus would be on governors completing any outstanding training (from the mandatory training) and the training governor would review two additional modules (AI and the Writing Framework) and report back to the governing body at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Chair reported that the Inclusion Manager had told her that training modules were available via the English Hub. The Training Governor will confirm this.</p>

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	<p>It was confirmed that Governors do not need to complete FGM awareness training. The induction and mandatory training modules would be shared with the new governor.</p>
<p>AOB (Item 19)</p>	<p><i>Q – A Governor asked could the LGB be made aware of what plans are in place in the event of a cyber incident?</i> A – The HT responded that she would speak to the CEO, DPO and BCTEC regarding sharing the Cyber response plan. <i>Q – A Governor asked we have talked briefly about the school’s BCP. Should we as governors actually have sight of this?</i> A – The HT responded that it could be shared. <i>Q – A Governor asked the Starfish Malawi information/photos on the new website look good. It gives the impression that the school is currently involved with the project. Is this still the case?</i> A – The HT responded that our partner school had made contact again and we have an AoW planned to reintroduce this. We can also make links with a school through the vicar at St Margaret’s, who came to AoW last week. <i>Q – A Governor asked for an update about ARBOR? The emails to governors did not work well and we are unclear as to whether we will have access to the new system? Will there be basic training available?</i> A – The Governance Professional confirmed that there was no need for Governors to access Arbor. The reason for the Governors being added to Arbor was to ensure they were on the SCR, and the emails were not needed. <i>Q – A Governor stated the Reviews for Arbor Education on Trustpilot are unusually poor. Consumers express widespread dissatisfaction with the app and website, citing issues such as unintuitive interfaces and poor design. They find the platforms difficult to navigate, with information presented in a jumbled manner. There are colourful metaphors and strong feelings in the reviews! Should we be concerned?</i> A - The HT responded that there have not been any concerns so far – the school are finding it easy to navigate – reporting, such as attendance reports etc are much easier and clearer and it has increased functionality which brings efficiencies in working for all. Staff have reported very positively.</p>

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4. Actions:

ACTIONS:	Item	Who
New Governor to be added to GIAS and Governor systems		NH
New Governor to be added to National College to complete training, and Training Governor to inform him about the required modules.		HT/Training Gov
BCP to be shared with Governors		HT
Meeting to be arranged for SG Gov to comment on LA SG in School.		HT
Training Governor to liaise with Inclusion Manager about English Hub training.		Training Gov
The Skills Audit had to be held over until the next meeting due to technical issues. The Governance Professional will ensure that it is added to the next Agenda		NH
The HT to liaise with the CEO and DPO about sharing the cyber response plan.		HT

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