

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEATHCOTE SECONDARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON MONDAY 14TH JULY 2025
AT 6:30PM
AT THE SCHOOL**

Present:	Lauren Marchant, Chair	Co-opted Governor
	Sonia Close, HT	Headteacher
	Leonie Alderman	Parent Governors
	Laura Alexander	
	Claire Feiner	
	Andre Henry	Staff Governor

Clerk to the Governors: Kathryn Protsiv

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
4.1	Agreed: Minutes 19 th May 2025, Chair to sign	-	-
4.2.13.2	Agreed: Recommended Terms of Reference for BAPD and QoE committees	-	-
4.2.7.1	Action: To send the Risk Register to the Chair (LM) for signing	School/ HT	Immediate
6.2	Action: To include the following post-meeting note at item 6.2 in the minutes of the meeting of the BAPD committee held on 16 th June 2025: The data reported in bullet points 1,2,3 and 7 has since been reviewed and corrected. Please refer to the Headteacher's report attached to the minutes of the FGB held on 14 th July 2025 for full attendance reporting and analysis.		
11	Policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Policy • Provision of First Aid Policy • Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy 	-	-
11.4	Action: Clerk to ask Governor Services for a model induction policy and email the NGA induction document to the Chair.	Clerk/ Governor Services	Next FGB

Chair's Initials:

13	Agreed: To set-up a broadcast only governor WhatsApp group.	Chair	Immediate
14.3	Agreed: Governors unanimously voted Sharon Morgan as the LA governor for Heathcote school, subject to completion of the referencing process.	-	-
14.4	Agreed: FGB meetings to be in-person only. A request for hybrid attendance, due to exceptional circumstances, may be sent to the Chair up to 48hours in advance of a meeting for the Chair's consideration.	-	-
	Date of next meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24th September 2025, time tbc, FGB 	All /GS	Immediate
	Agenda item: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School trips: Tour company updates 		

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Helen Douglas and Maria Slavovski.
- 1.3 No apologies for absence were received from James Bore and therefore these were not accepted.
- 1.4 The meeting was quorate with six members present.

2. NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

- 2.1 Andre Henry was re-elected as staff governor. The governing body thanked him for his nomination for re-election and welcomed him for a new term of office as a valued contributor to the work of the governing body.
- 2.2 The Chair requested an item for the end of the meeting, regarding governor communication.
- 2.3 The HT noted the need to discuss a meeting schedule for next academic year-agenda item 12.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 Pecuniary Interests – Governors confirmed receipt of the register of interests and were reminded this will need to be re-confirmed at the beginning of the next academic year.
- 3.2 There were no declarations made pertaining to any of the agenda items for this meeting. The HT briefly gave an example of a declaration in response to a governor's question.

4. MINUTES

- 4.1 Governors received the minutes of the governing body meeting held on 12th May 2025 and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting. The Chair to sign a copy of the minutes on GovernorHub
- 4.2: Matters arising:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Status Update
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Chair's Initials:

7.1	School to update Risk Register following the governor review	Complete, send to James Bore Chair of Governors in May. Action: To send the Risk Register to the Chair for signing
7.1	To circulate the outcome of the condition survey to governors	Complete, this will be re-sent if needed,
13.2	To Clarify which policies can be ratified at committee meetings	Complete, ToR were updated and recommended at committees. The FGB agreed the updated committee Terms of References

Andre Henry reported that since the last FGB the tour company has been contacted and an update will be provided to the governors at the next FGB. **Agenda Item**

5. CHAIR’S ACTION

None reported.

6. BEHAVIOUR AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

6.1 Governors discussed the reporting of data in this meeting by staff new to roles. Governors queried some attendance data reported in item 6.2. It was agreed the following post-meeting note would be added to these minutes.

Action: To include the following post-meeting note at item 6.2 in the meeting of the BAPD committee held on 16th June 2025: The data reported in bullet points 1,2,3 and 7 has since been reviewed and corrected. Please refer to the Headteacher’s report attached to the minutes of the FGB held on 14th July 2025 for full attendance reporting and analysis.

Governors discussed staff new to roles providing governor reports, summer term resignations and maternity leave in respect of managing SLT workload. Governors also discussed staff development and ensuring robust accountability in meetings.

7. QUALITY OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- 7.1 The Chair noted the importance of accurate minutes, stating the DHT had reviewed and amended the committee minutes.
- 7.2 Governors discussed the presentation of data, noting there is currently a drop off in the percentages of pupils on track to meet targets once they begin KS4. There was a detailed discussion regarding how targets are set and tracked from KS3 to KS4, as well as how KS2 data informs pupil targets.
- 7.3 There was a detailed discussion of this meeting. The HT detailed how the school is currently reviewing and developing KS3 assessment, a next step for the school following the successful development of robust assessment in KS4.
- 7.4 In response to a governor question the HT described in detail how grades are reported in Year 10. Pupil feedback was a preference for the opportunity to sit whole paper mocks from the outset of KS4. Previously the school used part-papers, but this resulted in variability between subjects as there was a level of teacher subjectivity

Chair’s Initials:

- introduced. Also, pupils fed back that they felt sitting whole papers better prepared them with an understanding of the real exams and time pressures they would work to.
- 7.5 In response to a question the HT explained how scaled scores are used to inform grades in Year 10, the scores are designed to take account of content coverage and skills. Previously the school has trialled tracked sub-level progress, as opposed to a scaled score that is in line with expected outcomes.
A parent governor queried if this could be confusing, that parents would expect grade progress over KS4 on reports.
- 7.6 In response to a question about tracking interventions, particularly for children on track but with lower DfE target grades, the HT gave an example of how Sparks Reader is used. Children scoring a reading age below a certain age are given targeted intervention, e.g. Toe-by-toe or work with the Primary teachers.
- 7.7 There was a discussion for how KS3 assessment is being developed to better capture HAP on track for grades 7/8/9.
- 7.8 There was a discussion regarding Primary School data, a governor suggested the use of SATs papers in Year 7 to support baselining pupils. How SATs targets feed into non-core subject targets, e.g. for Computer Science, was discussed, and the difficulty in making comparisons to Maths and English data. CATS were also discussed as part of the holistic look at a child, the school reviews Year 7 data mid-year to identify gaps.
- 7.9 The HT noted the move away from accelerated reader, to Sparks, which is providing stronger data for HAPs.
- 7.10 The new librarian has started and is doing well in the role.
- 7.11 A governor noted she has arranged a link visit for the day after this meeting.
- 7.12 There was a discussion regarding when students begin GCSE courses. OFSTED have found in previous inspection reports in other schools that beginning GCSE courses at the start of Year 9 narrows the curriculum for students.
The HT reported a model in some schools where pupils pick an arts options in Year 9, which runs through Year 9 to Year 10. This is being considered, along with compulsory RE. At the moment RE is offered as a half course, with after school lessons for students doing the full GCSE.
- 7.13 The Safeguarding audit was reported, with actions noted. The Chair noted a new Safeguarding Link governor will need to be elected at the September FGB.
- 7.14 George Ferrar, DHT, is still focusing on the Anti-Racist Award which is on track to be achieved in the Summer Term.

8. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

- 8.1 The HT noted the length of the attached report, which included both information for this FGB and committees.
- 8.2 The HT highlighted from the report:
- 8.3 Finance updates:
- The Draft budget for 2025-26 has been updated to take account of staffing and other changes in preparation for Quarter 1 budget monitoring return, attached separately. The projected deficit has reduced further as funding for the OAK has been secured for another year, this is now £256k- down from £371,038 and substantially less than the original figure of £500k discussed.
 - TTO and Nopal have all been agreed and signed off by the school. Communications have gone out to staff with first payments being made in July payroll. Liability for payments is being shared with LBWF 50/50. This has been a long process.
 - Match Funding bid approved by LBWF for £20,000 for condition survey works.

- Kier has offered £14k in penalties back, but the school is trying to secure more. The science building was shut again after flooding from rain water.

Q: FOR How long is Kier still the school's contractor?

A: 13 more years.

- 8.4 The annual Health and Safety Audit was positive.
- 8.5 The school is asking LBWF to better maintain bordering land. Thames Water have also been contacted again, with issues escalated to the LA regarding the back gate flooding.
- 8.6 The school is now server-less with cloud based storage, removing the risk of servers going down and access to systems being lost.
- 8.7 Following the announcement end of the LBWF catering service in April 2026 the school is tendering for a new provider along with 3 other secondary schools. This is another significant piece of work quite soon after the end of the end of Strictly's Payroll services, which were recently replaced. So far, the new payroll provider is demonstrating a better service.
- 8.8 Recruitment: There were some late resignations and five staff will be on maternity leave in September. The HT noted subject areas impacted in response to a question, only three posts still require recruitment.
- 8.9 There was a positive trend in Year 13 attainment, with A+ attainment targets predicted to be exceeded.
- 8.10 Year 11 outcomes are predicted to be positive in relation to the cohort's contextual needs. Maths predictions were discussed, last year the predictions were less exact than for other subjects.
- 8.11 The bulge year in Year 8 was discussed, the HT reassured governors the additional class did not impact the curriculum offer for students. Reasons for accepting the bulge class were discussed, as well as falling numbers in primary schools. Heathcote does have a large waiting list in Year 7; pupil numbers are not yet having an impact at Year 7.

9. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The HT reported the attached document with summary priorities, with RAG rated action outcomes and detailed comments shared with governors from the report.

SIP Areas 2025-26:

- 9.1 Our Staff: Leadership Development and CPD
- 9.2 Our Curriculums: Subject Content and Delivery
- 9.3 Our Finances: Budget Management and resources
- 9.4 Our Outcomes: Performance metrics and achievement
- 9.5 Our Classrooms: Learning environment and practice
- 9.6 Our Conduct: Behaviour and school culture

A governor asked about the split break and lunch and reasons for this were discussed, notably getting 1000 children to use the canteen and toilets.

Q: Who writes grants?

A: The HT, with Julie. HT workload was discussed and sustainability.

The HT reported the successful visit with Primary Headteachers on the Schol Readiness day, next year this has been booked again.

10. OAK QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

The report was received with no significant concerns noted.

The school is challenging the findings for DBS checks. Whilst three year checks are best practice five year re-checks are within LBWF policy, and therefore are compliant. A governor expressed support for this approach, accepting the financial cost of DBS checks and also noting DBS re-checks are only one part of the wider safeguarding work of the school in ensuring students are safe. They are only a snapshot on a particular day.

In response to a question the HT stated the OAK is designed for children without EHCPs, it is commissioned for children who may be at the early stage of CAMHS or awaiting assessments.

Q: After the approval of funding for a further academic year, what is likely to happen next year?

A: It is unknown. Key staff left the OAK this year due to the uncertainty of their roles, as another year of funding has only been recently granted. This is why the role of therapeutic lead is being recruited. The school is awaiting a LBWF longer term AP plan based on the SEND sufficiency plan. For example, the LA could ask to close the OAK, and open a SEND unit in response to this review. The HT is aware of the LA offering capital start up grants for new units, for schools able to volunteer spaces to convert. The difficulty in accepting this would be recruiting specialists. This led to a discussion about the SRP for deaf students, no Teacher of the Deaf has been recruited and the school has asked the LA if this breaches the SLA. No SLA has been provided. There have been no external quality assurance visits for the SRP to provide guidance and support the internal quality assurance processes.

A Governor shared their experience of receiving a maths report of an excellent quality. The report clearly identified learning gaps and demonstrated knowledge of the child. The HT shared how using Spark Maths in future will further improve reporting, along with new AI software. Families will receive gaps for work at home consistently.

11. SCHOOL POLICIES

- 11.1 Health and Safety Policy: governors confirmed management were provided with both key pieces of legislation referenced through the audit, planned the week after this meeting. Kier's and the school's duties remain unchanged. **Ratified**
- 11.2 Provision of First Aid Policy: The expenditure was explained as relating to maintaining three buildings with their own medical rooms. The HT gave examples of how complex medical needs of students are being managed. Staff on each corridor have Epi-pen training. Changes to the policy were highlighted on the document. **Ratified**
- 11.3 Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy: the HT highlighted changes to terminology for medical health care plans. Engaging parents and ensuring due diligence from home was discussed. **Ratified**
- 11.4 New Governor Induction Policy:

Q: Would the addition of a flow chart be useful?

A: Governors agreed the policy was clear and useful, but steps may be useful. Governors requested the Clerk ask Governor Services for a model policy. After a discussion of school needs the clerk shared an NGA model document with a 5 step governor induction document, that may meet needs shared. The Clerk also signposted the Governor Accreditation Programme in response to feedback about an experience as a new governor.

It was agreed to bring this Policy back to governors in September for further review and consideration of a flow chart, or stepped, appendix.

Action: Clerk to ask Governor Services for a model induction policy and email the NGA induction document along with the minutes.

12. SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES

Next Meeting: FGB 24th September 2025

Agreed: To set up a poll for the time and date of 2025/26 governor meetings.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Communication was discussed, and if there was a need for an additional way of notifying governors of last minute information, changes or updates-e.g. that a GDC availability poll had been posted on GovernorHub.

After a discussion a broadcast only WhatsApp channel was agreed, replies when required can be via email. The Chair expressly informed the staff governors they were not obliged to join, and noted doing so would require sharing personal numbers.

Agreed: To set-up a broadcast only governor WhatsApp group.

14. GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP

14.1 The Clerk confirmed three co-opted and one LA governor vacancy.

14.2 A potential co-opted governor has expressed interest.

14.3 A nomination for an LA governor was not completed before this meeting, Governor Services have informed the Chair they are awaiting the completion of references to finalise this. The prospective governor recently observed a meeting. The skills set of this prospective governor were shared and governors expressed a keenness to finalise the appointment.

Agreed: Governors unanimously voted Sharon Morgan as the LA governor for Heathcote school, subject to completion of the referencing process.

14.4 Governors discussed the effectiveness and resourcing of hybrid meetings. It was agreed that there was a difficulty in supporting hybrid meetings in the constraints of the school setting.

Agreed: FGB meetings to be in-person only. A request for hybrid attendance, due to exceptional circumstances, may be sent to the Chair up to 48hours in advance for the Chair's consideration.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm