Part I Minutes of the Oswald Road Primary School's FGB Meeting held on Monday 23rd June 2025 at 6.15pm at School

Present

Peter Martin (PM)	Co-opted Governor (Chair of Governors)
Stephen Bradley (SB) *	Co-opted Governor
Martha Courtauld (MC) **	Co-opted Governor
James Flanagan (JF)	Co-opted Governor
Stephen Haddock (SH)	LA Governor
Ernst ter Horst (EtH) **	Co-opted Governor
Deborah Howard (DH)	Headteacher (ex-officio)
Nic McAllister (NM) *	Parent Governor
Helen Savage (HS)	Staff Governor
Victoria Thompson (VT)	Co-opted Governor
Jennie Wiggins (JW)	Co-opted Governor
Victoria Wilshaw (VW) ***	Parent Governor

In Attendance

Joe Stevenson (JS)	Associate Member
Kim Spooner	Clerk

* *present from part of agenda item 3b onwards*
** *present from part of agenda item 4 onwards*
*** *present until part of agenda item 5bii*

The meeting met its quorum (8/6) and commenced at 6.23pm.

1. Welcome/Apologies
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. MC had given advance notice of late arrival to the meeting. VW gave advance notice of early departure from the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest/s

Resolved: There were none.

3. Governing Body Membership
a) Membership

- Peter Martin's term of office ends 27 June 2025.
  The Chair expressed willingness to continue for a further term of four years. ***He encouraged governors to consider volunteering for the position of Chair.***

  Resolved: That Peter Martin was re-appointed as a Co-opted Governor for a four-year term commencing 28 June 2025.

- Governors were reminded that MC will leave the governing body in October 2025.

The Chair thanked all governors for their contributions this year, noting that the governing body had been at full complement throughout 2024-25.

b) Governor Visits
The Chair updated the visits record in the meeting to reflect:

- **JF**'s safeguarding link governor visit in June 2025. There were emerging concerns about serious national safeguarding matters now presenting in primary schools, such as gang involvement, for which there has not historically been sufficient training for primary school Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).

[NM joined the meeting.]

Q. Does the DSL feel supported?

A. Yes, despite the increase in complex cases and staffing challenges.

- **PM** observed KS2 SATs observation in June 2025.
- **PM** and the Headteacher met with Unity Arts and MCC's Youth Team Worker to discuss the Field of Os planning in March 2025.
- **PM** and the Headteacher met with MP Jeff Smith re: the Field of Os planning.

[SB joined the meeting.]

c) Governor Training
Governors were reminded to record any relevant training on the 'Governor training record data' googlesheet.

Recent safeguarding and finance training was discussed and logged.

d) Chair's Action *(if any)*
There was none.

4. Minutes of the meeting held 31 March 2025
Two typographical amendments were noted:

- page 2 and page 10 actions table, action 5a – 'ER' should be 'EL'
- page 10 actions table, action 8i – 'the DW' should be 'DW'

ACTION: Clerk to amend minutes, as noted.

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 March 2025 were formally approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting, subject to the noted amendments.

[EtH and MC joined the meeting.]
5. Actions/Matters Arising
a) Actions
Previous actions were noted as complete or in progress apart from:
A number of governors were yet to complete their declarations, skills audit and Level 1 safeguarding training. Resource committee members were reminded to complete the skills matrix and complete additional finance training. **REVISED ACTION: Governors/Resource Committee members**

5a **James Flanagan** to send safeguarding training certificate to EL (or AC) **– Pending**

15b **Peter Martin** to invite MCC councillor to next FGB meeting – **Superseded**. The Chair and the Headteacher had met with the local MP and would be seeing him again later this week *(discussed further under agenda item 5b).* Invitation to a future FGB meeting would be considered next year. ***The Chair acknowledged that the school had missed its historic connection with MCC through the previous LA governor who was a MCC Councillor.***

Doc ID: 30a411c4747dcb29bae729c0e954e2f42fdd921a

In relation to completed action *8i* ***Deborah Howard*** *to clarify with DW whether the volunteer process is different for a high school student compared to that for other volunteers*, the Headteacher confirmed that the volunteer induction process involves the volunteer being asked to sign a google form to confirm that they have read and understood relevant documents and completed safeguarding training; induction for high school students involves the student reading the usual visitors' safeguarding sheet upon sign-in on their first day but there is no other induction as they are minors and therefore not regulated or ever left unattended with the children. ***Governors confirmed they were satisfied with the processes.***

Updates from completed actions relating to academisation were covered under agenda item 5b.

b) Matters Arising

Academisation

Governors re-visited the strategic discussion around potential academisation. It was acknowledged that while the immediate risk of forced academisation had reduced, the school should continue to explore and remain informed about viable options.

Initial exploration:

- Contact had been made with local trusts, including the Single Academy Trust (SAT), Burnage High School. General conversations around Multi Academy Trusts, had been held with the CEO of the CLIC Trust. Informal discussions allowed reflection on potential alignment of values and strategic fit and initial indications were positive.

- Discussions had taken place with Oswald Road's Union Leads and then with wider staff, to introduce the topic. No concerns were raised and the school has already benefitted from discussions with Burnage High School to understand Year 7 expectations for writing and is also working with their EAL Lead. ***Governors agreed that the Headteacher should continue engagement for the benefit of the school.***

Advice from an experienced professional:

- ***A governor relayed insights from a senior education professional with MAT experience.*** This included:
    - caution against joining large, established MATs that may impose rigid business models and diminish local governance; joining a MAT with a number of failing schools would likely be to Oswald Road's disadvantage in terms of resource-sharing
    - encouragement to consider forming a new Trust or joining a smaller, like-minded MAT
    - advice to secure a clear governance structure and terms of reference to retain influence over key decisions and preserve the school's existing relationship with the LA, as desired.

Concerns with certain Trusts:

- Governors noted that some Trusts being considered were secondary- or special school-focused, which may not be ideal for a primary school. The Headteacher shared her preference, should there be a move to academisation, for a balanced mix of primary, secondary and special schools, to benefit from a wealth of experience.

The Chair undertook to make contact with the Headteacher of Burnage High School in the first instance and would contact the CEO of the CLIC Trust thereafter. **ACTION: Chair.**

i) School Uniform

As discussed at the last FGB meeting, several prospective parents had expressed concerns or indicated

Doc ID: 30a411c4747dcb29bae729c0e954e2f42fdd921a

that the lack of uniform was a factor in their decision-making. A general perception persists that the lack of uniform may affect admissions and governors noted the anonymised feedback from one parent (paper 5bi). The Headteacher explained that uniform was not cited as influencing factor in the feedback elicited from parents who had toured Reception and not put the school as their first choice.

As agreed at the last meeting, a generic question about uniform would be included in the whole school survey to gather the views of current parents. ***A governor suggested that a simple leaflet is produced, for parents to read after a tour, including the results of the survey and explaining the rationale for the school's policy.*** The Headteacher referred to EEF evidence that suggests that school uniform has no impact on academic outcomes. ***A governor agreed, highlighting research from the USA that suggests that while a uniform may benefit cohesion/common purpose, the absence of uniform has not been found to negatively impact on academic achievement or behaviour. They emphasised that pupils wearing their own clothes contributes positively to activity, self-expression, creativity and independence. The governor suggested that the leaflet references Oswald Road as a 'Rights Respecting School'.***

Q. Have we had any feedback from parents stating that the lack of uniform has been a positive factor in their decision?
A. No, but pupils are often keen to talk about it (eg: to Ofsted inspectors). ***A governor suggested that pupil voice is included in the leaflet/on the school website along with photos of pupils both in their standard dress and wearing uniform to demonstrate that it is not an issue for the pupils.***

A governor added that the school's stance is potentially a unique selling point and encouraged the school to not be apologetic.

The Headteacher noted the importance of achieving the right balance in order to not deter potential admissions, particularly given the pressure to maintain pupil numbers.

A governor commented that inclusive approaches such as the absence of compulsory uniform were often beneficial for neuro-diverse children and those with sensory needs. The Headteacher agreed that this could be incorporated alongside promotion of the school's strong reputation for SEND provision.

ii) Field of Os update (planning consultation)
This agenda item was deemed confidential and would be recorded in the Part II confidential section of the minutes.
[VW left the meeting.]

6. Committee Reports / discussion points arising from Committee meetings
a) Resources Committee – 09 June 2025
The key items discussed in the meeting were the balanced budget for 2025-26 and the 3-year budget which has some risks in the outer years around unfunded cost increases. The Chair highlighted that the last financial year had closed with a surplus of around £70k, increasing the school's overall reserves.

b) Resources Committee – 24 March 2025
Governors received the minutes further to the verbal update provided at the previous FGB meeting.

c) Teaching & Learning Committee – 28 April 2025
Governors noted the Committee meeting minutes. The main focus of the meeting was an overview of academisation presented by MC which initiated conversation that was deemed to be very helpful.

Doc ID: 30a411c4747dcb29bae729c0e954e2f42fdd921a

The meeting was not quorate and therefore all decisions were deferred to the next meeting in July.

7. 2025-26 Budget and 3-year forecast for approval
The '3 Year Budget 25-27' was reviewed and discussed by the Resources Committee. Governors received the same paper (7).

The following points were highlighted in discussion:

- declining pupil numbers impacting income
- the positive income stream from Wraparound. ***The Chair congratulated the school on the achievement. The Chair of the Resources Committee added that this highlights the situation the school would be in without this additional income.***
- the school's percentage spend on staffing is above the recommended 75% benchmark
  Q. Do we have any staff due to retire?
  A. No. The Headteacher assured that all staff, including those at the top of their payscale, continue to commit wholeheartedly to the school.
- the school has to submit a balanced budget to the LA, despite working with many unknowns, the biggest one being national pay awards. Governors were reminded that the budget cannot include assumed funding to cover the known increases.
- there is a plan to balance the budget in Year 3, if required.

Resolved: That the 2025-26 budget, as recommended by Resources Committee, was ratified.
Resolved: That the 3-year forecast, as recommended by Resources Committee, was ratified.

8. Policies/Procedures for approval
Governors had added comments/tracked changes to the circulated policies in advance of the meeting.
a) Accessibility Plan (for 2-year old provision)
The Headteacher explained that the Accessibility Plan works in conjunction with the Accessibility Audit and the Accessibility Policy.
Q. What is the timescale for launching the provision?
A. The aim is to open it in a year's time.

A governor asked if a draft drawing of the re-development of the old caretaker's house/community hub and the 2-year old provision was available. The Headteacher undertook to ask the School Business Manager to circulate it to governors. **ACTION: Headteacher.**

Q. Will it generate income?
A. It should do.

RESOLVED: That the Accessibility Plan was AGREED.

b) Resolution of Concerns & Complaints Policy

RESOLVED: That the Resolution of Concerns & Complaints Policy was AGREED.

c) Business Continuity Plan

RESOLVED: That the Business Continuity Plan was AGREED.

Doc ID: 30a411c4747dcb29bae729c0e954e2f42fdd921a

The Chair shared that the plan had been stress-tested in a real-life situation and proved to be effective.

d) Staff Code of Conduct 2025-26

RESOLVED: That the Staff Code of Conduct was AGREED.

9. Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher drew attention to the following points from her written report (circulated in advance of the meeting as paper 9):

Demographics

- The roll is currently 658 including part-time Nursery and some Rising 3s.
- Year 6 is near capacity and Reception will be a low Year group.
- The decision has been made to open Nursery up to more children (for which the school has sufficient staffing and space) because Nursery numbers translate to Reception admissions.
- Investment has been agreed for a re-design of the outside area at the front of Reception which will be impactful for school tours.
- Year 3 has exceeded 'capacity'. The Headteacher confirmed that the LA permits 10% over numbers in Key Stage 2, at the school's discretion.

Staffing

- Staffing changes for 2025-26 were explained.
- An experienced teacher has been reassigned to Year 1 to strengthen provision. The transition from Early Years to Year 1 was found to be less effective this year which may have been compounded by all three Year 1 classes having job shares.

Attendance

- Overall attendance is 95.2%.
- As previously noted, there is a pattern of absence either side of a holiday period and fines do not have any impact.
  Q. If fines did not exist, do you think the absence rate would be higher?
  A. No, but the new system of graduated fines might make a difference.
  Q. Is it a national issue?
  A. Yes. The Headteacher highlighted the additional work caused to the school when families are dishonest about the absence; staff have to conduct home visits and the matter becomes a welfare issue when the child is not at home.
  Q. Does absence affect the learning of others in the class?
  A. *(answered by the staff governor)* It is dependent on the time of year; absence at the end of Term tends not to be as impactful as in the middle of the year or at the beginning.
  Q. Is there anything that can be done about that?
  A. I do not think any more could be done.
- FSM attendance is lower than the national average and so remains a focus.
- An analysis of Pupil Premium attendance was included within the report.
- Anonymised context was provided for the Pupil Premium children in Years 2, 3 and 5 who have attendance below 95%. ***The Chair noted that it was helpful to see the figures broken down and for governors to be assured of the proactive steps the school is taking for each case.*** Identified themes were: involvement with other services; siblings; extended unauthorised holidays.
- Persistent Absence (PA) is lower than the national average.
- There is an increasing trend of Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA), also noted as an issue across the Cluster. ***A governor stated that it is a national picture for primary and secondary schools.*** The school is implementing a tiered model of support, with a focus on

Doc ID: 30a411c4747dcb29bae729c0e954e2f42fdd921a

providing early intervention through a 'universal Tier 1' offer. As pupils progress to higher levels of need (up to Tier 3), support becomes more intensive but is constrained by staffing capacity. The Headteacher explained that the level of provision is not unlimited and the school is working to deliver the best possible support within available resources.

- Two part-time timetables were explained.

Stakeholder views

- A range of positive stakeholder comments were noted, including compliments for the Headteacher and staff.
- Concerns had been raised in relation to:
  - a child being hurt
  - RSE lessons
  - lunchtime
  - alleged bullying.
- Two formal complaints (both linked to physical assaults in school) seem to have been resolved at the informal stage.

Safeguarding

- This discussion was recorded in the Part II confidential section of the minutes.

Behaviour

- The Headteacher referred to the data in her report and outlined the work being undertaken to improve behaviour and tackle identified themes, including actions around racial language; internet safety lessons delivered by a specialist; a review of next year's staffing; increasing the number of reflections in KS1 before the Behaviour Lead gets involved; and a more consistent approach to serious incidents.
- There were 84 reflections for 47 children in the Spring Term.
- There were two high level reports (for one child) in the Spring Term and one suspension.
- There has been a significant increase in high level and physical behaviour. This was a new dynamic for the school and something to navigate with parents. Measures in place include safety plans; 1:1 staffing for two particular children; SLT on a playground rota; and use of the Headteacher's room to diffuse some Year 6 pupils.
- There has been a steady stream of incidents of offensive comments made online by pupils and instances of parents making disparaging remarks about pupils and not embodying the school's inclusive values in WhatsApp groups. ***A governor pointed out that many parents use social media positively and that parent groups are useful for parents to help each other, which is also beneficial to the school.***
- ***A governor asked if a governor visit would help support the behaviour issues.*** The Headteacher did not think it was necessary and explained that as well as reviewing the behaviour policy, there are plans to enhance the digital literacy curriculum next year. ***Governors were supportive of the approach.***

Behaviour, Values & Vision

Governors were referred to paper 9a and the process the school has taken this year. The Headteacher summarised that it had been an interesting and enjoyable piece of work.

- All work was based on early consensus on respect and responsibilities.
- There is now a vision for each area of the school in terms of what behaviour is expected to be like, agreed in consultation with the Rights Respecting Ambassadors.
- Final sessions will focus on sanction and reward and deployment in the classroom.

A governor suggested that the school links with one of the Trusts it is engaging with, to see what behaviour approach/policy they use.

Flexi-schooling

Doc ID: 30a411c4747dcb29bae729c0e954e2f42fdd921a

The Headteacher explained the concept of 'flexi-schooling' (a hybrid educational arrangement whereby a child is on roll at the school but attends part-time and receives the remainder of their education at home or in another setting) and suggested that it might be worth considering in light of falling pupil numbers, a shift in the needs and context of the pupil population and school's skill-set. The Headteacher acknowledged the complexities and sensitivities involved, particularly for teachers, but noted that the school has strong pastoral provision and expertise in settling children in transition. Initial discussions have taken place with other schools and legal advisors, and it was agreed that further information is required to enable a well-informed decision. ***The staff governor agreed that the school has real skill in supporting children with a different context and welcomed investigation into how other schools have managed flexi-schooling.*** The Headteacher would bring further information to governors for consideration.

Assessment Process: Governors were referred to the process (paper 9b) taken to address the main Ofsted inspection development point.

10. School Improvement Plan (SIP)
An update on school improvement work was included on page 9 of the Headteacher's Report and within the updated SIP (paper 10). The Headteacher summarised that progress was on-track.

Writing: the scheme is fully implemented and will now benefit from the whole school assessment work with an initial focus of the baseline assessment. Spelling (ELS) has been implemented and will be rolled out to older Year groups. Cross-curricular writing is still an area to consider. Moderation opportunities have continued across the year.

Wraparound: In-house wraparound care has been successfully implemented and is going well. Development of three tiers has also been successful and used within tours of prospective parents. The offer to all EYFS prospective parents has been really good. The introduction of School of Play for Nursery Wraparound next year will further develop capacity (plus holiday care). ***A governor asked that their appreciation is passed on to the 'phenomenal' team at Owl Club.***

Questions were invited from governors.
There were none.

11. PE & Sports Premium
The Headteacher confirmed that the school would publish a report detailing how the funding has been spent by the required deadline (31 July 2025).

12. Music Development Plan
Governors noted the requirement for the school to update the summary published last year before the start of the 2025-26 academic year. **ACTION: Headteacher** to confirm this is in-hand.

13. Equality Objectives *(Standing Item)*
There were no updates.

14. Reflection on the 2024-25 academic year & looking forward to the 2025-26 academic year
Governors reflected on a challenging but productive year. Staff had demonstrated resilience and had worked hard to pursue the objectives in the SIP. There would be a continued commitment to improvement next year. ***The Chair acknowledged the work of governors and thanked them for engaging and providing thought and support in many areas.***

15. AOB

Doc ID: 30a411c4747dcb29bae729c0e954e2f42fdd921a

a) Headteacher's mid-term review

The Chair asked if the Headteacher wanted a mid-term review. The Headteacher was grateful for the offer but confirmed that she was on-track and did not feel that an additional check-in before the formal review was necessary.

b) 2025 Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) results

The Headteacher shared the results received on 23 June:

- Oswald Road is above national (compared to 2024 data):
  - 40% of Oswald Road pupils achieved 25/25 (the national average last year was 34%)
  - the average score was 22.2 (the national average last year was 20.6).
- The average score for the pupils at the start of the year was 17, so they had made remarkable progress. The Headteacher reminded governors of the importance of timestables for pupils to be able to access other areas of Maths.

Governors congratulated the school. A governor suggested that the results were promoted on the school website, noting that academic achievements were valued by prospective parents.

16. Next meeting dates:

- **TBC for 2025-26.** The schedule would follow a similar pattern to this year. **ACTIONS: Clerk** to send draft schedule to the Chair, Headteacher and School Business Manager / to send the final schedule to all governors.
- T&L 14 July 2025 at 5.15pm **online**.

17. Confidential Matters

Confidential matters from agenda item 5bii and item 9 was recorded in the Part II confidential section of the minutes.

The meeting concluded at 9.30pm.

ACTIONS FROM FGB MEETING 23.06.25

Agenda Item	Who	What	When
4	Clerk	to amend 31 March 2025 FGB minutes as noted	ASAP
5a *c/f*	Governors Resource committee members	to complete declarations, skills audit and Level 1 safeguarding training to complete the skills matrix and additional finance training	End of Term
5a *c/f*	James Flanagan	to send safeguarding training certificate to EL or AC	ASAP
5b	Peter Martin	to contact the Headteacher of Burnage High School and the CEO of CLIC	ASAP
8a	Deborah Howard	to ask Craig Taylor to circulate the draft drawings of the old caretaker's house/community hub and 2-year old provision to governors	ASAP
12	Deborah Howard	to ensure the Music Development Plan summary is updated before the start of the 2025-26 academic year	ASAP
16	Clerk	to send draft meeting schedule for 2025-26 to the Chair, Headteacher and School Business to send the final meeting schedule for 2025-26 to all governors	ASAP ASAP

Peter Martin 19 / 12 / 2025

Doc ID: 30a411c4747dcb29bae729c0e954e2f42fdd921a

Title	For signature - FGB Meeting Part I Minutes - 23.06.25
File name	FINAL_Part_I_Minu...ting_23.06.25.pdf
Document ID	30a411c4747dcb29bae729c0e954e2f42fdd921a
Audit trail date format	DD / MM / YYYY
Status	Signed

Document history

SENT	**17 / 12 / 2025** 11:59:22 UTC	Sent for signature to Peter Martin (pm.governor@oswaldroad.manchester.sch.uk) from kimspooner@boardclerk.co.uk IP: 31.49.0.49
VIEWED	**19 / 12 / 2025** 12:30:46 UTC	Viewed by Peter Martin (pm.governor@oswaldroad.manchester.sch.uk) IP: 130.88.208.70
SIGNED	**19 / 12 / 2025** 12:30:57 UTC	Signed by Peter Martin (pm.governor@oswaldroad.manchester.sch.uk) IP: 130.88.208.70
COMPLETED	**19 / 12 / 2025** 12:30:57 UTC	The document has been completed.