



Aston Rowant C+E Primary School
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Headteacher: Mrs Helen France

Meeting of the Full Governing Body of Aston Rowant CE Primary School
Wednesday 10th September 2025 at 18.30

In attendance:

- Jacky Barr (JB) Foundation Governor *ex officio*
- Zoe Batt (ZB) LA Governor
- Helen France (HF) Headteacher *ex officio*
- Caroline Isabelle (CI) Foundation Governor
- Matt Parker (MP) Foundation Governor
- Tom Sowerby (TS) Foundation Governor (Chair)
- Abi Tindall (AT) Parent Governor
- Gill Tyler, (GT) Foundation Governor
- Ben Wilson (BW) Parent Governor

Apologies:

- Alexi Olsen (AO) Staff Governor

		Action
1.	Welcome and Prayer TS welcomed everyone and JB opened the meeting with prayer. The meeting was quorate.	
2.	Apologies for absence / declarations of interest Apologies from AO were accepted. No declarations of interest noted in relation to items on the agenda. All but three governors have confirmed their declarations for 2025-26 on Gov Hub. When those three have confirmed, the clerk will be able to produce a summary for the school website.	HF, CI, AO
3. 3.1 3.2	Minutes of meetings held on 16 July 2025 and matters arising Approval (TS) – Approved and signed Matters arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4.3 Draft Monitoring Plan and schedule (TS) – this had been done and uploaded to the meeting folder. ● 4.3 Arrange monitoring visits with relevant staff (all governors) – ongoing 	All

GRATITUDE RESILIENCE OUTREACH WONDER TRUST HARMONY

'Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him.' Colossians 2:7

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4.3 Review terms of reference (committee chairs) – ongoing. Need to be updated: Finance and Resources, Health and Safety, Pay. ● 4.31 Book mandatory training for September 2025 (all governors) – The chair confirmed that any governor who had not attended the basic Safeguarding course (level 2) in the last three years must book on the course which they will find on GovernorHub. In case of difficulty please contact the chair. ● 4.4 Circulate PE/Sports Premium for governor approval (HF) – done note: I can't find the document on GovernorHub. Was it emailed to governors? ● 5.1 Re-advertise HLTA role (HF) – candidates had been interviewed but were not suitable. The role is being covered by RH until Christmas. ● 5.2 Contact staff to draft Climate Action Plan for September meeting (BW) – populated the plan and will work through it with HF after his next meeting ● 6.3 Read <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> and confirm (all governors) – done ● 6.3 Read Section 6 of SEND Code of Practice (all governors) – done ● 7.1 Post SDP to the one drive for governor comment (HF/all governors) – done but needs to be reshared. Some governors had had trouble accessing this document. ● 9 Align committee meeting dates to budget monitoring and data assessment (TS) – done ● 9 Send reminders to parents to complete the survey (ZB) – survey had been closed because there had to be a point at which responses could be analysed. The data was shared in the 10 September meeting folder. Governors were disappointed by less than 25% response and the lesson for the future might be to send the survey out earlier in the summer term. However there had been important issues raised by the survey and these would be discussed in the SDP priorities item 7 below. Will send a letter to parents instead – not sure what this means 	<p>MP, BW, ZB</p> <p>All</p> <p>HF/TS</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p>Governance Matters</p> <p>Code of Conduct (TS) – all signed off.</p> <p>The chair noted that the governing body is very 'parent-heavy' and governors need to take extra care to be objective and strategic. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents who are not parent governors need to have a foundation focus. Most governors have a strong link with someone or something in the school. - It is hard to keep a distance sometimes from operational matters. Governors need to be approachable to all parents/residents etc but should avoid making promises about dealing with a situation. Parents/residents should be reminded to email the chair with any queries. 	<p>TS</p>

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<p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p> <p>4.4</p>	<p>Governor training (TS) – Aston Rowant subscribes to the OCC governor training package so all courses are free. The chair reminded governors to take full advantage of this. It is important to focus on the courses which are mandatory, such as Safeguarding but there are other useful courses. It’s good free knowledge. ODBE courses have a cost.</p> <p>Annual Schedule (TS) – to be done. It will be based on the OCC Annual Schedule. TS undertook to prepare this for the next meeting. Can the clerk help?</p> <p>Monitoring Plan (GT) – This had been completed and was shared in the 10 September meeting folder. The chair asked governors to contact relevant staff to let them know they have responsibility for monitoring a subject and asking when it would be convenient to visit. The chair suggests two visits per year: one in the autumn and the other in summer. Governors recognised the need to avoid bombarding staff who have more than one subject responsibility. If governors send questions in advance of the visit, the teacher can prepare. The chair repeated a comment he had received from the clerk, praising governors for the number and quality of visit reports last year. It represented determined and successful efforts to build strong relationships with staff.</p>	
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p>	<p>Headteacher’s update</p> <p>Headteacher - verbal update (HF)</p> <p><u>SUCSESSES:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building work complete (roof, hall floor, EY flooring, fence). ▪ Not lost any members of staff, great team, hit the ground running. ▪ SDP and SIAMS SEF been through with all staff. 99 children on roll – it’s highest ever! ▪ Library plans going well, still looking at a spring term build. Amazing fundraising efforts so far. Planning has gone in earlier than planned, letters will be sent out asap. <p><u>CHALLENGES:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SIAMS inspection on Monday 15 September is inconveniently early. Tricky as it is the start of term so there is nothing in the books and can’t update the website etc. ▪ Health and Safety audit is being negotiated currently (hopefully being moved from October 7th). ▪ SARs request and a red MASH today. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tricky start of the year. <p>Governors recorded huge thanks to the headteacher for everything she has achieved so far. Governors are confident the school is in a good place for the inspection on Monday, along with everything else.</p> <p>Sustainability I’m afraid I could not hear anything about this in the recording.</p>	
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p>	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Brief verbal update (TS) – summer holidays which can be a time when safeguarding issues emerge, were quiet. The headteacher had dealt with a ‘Red MASH’ (meaning an issue that had to be addressed within four hours) today.</p>	

<p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p>	<p>Filtering and Monitoring/Cyber Security updates (TS) – no real changes. The chair reported that TurnITOn have responsibility for IT security.</p> <p><i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> (KCSiE) 2025 (TS) – signed and read by all</p> <p>Safeguarding Policy ratification (TS) – had been uploaded to the meeting folder. All governors voted in favour. TS put it forward and JB seconded. (Clerk advice: No need to have proposer and seconder unless it's a really controversial issue.)</p> <p>Two other policies relating to Safeguarding were also uploaded to the meeting folder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safer Recruitment ▪ Dealing with Allegations against Staff and Volunteers. <p>Governors noted that these had been prepared by OCC and agreed to adopt them for Aston Rowant.</p> <p>All staff have been trained in Safeguarding. The headteacher is Designated Safeguarding Lead and Lexi is Deputy DSL.</p> <p>Staff know how to use the digital record 'My Concern' to record anything they see or hear that might help to build a picture and safeguarding issue.</p> <p>Governors noted that the role of DSL is time-consuming and often emotionally draining which makes it a staff well-being issue.</p>	
<p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p>	<p>SDP</p> <p>2025/26 SDP (TS). The chair had allocated 45 minutes on the agenda to ensure there was substantial opportunity for strategic discussion.</p> <p>The governor parts of the SDP have been updated by some members of FGB to save time, but the chair assured governors that it was not a fait accompli and was intended to generate discussion and ideas. The agreed plan would inform governors' scheduled visits.</p> <p>Read out to FGB and shown on the board so all can see.</p> <p>The plan focussed on Three pillars: Great Governance, Fantastic Facilities, Super Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Great Governance</i> <p><i>Understand the school's strengths and weaknesses to inform the board's strategic discussions and decisions about current priorities and the future.</i></p> <p>Discussion of this pillar included the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Should the board also have more of a focus on pupils' voice in understanding strengths and weaknesses?</i> Governors discussed doing something with the School Council – either asking the School Council to discuss their answers to some questions about school life and producing a report for governors to consider, or even inviting a few pupils to attend a meeting to make a presentation to governors. 	<p>ZB</p> <p>TS</p>

- ***We should focus on parent voice again.*** the last survey was sent out late and we didn't get many answers back. Maybe ZB to meet with class representatives mid-year?
- ***The message from the parent responses was that parents want more information from governors about what governors do during the school year.*** The chair undertook to send three newsletters per year from governors – in September, January and July. Part of the message that needs to be conveyed to parents is that the board deals with strategic matters and that if parents wish to discuss operational matters, they need to take their concerns or suggestions to school staff and ultimately to the headteacher. Governors also agreed to send the headteacher a brief paragraph about themselves and their role in the governing board. The headteacher will then select those descriptions to include in the school newsletter.

TS

Fantastic Facilities

To ensure that the buildings and learning environments are the best they can be and are suitable for the needs of all pupils, staff

Discussion of this pillar included the following suggestions:

Should the library be mentioned here? Maybe not as it is led by PTA. Governors don't want to appear to be taking credit for this project.

We need to add in what staff and pupils think of the facilities and what we need to do to ensure growth of facilities is targeted to enhance teaching and learning.

Super Staff

To ensure we support and develop our team and encourage personal growth. To create a culture of lifelong learning and development, recognising practitioners as experts in their field, ensuring that all staff maximise their potential, resulting in high quality impact on children's outcomes.

Discussion of this pillar included the following questions and suggestions:

Working as a team within the governing board or with staff? Both. All the staff (TAs and teachers) should feel they can engage with the governing board so that we are a single team with common goals.

Need to work on strengthening the relationships with staff including TAs. The chair will send a letter to the staff letting them know governor different link areas and who is on the board this year. Need to foster the conversations but also be aware of governor remit as strategic and not operational.

How are we going to support the headteacher to go onto her course National Professional Qualification in Executive Leadership (NPQEL)? This course was recommended by the diocesan adviser, Toby Long. It provides the opportunity to take the school one stage further in case an opportunity arises to bring two small schools together under an Executive Headteacher with two 'heads of schools'.

Governors asked how long the course would take. It depends, but probably about 18 months. The course costs c. £4k but governors should allocate another £2k to enable the headteacher to work on course assignments away from school

	with her role backfilled. The chair will obtain exact costings and bring a proposal for governors to consider. Governors noted the need to ensure that the staff team are on board and can take on more leadership themselves. This would be another way to grow staff. Governors recognise the need to check that the headteacher wants to obtain the qualification at this time.	
8.	<p>SIAMS & monitoring the impact of our Christian Vision</p> <p>8.1 SIAMS update (TS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Four or five governors coming in on Monday for the inspection. Governors agreed to come in early before the meeting at 2pm to talk through the Inspection Questions prior to meeting the inspector. Governors can prepare by reading the school’s SIAMS Self-Evaluation shared on GovernorHub. <p>8.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GT has made a list of what we have noted in meeting minutes and on our visit forms - TS is going to make a folder for all to see the information about the IQ questions <p>Governors discussed how has the school’s Theologically Rooted Christian Values (TRCV) and values shaped our SDP to ensure growth for all? (TS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on <i>Outreach</i> in the SDP. <i>Gratitude</i> and <i>Harmony</i> in the strengths section. <i>Resilience</i> shown in challenges section. <i>Wonder</i> is shown <i>Trust</i> is shown by each member working hard in their link areas. - 	TS
9.	<p>Date of next meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business - 19th November 2025 ● Business / brief SDP review - 21st January 2026 ● Business - 25th March 2026 ● Virtual - 29th April 2026 to formally approve the budget ● Strategy long term - 10th June 2026 to discuss a 5 year plan ● SDP review - 15th July 2026. <p>All Wednesdays at 6.30pm. All to be held at school except 29/04/26.</p>	
10.	<p>Governor growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ZB is grateful for GT bringing the list IQs so she feels more confident for Monday’s inspection - TS is grateful for all the support ahead of Monday - GT is grateful for TS to take lots of time away from his ‘real life’ to help with governor jobs - JB noted the harmony between the group and that we are able to trust each other - AT noted HF’s resilience in what is going on in school currently - AT encouraged outreach with the Foodbank box outside the school (Squirrel courageous advocacy project from last academic year). 	
	In closing the meeting, the chair thanked AT for making notes of the meeting which will help the clerk prepare the minutes.	

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