Ickleford Primary School
Shared Values · Shared Aspirations · Shared Achievements

MINUTES FROM FULL GOVERNING BOARD

8th JULY 2026

PRESENT:

Dr Miles Maxwell (Chair)
Mrs Chris Barker
Mrs Jessica Beesen-Smith
Mrs Liz Bundy
Mr David Bunker
Dr Maciej Hermanowicz
Ms Kim King
Ms Gill Lawton
Mr James Mendis
Mr Richard Murrell
Ms Tobi Olujinmi
Mr Neil Osmond
Dr Elizabeth Skinner
Mrs Shirley Williams
Mrs Sarah Wright (Headteacher)
Ms Lauren Eden (Clerk)

APOLOGIES:

Reverend Margaret Holford
Reverend Mary de Salis

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

MM welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received, and accepted, from Reverend Margaret Holford and Reverend Mary de Salis.

Welcome to LE who has been recruited to fill the Clerk to Governors position.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY

No conflicts of interest or confidentiality issues were declared.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No additional items were raised.

4. PREVIOUS MINUTES FROM 18TH MAY 2026 AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record. One action (the removal of an individual's name from the Personnel Committee minutes had not been actioned. However, as these minutes do not go into the public domain there is no risk of a breach of personal information.

MM thanked KF for stepping in to take and prepare these minutes whilst the Clerk role was being recruited.

Matters Arising

The following matters arising from the previous meeting were updated on:

- Removal of name of Clerk applicant from the Personnel committee minutes: Not yet actioned, but as these minutes are not in the public domain the removal of the applicant's name is not critical.
- Staff morale: MM confirmed he has spoken to the individuals involved; his perception from that was that they did not wish to take the issue any further.
- See Item 8 for additional update from the Governors' day in school.
- Prevent training: Discussed at appropriate agenda item (see 14b).
- Training log updates:
  - Discussed at appropriate agenda item (see 14b).
  - JM updated that Governors' induction training is closed until September.
  - JBS completed research into 'Belonging' training but was unsure of the context for it, so took it to be for SEND pupils. Need to confirm.

ACTION: JM to book governor induction training in September.

The following new matters were raised:

- SWi requested the FGB minutes reflect where Governors had asked a question, and the response to show they're engaged in the process and are challenging issues. She acknowledged that the May minutes conform to this.

No further matters were raised.

5. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

6. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

Comments on the Headteacher's report were invited.

School Overview

DB asked for clarification that the Reception class is not expected to be at PAN in Sept 2026. SWr confirmed this.

DB asked about the financial impact of this. SWr confirmed that the PAN as at October census will determine funding, and that if a child joins during the year no funded is later added. SWr confirmed there is no concern at this stage as we hope to allocate pupils to some of the spare places and other funding is due from other sources to support the needs of some new Reception pupils.

SEND

TO asked about the transition process for children with SEND. SWr confirmed the SENDCo team have planned appropriate transition arrangements including engaging with parents and providing additional support as needed.

SCHOOL VALUES REPRESENTED/ACHIEVED: Ensuring a happy teaching environment; Building an inclusive community.

SWi asked what the definition of a 'Child in Need' is. SWr confirmed, the LA defines it as a child requiring 'the highest levels of support' for developmental and health needs, disability and/or at-risk factors. Support is often from multiple agencies.

SWi raised that the column 'K' total (on the SEND register table) did not add up. SWr confirmed there had been a last-minute change to the table.

ACTION: SWr to amend/correct values appropriately.

NO asked what the 'K' stands for. SWr confirmed 'on the SEND register'.

ES raised that it appears from the data shown that children with SEND are accessing the curriculum well. SWr agreed. SWr explained the EHCP levels and interventions and that adaptations may also be made for children who do not have an EHCP where such support may be needed.

SCHOOL VALUES REPRESENTED/ACHIEVED: Building an inclusive community.

Pupil Premium

No comments raised.

Key Achievements and Events

MM expressed congratulations to everyone involved in the Phonics Screening Check, especially considering the increase in achievement since previous year.

TO confirmed sports day was well attended by parents.

KK spoke of the Year 6 trip to Shropshire highlighting that it was a good trip with excellent behaviour which attracted specific praise from the Centre Manager who cited them as 'one of the best groups they'd had all year', and the instructors also commenting that they look forward to the IPS children coming each year as they are so engaged and well behaved.

Progress on School Development Plan (SDP)

No comments raised by the Governors.

SWr reiterated the delay in being able to finalise the SDP due to the cloud migration.

Progress and Attainment

SWr confirmed that there is a national delay in some results therefore not ready to be discussed.

MH asked when data would be shared. SWr confirmed by the next FGB meeting in September, and they would be reviewed at the first P&D meeting of the new academic year.

Teaching and Learning

MM asked what 'Dark Green' on the RAYG rating is. SWr confirmed it is the highest (best) level: There are two green levels; light and dark. IPS has been light green for a long time but has now achieved dark green. The bandings and scoring have not changed so this change indicates the school's improvement.

SCHOOL VALUES REPRESENTED/ACHIEVED: Ensuring a happy teaching environment; Nurturing potential

MH noted that the Priority Areas listed in the Headteacher's Report are different to those listed in the P&D meeting minutes dated 9th June. SWr confirmed that further insight gained when Phillipa Chapman (PC) joined the staff team updated what the SLT believed focuses need to be. Confirmed priorities are: SEND (Communications with parents, ensuring background knowledge is up to date, is visible in classrooms and that all the EHCP provisions are accounted for.), Writing (English) (Interventions have been put in place to increase standards, the outcomes of these now need to be assessed and reviewed although signs are looking positive that expected standards are now being reached. Need to build on this good practice and make it a priority.), and RSHE. (There is a new RSHE curriculum. A consultation has been completed. Next steps are to ensure teachers are confident in the curriculum and in teaching it. The requirements are vast so need to prioritise the statutory requirements first then look at the 'nice' to haves.)

TO asked about the foundation subjects. SWr confirmed that everyone with responsibilities for those will keep them, but as a smaller proportion or overall focuses.

Staff and Retention

NO commented that it is difficult to explain in words the staff movements/structure. Suggested it could be done graphically. Confirmed happy to help do this.

Staff CDP and training

MM commented good to see all that has been achieved. SWr noted that she now includes the outcome of CPD per previous P&D committee discussion.

Financial update

No comments raised.

SWi asked about the potential to purchase parasols for shade outside. SWr to speak to Business Manager.

Attendance and Behaviour, Pupil Well-being and Safeguarding

GL asked for clarity on why there is a child registered not of statutory age. SWr confirmed the statutory age is 5 years old; the child it not yet 5.

SWr confirmed that in addition to the third-party support services detailed in the report, SPACE Herts have also been commissioned by the school to provided additional support where appropriate.

The large number of wellbeing interventions was noted.

No comments were noted re. behaviour, or re. family support and signposting.

Parent and Community Engagement

No comments raised.

Upcoming Challenges

MH asked why swimming has not been available locally this term. SWr confirmed it was due to Hitchin pool not being available due to building works there and Luton pool was used as an alternative, but we will return to Hitchin pool next year. SWr commented that the teaching at Luton was not as good as at Hitchin.

The Governors expressed their thanks to SWr for providing such a comprehensive report.

7. FEEDBACK FROM GOVERNORS' MEETINGS WITH SCHOOL COUNCIL AND Y6

Year 6

The Year 6 pupils spoken to expressed that they 'have loved their time at Ickleford'. In particular they noted their like of:

- Being a Buddy with the Reception class
- Shropshire trip
- School values
- ALL the teachers were mentioned
- Felt very supported especially in subjects struggled with
- Felt prepared for SATS
- The different ways of learning
- Variety of subjects

Pupils were asked, what have you learnt? Responded: Responsibility and resilience, making friends

Pupils were asked, what will they miss? Responded: Friends, teachers, 'cosy' feeling if the school.

Pupils were asked, is there anything you would like to change? Responded: More clubs / more spaces in the clubs that are available, have swimming lessons, facilities.

The general feeling from the Governors after these conversations was that the pupils are ready for the next step but will miss Ickleford Primary School.

SCHOOL VALUES REPRESENTED/ACHIEVED: Ensuring a happy teaching environment; Building an inclusive community; Instilling values; Developing resilient pupils; Creating independent thinkers with a passion for learning; and Nurturing potential.

TO raised concern around the inclusivity of the extra support and programmes requiring children to have access to devices, time to complete extra work etc. SWr confirmed all children are considered for these programmes.

School Council

The School Council reps made the following comments to the Governors:

Excited about trips.

Buddy bench created and working well.

What have they learned from being on the School Council?

- Confidence
- Trusted by friends
- Helped to feel like they belong

Words they gave to describe the school:

- Fun
- Food

- Being yourself
- Pupils
- Friendships
- Inclusive
- A bubble
- School trips

- Creativity

When asked if when a rule was broken is it dealt with fairly, the SC responded that the adult may not have the whole story when deciding on next steps; they may take someone's side. [NO later clarified, that the intent behind this comment was that they could appreciate how challenging it can be for adults in these situations, not that this is an issue.]

When asked what they would change:

- More clubs! E.g. various sports/PE clubs, baking, skipping, computing [It was noted that there has been a computing club but for different age groups.]

SWr prompted a discussion with the Governing Board around the response to dealing with issues fairly. Confirmed the process that is followed in this situation: The issue is investigated fully; but no details of that, nor the outcome of it, can be shared with other child/parents/guardians due to the school's GDPR responsibilities. Therefore, it may not always be visible that and how these situations are dealt with.

TO raised a comment around the language of seeing/hearing an incident; not seeing/hearing an event does not mean it did not happen.

SWr acknowledged that it can be difficult to gain evidence, but when investigating as many people as possible are spoken to get the best, fullest picture of a situation that is available. Children are asked what they 'would like the outcome to be' and this is followed up with asking them later if they were happy with how it was dealt with. Governors confirmed they were happy with this approach.

SCHOOL VALUES REPRESENTED/ACHIEVED: Instilling values; Developing resilient pupils; Creating independent thinkers with a passion for learning.

8. FEEDBACK ON GOVERNORS' DAY VISIT

Noted highlights of the day:

- The confidence and level of language and vocabulary used by Reception children
- The engagement of Year 1 in their letter writing activity
- The dynamic teaching of History in Year 2
- The joy of the children all around the school; buzzing, happy atmosphere
- Year 6
- Delivery of the Art curriculum in Year 5 – some great artists!
- The staff: Mostly feeling happy and supported; specifically highlighted SWr in creating this feeling.
- Happy, engaged children.
- Lots of things happening in Reception

- Year 4 were doing fractions; for many not an exciting topic but all children were involved and engaged, accepting of feedback and using their peers to support their learning
- Lunchtime! The confidence of the children to just chat to the adults and really engaged in the conversations
- The midday supervisors – only had positive comments of the school

SCHOOL VALUES REPRESENTED/ACHIEVED: Ensuring a happy teaching environment; Building an inclusive community; Nurturing potential.

Additional observations

Staff Morale:

- MM noted staff are aware of the challenges faced by all currently but are generally upbeat.
- TO noted, in particular, how stretched the TA team currently is with each being split across two classes. Although they are feeling supported in this by all staff and understand the circumstances, they're conscious of the impact.

Information security:

- An un-attended, unlocked laptop was noticed in a classroom

ACTION: SWr to remind all staff re. their information security/cyber security responsibilities and importance of locking laptops when unattended.

9. LINK GOVERNOR VISIT REPORTS AND SDP REVIEWS

a. To receive the most recent link Governor visit reports

No comments raised.

b. Progress update on end-of-year SDP reviews

MM noted for now Governors should send an email to MM/SWr rather than complete the template.

c. Amendments to the visit report template (Sept 2026)

Amendments to be made for next school year. NO has already proposed some changes; other governors are encouraged to do likewise by the September FGB. *ACTION: All governors to advise MM of possible changes.*

d. Guidance on reviewing the SDP (Sept 2026)

MM to provide further guidance for September following his attendance on a training course.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND LINK GOVERNOR RESPONSIBILITIES 2026/27

a. Status quo (mainly) until Ofsted, but to consider changes thereafter

MM confirmed that status quo would remain until Ofsted visit completed to maintain stability, with changes to be considered afterwards as appropriate.

MM raised that a succession plan for the Safeguarding Link role had been considered by himself and SWr with potential candidates discussed. Both felt DB is ideally suited for the role. DB was approached

and sought clarification on a few items before accepting. Thanks to DB were expressed. This will now be implemented as a phased approach over 2 years to ensure no gaps: DB to shadow MM in 2026/27 and undertake the required safeguarding training; MM to mentor DB in 2027/28 (therefore there will effectively be two safeguarding governors over the next two years).

It was noted that DB's current term of office ends in March 2028. He has expressed his wish to be reappointed as Foundation Governor should appropriate support to this be given by MS and the Diocese.

As a result of this, DB is to relinquish his Art & Design and Design Technology Link roles. JM has agreed to take these on from September. Thanks to JM were expressed.

In addition, DB requested to relinquish his Clerk to Finance Committee role. LB advised and will propose changes at the first Finance Committee meeting of next academic year.

TO and NO had been advised of these changes, and have confirmed their approval of the proposal.

No further comments raised.

Resolved: Appointments (DB to Safeguarding Link and JM to Art & Design Link and Design Technology Link) approved unanimously.

MM extended thanks to DB and JM for stepping into these roles.

MM proposed NO to join the Personnel Committee (in addition to the Finance Committee).

Noted that School Business Manager had questioned that should an issue need to be raised beyond the committee NO would have been someone to raise it to, if he's part of the committee then this might not be possible. Discussion noted however that if he is part of the committee, then, with his skills, an issue may be less likely to need escalating beyond the committee. Depending on the issue, he may still be able to be a point of escalation.

Resolved: Appointment approved unanimously.

MM extended thanks to NO for stepping into this role.

11. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

a. Performance & Development Committee meeting, 9th June 2026

DB commented that the SEF (School Self Evaluation Form) Excel file SWr has developed is a great idea. SWr confirmed this is now a template so can be easily updated.

b. Personnel Committee meeting, 24th June 2026

Noted that TO was also involved in the Clerk recruitment process.

MM noted his thanks to KF for covering the school office duties recently.

c. Environment Safety & Buildings Committee meeting, 26th June 2026

MM raised a suggestion in relation to Item 13 (Climate anxiety/ extreme weather): To rephrase 'it is rare that temperatures get this extreme' to 'it is becoming increasingly common …'. A discussion was had around the need to start looking at better long-term solutions around managing high temperatures in school buildings. Consensus agreed with this suggested change, although noted too

that the issue is also around the sustained periods of hot weather not just the frequency they are occurring.

Noted that it is not currently clear where the responsibility for managing and forward planning for any interventions to address overheating lies. Finance committee confirmed there was currently no plan/provision in their team to investigate solutions, e.g. air con.

SWr suggested temperatures could be taken at certain times of day around the school/classrooms and recorded to start collecting quantitative data enabling decisions around the need for long term solutions and the prioritisation of 'worst' areas, as it is likely any implementation will need to be phased.

MM asked, do all staff remind the children to drink during the day? Responses: ES suggested children should be reminded when it is hot. JBS confirmed water is available in classrooms which often prompts the children to drink. If it is not, then they often need reminding. SWr confirmed water is not usually provided on desks due to spills but is available at teacher's discretion when it is hot. Some teachers are doing 'drinks breaks' during teaching sessions.

12. SAFEGUARDING

a. Feedback on safeguarding discussions with pupils

RM reported back on feedback from pupils. They were asked, 'Is there anywhere in the school grounds that you feel unsafe?'

Responses:

- Gaps in the external hedging were mentioned – children's concern was not about strangers gaining access, but possibility that strangers could interact with pupils from public footpaths. SWr noted that pupils are encouraged to talk to the adult on duty if anyone attempts to talk to them, and that staff will be asked to be extra vigilant to this concern. The school fencing is a robust barrier.
- No child mentioned the school burglary from January 2026.
- Behind the bike shed. SWr confirmed it is due to be repaired shortly.
- Loose/broken play equipment.
- Crab apples from tree hanging over school grounds.
- Hot pipes exposed in the canteen (because lagging has come off). SWr confirmed this the pipes are due to be boxed-in shortly.

TO noted that the children did talk about 'trusted adults', and adults needing passwords. No child mentioned seeing adults they did not know being in school on their own.

'Dear Teacher' boxes were noted as good, but some said didn't know where they were.

NO reported that the School Council were asked, 'If a classmate said to them that they were being bullied by a sibling at home, what would they do?' Responses:

- Talk to a teacher
- Talk to parents
- Say to them to give their sibling space so not wind them up

NO noted that none of the children said they would speak to a trusted adult on their behalf (as an advocate).

Noted that it is good they are aware of Trusted Adults but suggested promoting to the children that they can be an advocate for their peers too, and how they could do this, not just be a bystander.

ACTION: SWr to speak to teachers re enabling children to be advocates.

SCHOOL VALUES REPRESENTED/ACHIEVED: Ensuring a happy teaching environment; Developing resilient pupils.

b. To receive the annual report to Hertfordshire Virtual School,

No comments raised.

c. Other updates

MM raised, National Crime Agency is actively warning UK schools and parents about the severe risks of publishing children's photos online. Criminal gangs are using openly available imagery from school websites to create AI-generated sexual abuse material, which they then use to blackmail students and schools. After initial discussion with SWr and JBS, options for IPS's response to this could include:

- Audit the website, and replace photos which show pupils' faces.
- Audit the website and seek renewed consent from parents for their children's image to be used considering the new/ higher risks.
- Advise all parents/ carers of the NCA's advice on putting pictures of their children onto social media.

SWr confirmed that having reviewed, the time has come to remove all photos of children from the website but will investigate if blurring faces may be an alternative to completing removing them. The school does have a working relationship with a professional photographer that specialises in prospectus and website images; could ask them to take new photos of the school grounds etc. to use instead.

JM requested for the National Crime Agency's articles on this to be shared.

MH asked if children's photos could be behind a password protected area of the website so parents could still access. SWr confirmed that the school would still be unable to guarantee compliance of access and the safety of the images therefore this would also not be possible. The school has and adheres to an extensive list of children that do not have consent to be included in any school photos. The school has a Media policy which states that photos may only be used for internal assessment purposes, never wider unless specifically consented to by appropriate parent/guardian.

ACTION: SWr to remove all child imagery from the school website asap over the summer, and later to contact photographer about taking new imagery.

ACTION: MM to share NCA's articles with Governors.

13. POLICIES

a. To approve the updated RSHE and PSHE policies following parental consultation

All Governors present confirmed their approval of the RSHE and PSHE policies.

MM extended thanks to JBS for running consultation of policies.

MM extended thanks to LS for excellent job in reviewing the HCC model policy on Allergy and Anaphylaxis. LS confirmed this is expected to be ready for wider review in Sept 2026.

14. TRAINING

a. Notification of training undertaken/ booked

No updates given.

b. Update of training log

MM raised that at present the training log for the Prevent training currently only lists LB, DB, MM, LS even though known others have completed.

ACTION: All those not listed to email their training completion confirmation to NO to add to the training record.

15. AOB

ACTION: SWr and LE to agree and circulate FGB schedule for next year.

MM extended thanks to all Governors for their attendance in school and at this meeting, and for their commitment this year.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

MINUTE	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DEADLINE
4	Book governor induction training in September.	JM	September
6	Amend/correct values on table on SEND register table in Headteacher's report.	SWr	September
8	Remind all staff re their information security/cyber security responsibilities and importance of locking laptops when unattended.	SWr	September
9c	Propose amendments to the Governor visit report template	All	September
12a	Speak to teachers re enabling children to be advocates for their peers	SWr	September
12c	Remove all child imagery from the school website (and later to contact photographer about taking new imagery).	SWr	September
12c	Share National Crime Agency's articles with Governors.	MM	September
14	Those not listed, but who have completed Prevent training to email their training completion confirmation to NO to add to the training record.	All	September

15	Agree and circulate FGB schedule for next year.	SWr, LE	September

SCHOOL VALUES

Ensuring a happy teaching environment | Building an inclusive community | Instilling values | Developing resilient pupils

Creating independent thinkers with a passion for learning | Nurturing potential