

HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees held at 6.00pm on Tuesday 3 June 2025

Present:

Mr. K. Balfe	Mrs. M. King
Mr. J. Crowther (Headteacher)	Mr. S. Lucas
Mr. K. Down	Mr. S. Mills
Mr. G. Edwards	Mrs S. Reeve
Dr. S. Eisenhandler	Mr. D. Roberts
Mr. C. Hall	Mrs. K. Rowe
Mr. K. Jenkins	Mr. T. Scott
Mrs. N. Job (Chair)	Mrs. A. Thornber

In attendance: Mr. T. Hankin Clerk
Mr. A. Jones Deputy Headteacher

1. Welcome & apologies for absence

Mrs. Job welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Board of Trustees. There were no apologies. Mr. T. Fitzakerly and Mrs. V. Targett were absent.

2. Notification of items to be raised under Any Other Business

None

3. Declarations of interest

Trustees were reminded of the need to declare any pecuniary or other interest in the items for discussion. There were none.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2025.

The minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4.2 Matters arising.

None

5. Review of the 2024/25 School Improvement Plan

Mr. Crowther shared an updated document which shows progress and a RAG rating on the objectives in the 2024/25 SIP. He stated that good or significant progress has been made against most objectives. Some objectives are ongoing and are rolled over into the new 2025/26 SIP. He invited comments and questions.

Trustees stated that it is very helpful to see the colour coding of progress against each objective. He was asked if there are any areas where progress has not been as great as he wished. Mr. Crowther replied that some staffing challenges have slowed progress on some objectives but he is generally very pleased with the outcomes. The development of Student Leadership has not worked as well as hoped this year and is now being reviewed for next year. Mr. Crowther was also asked if the plan contained too many objectives and aims. He replied that it is a big plan which shows all that the school wants to achieve. Changes to priorities and the availability of suitable resources will affect the ability to deliver on everything.

The Chair thanked Mr. Crowther for his review and confirmed that the Trustees are extremely pleased with the work completed during the year.

6. School Improvement Plan 2025/26

The draft SIP for 2025/26 was reviewed. Mr. Crowther reminded Trustees that it is the third year of a three year plan, with some items carried forward from the prior year. It is based around the school vision and core aims. A phrase used when preparing the plan has been 'We need to make the school an unmissable experience'. The format of the plan is similar to previous years. It is a working document and will change over time as priorities and capacity varies. It does include a potential migration to a new Management Information System which will take considerable time and resource if it goes ahead next year. He thanked his team for their work in preparing the SIP and advised that Heads of Department and their teams are now working on their plans for September. He invited questions on the SIP.

A Trustee asked what the reception of staff has been to the SIP. He replied that there has been little comment as the format is similar to the last two years. Where questions have been raised, they have been for clarification e.g. what is meant by use of AI.

A Trustee asked whether potential changes to EHCPs affect the plan? He replied that there will still be the same students in school with needs that will need to be met, even if criteria and thresholds change, but it may reduce some administrative work. It is still too early to know though.

A Trustee asked about the review of the Sixth Form Consortium undertaken by Herts for Learning and whether any outcomes from the review are included. He advised that the review is currently being considered by the three schools who will be looking at how best to ensure the purpose and role of the consortium is met.

A Trustee asked about the aim of making allocation of places on trips more equitable. Mr. Jones replied that most trips are heavily oversubscribed. In determining maximum numbers, various factors are considered including staff availability, venue capacity, ratios, risk and pricing. The school is looking at how to ensure the maximum number of students have the opportunity to attend trips during their time at the school. Trustees discussed the end of year trips where eligibility is linked to behaviour and attendance during the year.

A Trustee asked if there is anything the Trustees can do to support the potential move to a new MIS? Mr. Jones advised that help with specifications and procurement processes may be required once the school is committed to moving forward.

Mr. Crowther was thanked for including success criteria against objectives in the plan.

The Chair thanked Mr. Crowther and his team for all their work on the 2025/26 and Trustees approved the SIP for the year.

7. Proposed meeting date 2025/26

The Trust Board and Committee meeting dates were agreed.

8. Any other Business

None

9. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 17 June 2025