

HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees held at 6.00pm on Tuesday 2 June 2026

Present:

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

In attendance:

Mr. T. Hankin	Clerk
Mr. A. Jones	Deputy Headteacher
Mrs. K. Beaven	School Business Leader

1. Welcome & apologies for absence

Mrs. Job welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Board of Trustees. Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs. S. Reeve. Mr. T. Fitzakerly and Mrs. E. Ochiabuto 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 17 March 2026.

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

4.2 Matters arising.

There were none.

5. School Improvement Plan 2026/27

Mr. Crowther introduced the draft School Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2026/27. He explained the process undertaken to review and identify the key components of the plan. Areas that have helped to inform the plan have included the National Curriculum & Assessment Review, Response to the White Paper, SEND reform, changes to Performance Tables and changes to

KCSIE. He explained that the Senior Leadership Group discussed their key priorities for the year which were then grouped into 3 main areas:

- Curriculum Development
- Teaching, Learning & Achievement
- Leadership, Culture & Environment

At the core remains Inclusion and the goal of providing Exceptional Outcomes for All.

The SIP and Department Development Plans (DDP) have been produced based on these three core areas. Main priorities and actions include:

- Closing the gap
- Inclusion
- Teaching & Learning
- Embedding routines
- MIS Implementation
- Curriculum changes
- Operational Excellence

The current Vision Statement for the school will be reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect what the school aspires to for its students.

Sitting behind the core areas are the more detailed objectives and actions that make up the SIP. More work is required to firm up some of the costs and measures for success which will be added shortly.

Mr. Crowther then invited comments and questions from Trustees on the SIP.

Q. How has the implementation of the new MIS gone?

A. Two days in, things have started well. It is a soft launch and use will be increased over the next 6 weeks, with full use planned for September.

Q. Who sees and uses the SIP outside the school and what is its purpose?

A. It shows the work the school aims to achieve during the year and progress is RAG rated and shared with Trustees. The SIP is shared with the School Effectiveness Advisor and with Ofsted Inspectors.

Q. The plan references the Super Curriculum offering. This is something to celebrate. How can students and parents be made aware of what is available? Will some find the choices overwhelming?

A. It is not so much about making changes to the offering but being better at advertising opportunities to students and parents, including a targeted approach and making recommendations where appropriate. Some parents do not encourage students to get involved.

Q. How can engagement with parents be improved, ensuring they are aware of homework requirements, events taking place, the HGFSA etc.

A. The school is looking to broaden engagement opportunities, especially with parents at the time of transition from Primary School. Ways to increasing community involvement, and help with fundraising and grants, is also a focus.

Q. What challenges are there with the statutory requirement for 5 days of work experience for students, as employers are generally less able to help? What support is available to schools?

A. No support is available, schools have to manage this for themselves. Few workplaces are now able to provide space and time for work experience to take place. The school is in a

good place with its current Careers Education programme and will do its best to deliver on this requirement.

Q. How do you engage parents with homework more?

A. The school is looking at how it can provide better communication and information, without it being too overwhelming. The new MIS will help with this.

Q. Are there any particular plans regarding Student Voice?

A. There will be a review and relaunch of the Student Leadership Programme to ensure a culture of leadership operates throughout all year groups. This has been on the SIP for a few years so it will have a clear focus, with actions and timescales for the year. There is a need to build on current Oracy skills. Talk the Talk workshops have been excellent at helping with this.

Q. There is no mention of AI in the SIP although it was an objective this year.

A. It is not such a high priority this year. It is considered in every aspect of school life, but not as a separate objective.

Q. When looking at core expectations for lessons, where do rewards fit in?

A. These are included in the relational behaviour approach.

Q. What is the metric for identifying successful oracy?

A. There is no numerical figure but it is broadly based on the frequency that opportunities for oracy are seen through learning walks and other student interactions.

Trustees commented that they were very impressed with the plan and it is pleasing to see the continuity of core themes from previous plans coming through. The plan is easy to read. They agreed the plan for 2026/27.

The Chair thanked Mr. Crowther and the Senior Leadership Group for all their work on the SIP.

6. Any other Business

None

7. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 16 June 2026.