

HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 17 June 2025

Present:	Mr. K. Balfe	Mrs. M. King
	Mr. J. Crowther (Headteacher)	Mr. S. Lucas
	Mr. K. Down	Mr. S. Mills
	Dr. S. Eisenhandler	Mr. D. Roberts
	Mr. T. Fitzakerly	Mrs. K. Rowe
	Mr. C. Hall	Mr. T. Scott
	Mr. K Jenkins	Mrs. V. Targett
	Mrs. N. Job (Chair)	Mrs. A. Thornber
In attendance:	Mr. T. Hankin	Clerk
	Mr. A. Jones	Deputy Headteacher
	Mrs. J. Shaw	Director of Finance & Resources
	Ms. B. Winter	Head Girl

1. Welcome & apologies for absence

Mrs. Job welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Board of Trustees. Apologies were received and accepted from Mr. G. Edwards and Mrs. S. Reeve.

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 3 June 2025.

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

4.2 Matters arising.

None

5. Head Girl's report

Ms. Winter provided an update on some of the events and activities in school, including:

- Years 11 and 13 coming to the end of their public examinations. There seems to be quite a positive feeling amongst students
- A Walking for Mental Health event as part of the Healthy School Challenge
- Sports Leaders running events for local Primary schools
- A very large number of trips
- The annual Culture Day which was very well supported

- Preparations for Founders' Day, Sports Day, Gym & Dance
- The Teaching & None-Teaching staff awards, with around 500 nominations received from students

The Chair thanked Ms. Winter for her report and all the information she has shared with Trustees as Head Girl. Trustees wished her well for the future.

6. Headteacher's report

Mr. Crowther referred to his report, circulated in advance of the meeting. It has been another very busy term. He highlighted a number of items in his report:

- Staff recruitment - fully staffed from a teaching perspective for September which is a better position than last year
- Work underway on the actions in the School Improvement Plan
- The fantastic work completed by the exams team, the process has run very smoothly. He also thanked Mr. Jones and the Heads of Years 11 & 13 for their support during the exams.
- The recent UCAS information evening for Year 12 parents which has received very good feedback
- The wide range of careers activities provided for students
- SEND information and changes to the cohort for September
- Plans for a new Student Services Hub
- Ongoing work regarding attendance
- Complaints data - very similar level to last year, policies are in place to help deal with these
- Staffing changes

Trustees referred to the new Year 7 cohort and those joining with low ability in mathematics. Mr. Jones advised that plans are in place to support these students. It was noted that these students were in Key Stage 1 during Covid and the loss of face-to-face interaction and teaching has had an impact on some.

Mr. Crowther closed by thanking all the Trustees for their support during the year.

The Chair thanked Mr. Crowther for his report and for all he has done this year. She also thanked all staff for their work throughout the year.

7. Committee reports

7.1 Admissions committee

Mrs. King reported on the meeting held on 6 May. Student numbers and the allocation profile for the new Year 7 students were discussed. The committee also noted the guidelines regarding the review and setting of Operational Numbers for year groups other than Year 7.

7.2 Curriculum & Performance committee

Mr. Scott reported on the meeting held on 6 May. Attendance data was reviewed and the actions being taken to improve attendance were discussed. The information gathered from learning walks and student panels was also discussed. There are many areas of celebration plus some areas for development.

Minor changes to the Uniform Policy were considered and the updated policy recommended for approval. The Trustees **APPROVED** the updated policy.

7.3 Finance & Resources committee

Mr. Hall reported on the meeting held on 13 May. The current financial position remains healthy. The budget for 2025/26 was reviewed. A deficit for the year is projected. The school has reserves to cover this but the position is not sustainable in the long term.

Premises matters including plans for the cottage, maintenance and repairs, and Health & Safety were also considered. Initial approval for contacts for the cottage work and Condition Improvement Fund projects if successful were given. Ratification will be required once final details are known

The committee reviewed and approved the updated Reserves Policy and Trustee Allowance Policy and this was **NOTED**.

Mrs. Shaw then gave an update on the proposed budget for 2025/26. Confirmation has been received of the pay award for next year and the additional grant funding to help meet this. As a result, the budget deficit for next year has reduced to £73,000. Trustees **APPROVED** the budget for 2025/26.

7.4 Audit & Risk committee

Mr. Down reported on the meeting held on 13 May. The report from the Responsible Officer was reviewed and there were no matters of concern. The Risk Register has been updated.

7.5 Personnel committee

Mr. Lucas reported on the meeting held on 13 May. Staffing changes were noted along with remaining vacancies. The staff wellbeing report was considered and the committee was very encouraged to read about all that is in place. A staff Trustee was asked about wellbeing and replied that there seem to be no major concerns, most people seem happy.

The committee reviewed and approved the updated Code of Conduct and approved the new Menopause Policy, Parental Bereavement Policy and Redundancy Policy. This was **NOTED**.

8. Policies

The Chair informed Trustees that there are 5 policies that will need review and approval by the end of term, ready for September. An additional online meeting of the Curriculum & Performance committee will be held to consider these.

9. Governance

The Chair informed Trustees that Mrs. Targett has resigned as a Parent Trustee and that vacancies for 2 Parent Trustees will be advertised in September.

Mr. Lucas informed Trustees that he, along with Mrs. Job and Mr. Crowther have met with two potential Trustees. They had both been nominated in previous parental ballots but were unsuccessful. They have skills and experience that will be beneficial to the Trust Board and will also increase the diversity of the Board. The Members will be asked to consider appointing them as Trustees at the next Members meeting. Trustees supported this action.

The Trustee Induction Pack for new Trustees is being updated and Trustees suggested it was shared with all Trustees. It was also suggested that feedback from existing trustees is sought on how the year has been, along with any ideas for improvements. Mr. Lucas asked for volunteers willing to be a Buddy to new Trustees to help them settle in.

10. Link department visits

Mr. Lucas reported on a visit to the social sciences department. There were lots of positives in his discussion with the team about the subject and the school.

Dr. Eisenhandler reported on a visit to the Mathematics department. She had discussed staff recruitment and things are much better this year than last. Cover staff with an expertise in mathematics are proving very useful. Well structured intervention programmes are in place. Potential challenges relate to workload and new systems.

Mr. Down reported on visits to Design & Technology and History. Both were very positive. The success of Technology brings challenges relating to space as a result of increased take up of the subject. The Year 13 work was very impressive. History highlighted the amount of paperwork involved in organising whole year group trips and had asked if this could be reduced?

11. Any other Business

The Chair thanked the Trustees for their work, support and contribution this year.

12. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 16 September 2025