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Agenda Number	Laurence Haines School - Local Governing Committee Action Table from Meeting held on 19 November 2025	Person Responsible
4	Follow up on communication to parents about new phonics language and report back via Governor Hub	HT
5	Sign minutes via Governor Hub	Chair
7	Speak to possible parent governor applicants and recommend they speak to the chair	Parent governors
7	Complete National College training (Governor Effectiveness and Governor Compliance modules) for Single Central Record	All Governors
7	Send reminders to governors to complete mandatory training	Clerk
7	Deliver training on the Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR) at the next meeting	HT / Clerk (agenda)
9	Arrange press coverage of Families First Award with Watford Observer	HT
9	Include SEF summary with future Headteacher reports to show cycle of progress	HT
11	Upload behaviour policy to Governor Hub for approval once internet issues resolved	HT
14	Book monitoring visit on SEND	Sinead
17	Review with leadership team options to add to Arbor to help other parents with funding trips and report back	HT
18	Ensure Trustees are aware of Families First Award	Clerk (Trust)



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SCHOOL GOVERNING COMMITTEE MEETING on Wednesday 19th November 2025 at 7pm via Teams

Governor	Governor Type	18 Sep 2025	19 th Nov 2025
Romeena Ahmed	Co-opted governor	Y	Y
Jo Ball (HT)	Headteacher	Y	Y
Michael Dobner (Chair)	Co-opted governor	Y	Y
Emma Lad (Clerk)	Clerk	Y	Y
Sinead Parmar	Parent governor	Apologies	Y
Ricki Rajah	Co-opted governor	Y	Y
Safina Shan	Staff (Support) Governor	Y	Apologies
In attendance			
Mrs Wharton	Phonics presentation		Y
Ms Khartoon	Prospective staff governor		Y

Governor (G) challenge is highlighted in yellow Governor actions are highlighted in italics

Please see Appendix A: Discussion from Governor Hub ahead of the meeting

Meeting started 7pm

KEY:	Approval	Information	For feedback/questions	Action
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No	ITEM	Action
1.	Welcome, apologies and consent Yuk Wharton (to present on phonics)/ Ms Khatoon (prospective staff governor) were welcomed to the meeting. Apologies Safina Shah. The meeting was quorate.	



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2.	Notification of any other business - No items of any other business were notified.	
3.	Conflict of interest with agenda items to be declared - No conflicts of interest were declared with the agenda items.	
4.	Phonics presentation – Mrs Whalton The lead gave a verbal update on the embedding of Little Wandle into the school. Implementation Progress: • Resources and training organised for staff • Children assessed using Little Wandle assessment systems to establish baseline • The school received guidance from Little Wandle consultants on next steps based on current position • Rapid catch-up interventions in place: Year 2 children who did not pass phonics screen check are receiving targeted support from two trained TAs • Data shows these children have made strong progress and will move to next phase Assessment and Tracking: • Teachers trained to use Little Wandle assessment tracker portal to identify gaps and inform targeted support • "Keep Up" interventions delivered in afternoons to close identified gaps in early phonic learning • Children assessed every three weeks to ensure gaps are being closed and learning is secured Reading Practice Sessions: • Training delivered last week for teachers and teaching assistants on reading practice – key element of Little Wandle • Year 1 now in second week of implementation – children applying phonics skills to reading effectively • Children identifying tricky words (previously called "red words") in their reading • More confident children developing fluency and reading words on sight • Less confident children successfully decoding and using phonics to read unknown words Home-School Partnership: • Year 1 first year group to use Collins Hub e-reading portal at home • Currently 7 parents in Mrs Wharton's class engaging with reading breakfast sessions to encourage use of e-books • Books read in school reading practice sessions can be read to parents at home via the portal • This enables celebration of children's reading progress and allows parents to see how children apply phonics to reading Next Steps: • Monitor phonics teaching across Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 • Monitor reading practice sessions across these year groups • Spring Term: Launch Little Wandle Foundations for Nursery	



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- Roll out SEND-specific elements of Little Wandle programme (dependent on securing additional resources)
- Note: English Hub provided initial funding for core programme and reading practice books; additional SEND resources require further investment

G: Have the issues with the internet at school caused any issues with introducing Little Wandle?

Mrs Wharton: As we haven't been able to use white boards, we have modelled the videos or used a laptop. The data has been inputted at home. It has made it harder, not impossible.

G: Do we know how many children are using at home and how often?

Mrs Wharton: You can see how long they have read for when they have used a laptop. On a phone you cannot see the usage.

G: In terms of support at home, can we make sure new language is communicated to parents so we can support appropriately?

Mrs Wharton acknowledged that clearer communication is needed. Home learning sheets are sent weekly showing the sounds/digraphs being taught, with video links so parents can hear correct pronunciation. A parent workshop is pencilled in for the Nativity performance day to capture Reception parents (first exposure to phonics), with further workshops planned for Year 1 and Year 2 parents. The school is working to bridge the gap between the previous Read Write Inc approach and the new Little Wandle system. Staff were instructed to share information at September curriculum meetings with video links provided, though it was noted that not all parents received this information. The HT and lead will follow this up and report back via Governor Hub.

G: If a child joins in year two or three and they are not familiar with phonics. How do you get them to where you want them to be?

Mrs Wharton: Every child in Year 1 and Year 2 completed a placement assessment at the start of the year to determine their secure phonics knowledge. The assessment data is entered into Little Wandle and children are placed in groups matching their needs. Less confident children receive rapid catch-up support plus "Keep Up" interventions (one-to-one or small group) with teaching assistants. The Keep Up programme brings children up to the level of their peers so they can join the core programme and are not disadvantaged.

The Headteacher praised Mrs Wharton for exceptional work in implementing the new programme. She noted that Little Wandle implementation is progressing smoothly compared to previous change management initiatives. Staff have been trained brilliantly and are engaging well with the new system. The transition is being managed thoughtfully – upper school children learned through Read Write Inc so will continue with that language, while younger children learn Little Wandle, creating a natural rolling programme over time.

The Chair thanked Mrs Wharton for the comprehensive update and particularly commended her ability to continue implementation despite significant Internet connectivity challenges.

HT



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	7.31pm Mrs Wharton left the meeting.	
5.	<u>Minutes of the last meeting for approval and matters arising</u> <i>The governors confirmed the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting and will be signed via Governor Hub by the Chair</i> The matters arising are completed or agenda items.	Chair
6.	Communication from the Trust • Trustees' minutes	
7.	Chairs update a) Governors' recruitment and induction <i>Parent vacancy - The HT explained that there are difficulties with comms now because of the internet issues. The governors will speak to possible applicants and recommend they speak to the chair.</i> b) The Chair reported attending school five times since the last meeting: • Harvest Festival • HIP debrief on writing • SEND review led by Gillian Jackson (Headteacher of Beechfield) • Headteacher's appraisal (which went very well) c) Trust Chair's Meeting (3rd October): • Holywell School: Expected to join the Trust but delays due to county-level issues. When joining, will change name to Willow Tree. Further updates expected by January or end of term. • The meeting provided insight into different approaches across Trust schools. The Trust is working to align curriculum delivery across schools (e.g., phonics programmes, maths schemes). The Headteacher confirmed she is comfortable with alignment on curriculum content ("what") across the Trust to maintain high standards but is passionate about preserving Laurence Haines' unique approach to "how" children learn. She emphasised the importance of child agency and choice in learning. She reported positive discussions with the CEO (James) who agrees this approach is appropriate for the school community. d) IT Infrastructure: • Trust moving from Microsoft to Google platforms, which they believe will provide better security • The Headteacher responded that the school is open to any platform change, but the priority is simply having functioning Internet connectivity. The Trust has a change management plan for the Google transition. However, currently the school is "not a functioning school technically" due to ongoing Internet and phone system failures. Any platform will be welcomed once reliable connectivity is restored.	Parent governors



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	e) Governor effectiveness, confirmations and training - to be completed by all governors The Clerk reported that one or two governors have not yet completed all mandatory National College training modules. Specifically, Governor Effectiveness and Governor Compliance modules remain outstanding for some. These are critical for the school's Single Central Record. The Clerk will send reminders during the meeting. Priority Training for Completion: 1. Safeguarding update 2. Prevent training 3. Cybersecurity awareness Governor Effectiveness Review Results: • Skills: Governors demonstrate good skill levels across all areas identified • Experience: Good range of experience except in risk management and mediation/law • Risk management is Trust-managed; mediation and law services are purchased by Trust, so these gaps are acceptable • Training needs: Main area identified is data analysis The Headteacher confirmed the new framework focuses on all children, not just specific groups. Inspectors may follow any child showing distress or need (e.g., a child crying at the school gate) throughout the day to understand how staff support them to achieve, thrive and flourish, and ensure they belong. This replaces previous subject-focused deep dives with child-centred observations. The Headteacher welcomes this approach as it aligns with the school's inclusive ethos and strengths. <i>f) Ofsted Inspection framework update/ Inspection Data Summary report: The governors have identified data as an area for development. The HT will deliver training on the Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR) at the next meeting as this is key to the Ofsted Inspection Framework moving forward and will allow governors to have a clear understanding of where the school is in terms of data.</i>	HT/ Clerk (agenda)
8.	Finance report – sent via Governor Hub Budget Position: The Headteacher reported that the Autumn reforecast has been completed and the budget is balanced. This includes: • Five UPS (Upper Pay Scale) teachers • One qualified HLTA • New SEND teacher in The Woodlands • Two ITT (Initial Teacher Training) teachers • All pay rises	



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	Income and Savings: • Autumn SEND funding on track • EYFS nursery income on track • Small savings achieved on gas and electricity through supplier changes Planned Expenditure: • Curriculum spending proceeding as planned • £50,000 allocated for premises work (next phase of fencing and soakaway management) – both cannot be completed; business case to be submitted to Trust • Playground improvement project funding set aside, including Gemma Williamson's consultancy support • Library refurbishment funding allocated – aiming to complete before Christmas, otherwise in new year G: Mrs Wharton mentioned needing additional resources for SEND aspects of Little Wandle. Is this funded in the current budget? HT: Curriculum budget includes phonics funding. Additionally, English Hub funding will be received. Combined, these should cover the SEND resources needed across the year.	
9.	Headteacher report Internet and phone issues The HT explained that before the half term the internet went out again and after many conversations and complaints BT managed to fix the internet and get the school back connected. Then the internet went again last week, and the school is being told that the line has been stolen and is being used. There is no-one from BT to speak to. The phones are now on the internet, so they also don't use. The school now had a Starlink satellite delivered but it was broken. The school is waiting for a new one. Safeguarding records are having to be reported on slips and direct to the DSL. If required to get onto devices the staff are having to tether to their phones. The staff have been amazing at finding solutions. This needs to be resolved as soon as possible. Staff governors explained it has been very difficult and documents cannot be accessed in school or at home. It is adding friction to the day. Not being able to access the internet is causing issues with reporting and monitoring. The HT explained that communication with parents has been hindered as they cannot call the school and there can be no newsletters sent out. It is stopping the school from working at its usual standards. Key Highlights and Challenges: Challenges:	



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	1. Internet and telephone system failure (detailed above) 2. Non-threat lockdown incident: Following incident at nearby park, the school implemented lockdown procedures. Staff managed the situation exceptionally well, demonstrating strong crisis management capabilities. The situation was frightening for children and community but was handled professionally. Awards and Recognition: The school was nominated by Families First (subdivision of Hertfordshire Children's Services) for an award, which was unexpected. Laurence Haines won the award against strong competition. The school was described in the following way: "Laurence Haines is more than an educational institution. It is a sanctuary of hope, resilience and partnership... a truly child-centred and community-driven school." The Headteacher described this as a wonderful accolade recognising the school's work with families and vulnerable children. Beechfield School and Lara (Pastoral Lead) also won awards at the same event. G: Has this been reported in the Watford Observer? <i>HT: Not yet but will ask Deputy Head to arrange press coverage as it benefits the school and local community.</i> Key Stage 2 Results: The Headteacher highlighted that KS2 results are 10% above national, attributing this to a strong and well-planned curriculum and Fastidious focus on reading throughout the previous year School Evaluation Form (SEF): The Headteacher presented a new format for the School Evaluation Form (SEF), inspired by training from Gemma Williamson at a heads meeting. She expressed genuine excitement about the new Ofsted inspection framework as it suits Laurence Haines' approach and strengths. New SEF Structure: The format provides clear visibility for governors and external stakeholders: 1. Context: Local context, barriers, difficulties and challenges 2. Achievement: Focus area for Ofsted – assessment data must be accurate and robust 3. Inclusion: Universal offer, specific provisions, SEND support, additional interventions including nurture group, ordinarily available provision in every classroom. New Ofsted Judgement Categories: Ofsted stated they would not use grades but has introduced five judgement levels: • Urgent Improvement (equivalent to previous RI - Requires Improvement) • Needs Attention (not negative – indicates active areas of development) • Expected • Strong • Exceptional	HT
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"Needs Attention" requires careful parent communication as it may be misunderstood. It transparently shows what the school is actively working on rather than indicating poor performance. This supports effective governor challenge.

Categories:

More categories than previous framework (Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development). The new approach examines different aspects of school provision in greater detail. The report card will show colour-coded ratings for all areas.

Performance Data Analysis (shared in SEF):

- Key Stage 2: Performing really well – above national (green)
- Phonics: Currently below national (red/amber) – "Needs Attention" status
- Early Years FSP: Achieving national but lower than desired (orange)

G: What does Early Years FSP (Foundation Stage Profile) measure?

HT: FSP measures Good Level of Development (GLD) at end of Reception. Children typically enter with very low baselines well below average. One year (or two if attending nursery) is insufficient time to bring all children to national expectation. Children who enter able to communicate well, write their names, and with strong cultural capital at home typically achieve GLD. However, data consistently shows strong progress measures rather than absolute attainment. The longer children remain at Laurence Haines, the better they perform. By Year 6, they're above national. The school remains ambitious to improve Early Years outcomes whilst recognising the starting point challenges. Children need sufficient learning time to achieve and thrive.

Overall SEF Rating:

The Headteacher presented overall ratings developed in consultation with SLT and the Chair:

- Personal Development and Wellbeing: Exceptional (validated by Ofsted feedback)
- Other areas: Strong/Expected performance
- Key Performance Data: "Needs Attention" (solely due to phonics – an active improvement area)

G: The visual format is clear and helpful. At a glance, governors can identify focus areas. It makes for an excellent summary.

G: The format is easy to follow.

Chair: Very impressed with the clarity and accessibility of the format.

G: Will this be a live document that changes throughout the year, or will it be reviewed at set points?

HT: The document will be continuously reviewed but likely not changed until year end. The action plan will be amended to document progress. Some ratings may move to green during the year, allowing governors to question the change.

G: Could a summary of this SEF be included with future Headteacher reports to show the cycle of progress over the year?

HT: Yes, this will be incorporated into regular reporting.



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	Accountability Cross-Reference: The phonics presentation earlier in the meeting addressed one "Needs Attention" area in the SEF (raising standards through Little Wandle). Governors can track accountability for each focus area across meetings.																	
10.	Stakeholder engagement - There have been no further surveys completed - Empower hour is taking place with children attending a club, carrying out activities and having a hot meal. The HT explained is very worthwhile and supporting the school community. - The staff wellbeing survey is being completed.																	
11.	Policy tracker review and policies due a) Trust policies approved – refer to Every b) School policies – refer to Every <i>The HT explained that the policies are up to date, but the internet issues are stopping the uploading. The behaviour policy needs to be approved and will be posted to Governor Hub for approval.</i> <table><tr><td>Behaviour Policy</td><td>October 2027 – upload to Every</td></tr><tr><td>Business Continuity Plan</td><td>September 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Collective Act of Worship Policy</td><td>February 2031 – upload to Every</td></tr><tr><td>Equality Statement including accessibility plan</td><td>December 2028 – upload to Every</td></tr><tr><td>Health and Safety (Local) Policy</td><td>November 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Home Learning Policy</td><td>January 2027</td></tr><tr><td>Home School agreement</td><td>March 2026</td></tr><tr><td>Marking, Feedback and Presentation Policy</td><td>November 2025 – upload to Every</td></tr></table>	Behaviour Policy	October 2027 – upload to Every	Business Continuity Plan	September 2025	Collective Act of Worship Policy	February 2031 – upload to Every	Equality Statement including accessibility plan	December 2028 – upload to Every	Health and Safety (Local) Policy	November 2025	Home Learning Policy	January 2027	Home School agreement	March 2026	Marking, Feedback and Presentation Policy	November 2025 – upload to Every	HT
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12.	Risk register Governors asked the clerk to let Trustees know the internet and contingencies need to be on the risk register moving forward.																	
13.	Training - Governor training booked /to be booked/ completed with National College Governors were reminded to complete as soon as possible as it is affecting the Single Central Record. - New governor training - Ricki Rajah to complete.																	



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	Ideas/requests for future sessions										
14.	<u>Governor monitoring reports</u> Romeena Ahmed reported a wonderful morning visit to Laurence Haines. Becky (Assistant Head) provided a tour from Nursery through to Year 6, including Seedlings and The Woodlands. Observations: - All children were very well-behaved, happy, engaged and thoughtfully supported - Report uploaded to Governor Hub - Most questions related to Little Wandle and were answered during the presentation <i>Sinead is booking a visit on SEND.</i>	Sinead									
15.	Clerks update <u>Newsletters</u>										
16.	Any other business – none requested at the beginning of the meeting.										
17.	Future Dates <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th><th>Start</th><th>Location</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Wed 4 Feb 2026</td><td>19:00</td><td>online</td></tr> <tr> <td>Wed 1 Jul 2026</td><td>09:00</td><td>school</td></tr> </tbody> </table> G: Could we add options to Arbor to help other parents with funding trips? HT: I will review with the leadership team and report back.	Date	Start	Location	Wed 4 Feb 2026	19:00	online	Wed 1 Jul 2026	09:00	school	HT
Date	Start	Location									
Wed 4 Feb 2026	19:00	online									
Wed 1 Jul 2026	09:00	school									
18.	Items to be sent to CEO, Chair of Trustees and Trust Governance professional by the clerk <i>The Families First Award – clerk to ensure Trustees are aware.</i>	Clerk (Trust)									
	Meeting ended: 8.36pm										



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4. Matters arising from 18.09.25

	Action	Person Responsible
8	Send reminders to complete confirmations on Governor Hub (annual declarations including Register of business interests, KCSIE confirmation, Online safety policy, Code of conduct, Whistleblowing policy, Child protection policy)	Clerk / All Governors – item 7b
9	Run elections for parent and staff governor positions as soon as possible so new governors can join the November meeting	HT – item 7a
9	Complete Governor effectiveness review via Governor Hub	All Gobs – item 7b
10	Send overview of approved budget via Governor Hub	HT – item 8
11	Take to the trust to ask for Young carers to form part of the safeguarding reports	Clerk (Trust) – see below
11	Make Trustees aware of the Super Kind kite mark award from Mode Shift	Clerk (Trust) – see below
11	Send updated staff attendance figures via Governor Hub	HT – completed
13	Send policies to the clerk to be uploaded to Every. Review Business continuity plan and H&S policy at next meeting	HT / Clerk – item 11



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	Action	Person Responsible
15	Complete National College training (Safeguarding update, cybersecurity, Prevent training if not completed in last 4 years) by 1st November	All Gobs – item 7b
16	Arrange monitoring visits before November meeting	All Gobs – item 14

Items to be raised with Trust responses:

Take to the trust to ask for Young carers to form part of the safeguarding reports - the school now has three young carers and the governors discussed whether this should be a group they are monitoring. I suggested it may be easiest through the safeguarding report but feel free to say if it should be somewhere else. I don't know if the other three schools have registered young carers.

Response from the Education Committee/ CEO: The HT's have reviewed and the AHT's in each of the schools are ensuring the schools have identified all children who are young carers. This group will also be added to the safeguarding report.

Make Trustees aware of the Super Kind kite mark award from Mode Shift - This was just to let you know the school has another pastoral kite mark!

Response from the Education Committee: Trustees congratulated the school on the award.

11.	Policy tracker 2024/25	
Behaviour Policy		October 2027 – upload to Every
Business Continuity Plan		September 2025



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Collective Act of Worship Policy	February 2031 – upload to Every
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