



Ripon Grammar School Governors

Full Governing Board meeting

Wednesday 15th July 2026, 1800hrs Bishopton House

MINUTES

1. Introductory Business

Attendance

Present: Elizabeth Jarvis (Chair), Jonathan Webb, Graham Livesey, Amy Tweddle-Bray (via teams), Vikki Barton Brown, Jonathan Branton, Tom Cavell Taylor, Ian Charlton, Peter von Hoven, Richard Johnston, Adele Laurie-Wilson (via teams), Eric Medway, Robert O'Hare, Victoria Pang.

Apologies: Jayne Dale, David Winspear and Siny Jayan.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed governors to the final Full Governing Board meeting of the academic year and thanked them for their work over the term.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meetings held on 18 March 2026 and 12 May 2026 were accepted as accurate records, subject to checking the attendance list for 12 May against the definitive record.

Review of Action Tracker and Matters Arising

- The Chair and Headmaster would review and rationalise the accumulated action tracker before the next meeting, closing completed items and carrying forward a clear set of actions for 2026/27.
- Jayne Dale had offered to act as the named governor representative for the school's work on Martyn's Law. This was welcomed.
- The Committee Terms of Reference review and website compliance actions were reported as complete, subject to the tracker being updated.
- The action relating to exploring grant opportunities remained part of the work planned for the next academic year. Ownership entries on the tracker would be corrected where necessary.

2. Principal Business

Headmaster's Report (JMW)

JMW presented the report in the established format and invited questions. The following key points were noted from the report and supporting slides:

- School roll: the current roll was 958 and the projected roll for 2026/27 was 983. The projected Year 7 intake was 124, Year 9 was 137 and Year 12 was 180. Boarding remained less certain, with a working projection of 82.
- Admissions: there had been no complaints following the Year 7 testing changes. The June open evening attracted 328 registered families and feedback was very positive. Year 12 applications and offers remained strong, although boarding acceptance and withdrawal levels continued to require close monitoring.
- Staffing: staffing was broadly stable. Recruitment was progressing for an Art Technician. Planning continued for replacement arrangements for the Bursar/Finance Officer and Director of Strategic Operations/Business Manager roles ahead of retirements at the end of the Autumn term 2026.
- Curriculum and academic: departmental reviews had identified many strengths, alongside scope to improve home learning and revision preparation. A revised intervention and monitoring protocol would commence in 2026/27. Year 11 forecasts were encouraging; Year 13 outcomes might be less strong than the previous year.
- Teaching and learning: refined Quality First Teaching principles and a teaching and learning handbook would be embedded through staff development in 2026/27. A review of classroom facilities had been completed.

Literacy and oracy work had been positively reviewed by the local authority adviser, leading to a new whole-school strategy.

- Inclusion: student feedback was generally positive, although parent survey engagement was low. The local authority inclusion visit was positive. Further work would focus on measurable impact, profile targets, staff training and support arrangements from Autumn 2026.
- Pastoral: Year 10 junior prefects were making a positive contribution; transition activity had taken place for new Year 7 and Year 9 pupils; Year 11 and Year 13 departures and proms had been calm and successful. Planning was under way for five Year 9 forms and closer alignment of form time with the revised PSHCE curriculum.
- Behaviour and attendance: the post-Covid trend in suspensions continued to improve. Remaining concerns related principally to verbal and physical abuse by a small number of pupils and inappropriate use of social media. Attendance remained strong overall.
- Sixth Form and careers: students had accessed university, apprenticeship, work experience, society and super-curricular opportunities. The Learning Centre had been improved and student leadership activity continued to develop.
- Boarding: governors noted the first year of the new leadership arrangements, the development plan, establishment of the NEBS group, enhanced weekend activity, tutor development and completed refurbishment works.
- Estates and health and safety: substantial refurbishment and infrastructure works had been undertaken. Key concerns included the fire strategy, ageing boilers, sports hall condition, netball courts and water issues. The NYC health and safety audit had been highly positive, and procedures had been amended following accident reviews.
- School Development Plan: progress was noted across inclusion, curriculum, teaching, personal development, leadership, finance, estates and boarding. Device-led learning and teaching mentor proposals remained on hold; the Financial Recovery Plan forecasted a small surplus, with boarding numbers remaining a key risk.

ASSURANCE: Governors received a comprehensive year-end picture. Roll and admissions were strong overall, teaching and pastoral indicators were generally positive, and the principal strategic risks remained finance, boarding numbers, estates/fire safety and leadership succession.

Financial Matters (ROH / GL)

- The June Budget Monitoring Report forecast an in-year surplus of approximately £19.1k and a cumulative year-end surplus of approximately £30.7k, a deterioration of approximately £3.1k against the Start Budget.
- The forecast assumed 82 boarders rather than the 85 included in the Start Budget. This reduced projected boarding income and remained the most material uncertainty; final numbers would not be known until August.
- The Financial Recovery Plan was reported to be on track overall and ahead of target, except for uncertainty around pay-award funding and boarding admissions. Curriculum savings, departmental savings and the planned Development Fund contribution were progressing; further curriculum changes from September 2027 remained on hold.
- Governors noted the need for monthly monitoring through the BMR, refinement of the FRP tracker to show detail and actual savings, and updating of the Financial Risk Register where risks increased.
- A late-payment interest clause would be included in new boarding contracts from September 2026, subject to confirmation of the final wording with NYC.
- Lettings income remained strong. The catering contract retender concluded with the incumbent supplier as the preferred bidder, following assessment of quality, cost and planned capital investment.
- No additional capital expenditure approval was identified in the papers beyond expenditure previously approved and incorporated within the budget.

ASSURANCE: The F&P Committee had scrutinised the BMR and FRP in detail. The plan remained deliverable, but the Board required continued close oversight of boarding income, pay funding and any material variance from the recovery trajectory.

Safeguarding

No report was provided to the meeting from the safeguarding governor. The Chair and Headmaster confirmed there were no new matters for escalation.

Co-option and Elections

The Board considered the nominations presented for co-option and for governance roles for 2026/27. All nominations were accepted and all governors agreed.

DECISION: All nominations for co-option to the FGB were approved unanimously. Elizabeth Jarvis and Vikki Barton Brwon

DECISION: The nominated Vice-Chair of the FGB was elected unanimously. Eric Medway

DECISION: The nominated Chair of the FGB was elected unanimously. Elizabeth Jarvis

DECISION: Committee-chair nominations were approved unanimously: Matthew Bean, Boarding Committee; Amy Tweddle-Bray, Curriculum Committee; Robert O'Hare, Finance & Personnel Committee; and Tom Cavell-Taylor, Pastoral Committee. The Chair recorded her personal thanks to Eric Medway who has retired from his role as Chair of Curriculum Committee – one he has held for many years.

3. Regular Business

Committee Reports

The Board received the committee minutes and reports circulated with the papers. Matters already covered under the Headmaster's and financial reports were not repeated.

- Admissions Committee (23 June 2026): projected roll for September was 983, including 82 boarders. Year 7 was projected at 124 and Year 9 at 137. Governors noted the boarding recruitment risk and the request for the Boarding Committee to consider the point at which the boarding model would need reconfiguration to remain financially sustainable.
- Boarding Committee (19 May 2026): the Committee had considered the critical number of boarders below which operating one house might make economic sense. The REACH system was being trialled, boarding marketing work continued, and completed refurbishments were welcomed.
- Curriculum Committee (9 June 2026): attainment and progress were generally encouraging, with targeted concerns under active review. Departmental and teaching reviews provided reassurance. The revised Curriculum Statement was recommended to the FGB for approval.
- Estates Development Committee (2 June 2026): governors noted capital and local-authority works, continuing attempts to progress Section 106 funding, the implications of the fire strategy for the science block, and the school's wider five-year estates programme.
- Finance & Personnel Committee (7 July 2026): the key matters were the June BMR, FRP delivery, boarding risk, contract management, estates/fire-safety financial exposure, and succession planning for the Bursar and Director of Strategic Operations roles.
- Pastoral Committee (16 June 2026): behaviour and wellbeing indicators were moving positively, supported by early intervention and consistent practice. Governors noted growing complexity and time pressure within pastoral roles, increased parental expectations and the importance of clear boundaries and communication.

Governors with Specific Areas of Responsibility

Inclusion Governor

- The Inclusion Report showed regular scrutiny of SEND and disadvantaged pupil attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour through Curriculum and Pastoral Committees.
- The NYC inclusion visit was highly reassuring, identifying strong values-led leadership, robust systems and inclusive classroom practice, while recommending further work on milestones, resilience arrangements, transition and consistent support.
- Student voice was broadly positive. Parent survey response had been limited. The importance of continuing to strengthen parent engagement and direct governor contact with parents was noted.

ASSURANCE: The Board received strong assurance on the direction of inclusion work, with clear development actions around capacity, monitoring, transition and parent voice.

CEIAG Governor

- The careers programme continued to provide extensive one-to-one guidance, work experience, university and apprenticeship engagement, employer contact, enterprise and volunteering opportunities.
- Governors noted the continuing single-point-of-failure risk arising from reliance on one member of staff, despite substantial efficiencies and the delivery of most provision in-house.

Staff Welfare Governor

Health and Safety

Health and safety matters were covered through the Headmaster's and Estates reports. The Board noted the highly positive NYC audit and the actions taken following accident reviews.

The Chair raised the matter of the Fire Safety Report – and the recommendation for intervention on the Science Block. The Headmaster confirmed that he had written twice to NYC (Jon Holden) for advice and no response had been received. The school premises team have undertaken remedial actions to ensure safety is optimized, with a plan for a fire drill in early September. The Head confirmed that he will pursue matters with NYC and the Chair offered to escalate as required.

Complaints

None

Policies for Approval

DECISION: The revised Curriculum Statement was approved unanimously, reflecting the school's continuing values, Quality First Teaching principles and learning behaviours, with clearer statements of intent and implementation.

The Concerns and Complaints Policy was considered. This was approved.

Off-site Visits and Activities

The Board received the updated schedule of educational visits. Governors noted the breadth of activity and the visits already approved. The 2026/27 ski trip to Italy was shown as requiring approval.

DECISION: The 2026/27 ski trip to Italy was approved.

Governor Training

No formal training has been undertaken since the last FGB

The Skills analysis will identify areas for development for next terms and this will be reviewed at the next FGB.

Calendar: Meeting Dates for 2026/27

The draft calendar of governor and committee meetings for 2026/27 was received and agreed, subject to any final administrative amendments. The next FGB meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 13 October 2026 at 18.00h.

Any Other Business

The Chair thanked the parent governors who would shortly reach the end of their terms of office for their contribution to the work of the Governing Board. Governors were wished a happy and healthy holiday.

The Vice Chair reminded governors of the need to undertake the skills audit prior to the next end of term.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 13 October 2026, 18.00h.

Meeting Closure

The meeting closed at 2125

Appendix: Summary of Actions

Action	Responsibility	Deadline
Review and rationalise the action tracker; close completed items and carry forward a clear 2026/27 tracker.	EJ / JMW	Before next FGB
Update the tracker to record Jayne Dale as the named governor representative for Martyn's Law.	GL / EJ	Before next FGB
Correct action ownership entries, including grant-funding actions, and confirm next steps.	EJ / JMW / GL	Before next FGB
Continue monthly monitoring of the FRP through the BMR and escalate material variances.	JB / GL / F&P	Monthly

Expand the FRP tracker to include brief measure descriptions and actual savings achieved.	GL / JB	Next F&P meeting
Improve coordination and reporting between boarding admissions, finance and the relevant governor committees.	EJ / ERM / GL	2026/27
Confirm final wording of the late-payment interest clause with NYC and include it in new boarding contracts.	GL / JB	September 2026
Consider the critical boarding number and the circumstances in which a one-house model would be economically appropriate.	TD / JMW / Boarding Committee	Next Boarding Committee
Continue inclusion actions on milestones, subject targets, resilience, transition and parental engagement.	SENDCo / SLT	Ongoing / Autumn 2026
Pursue matters relating to the section 106 monies and the fire regulations with NYC	JMW/Chair	Ongoing
Identify training needs for next term following completion of skills audits	Chair and Vice Chair	Next FGB