

**ST JOHN RIGBY COLLEGE
MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD
TO BE HELD AT 5:30PM ON THURSDAY 18TH DECEMBER 2025
AT THE COLLEGE**



The core functions of the corporation board include:

- *Preserving and developing the college's educational character*
- *Setting and communicating the college's strategy and goals*
- *Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance and quality of the college, and for the performance of staff*
- *Exercising effective control to ensure that funds and assets are protected, the organisation remains solvent and legal obligations are met*

The Nolan Principles: Selflessness/ Integrity/ Objectivity/ Accountability/ Openness/ Honesty/ Leadership

Strategic Objectives:

- To embed a learning culture which meets the needs of all students and, in doing so, improves the standards of student attendance, achievement, raises aspirations and promotes excellence across the full range of the College curriculum. In addition to providing a safe environment, we will focus on three key areas of outcomes for learners:
- Establishing consistently high outcomes across all courses
- Raising student achievement rates and challenging all courses to exceed Sixth Form College national benchmarks
- Establishing a consistently high 'progress score' for all courses
- To widen student participation, in partnership with other providers, through the offer of a comprehensive range of high-quality courses that meet the needs of our students and support developments and provision within partner high schools
- To work collaboratively with groups within College's local and extended community
- To further develop the estate to provide an outstanding learning environment for the whole college community
- To sustain a culture where all staff are committed to SJRs core values, where continuous professional development is encouraged, and organisational efficiency and effectiveness are achieved
- To maintain the College's financial stability in order to implement the College Development Plan

'Students are at the heart of everything that we do, in our actions, discussions and decisions'.

Our College Values: Integrity, Faith, Courage, Commitment, Freedom

Our College Vision: To be an outstanding, inclusive Catholic sixth form college, valuing the individual, celebrating learning and raising aspirations.

Meeting Prayer:

Lord God

Bless us as we come together for this meeting.

Grace us with your wisdom and vision.

Send your Spirit to guide us in our discussions, in our discernment and in the decisions we make for the good of all.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen

MINUTES

Governors present:		
Pam Tate (Chair)	Foundation Governor	Yes
Philip Collier (Vice Chair)	Foundation Governor	Yes
Pamela Catherall	Foundation Governor	Yes
Mark Higgins	Foundation Governor	Apologies
Mark Dumican	Foundation Governor	Apologies
Peter Cudlip	Foundation Governor	Yes
Kate Watts	Staff Governor	Yes
Chris Chandler	Staff Governor	Yes
Anne White	Co-opted Governor	Apologies
Paula Nolan	Principal	Yes
William Smith	Student Governor (Outgoing)	Yes
Abigail Fletcher	Student Governor (Incoming)	Yes – <i>withdrew at 19:28</i>
In Attendance:		
Victoria Brown	Vice Principal	Yes
Nuala Briscoe	Vice Principal	Yes
Laura Murphy	Assistant Principal	Yes
Jim Winstanley	Finance Manager	Yes – <i>via MS Teams.</i>
Annaleigh Hurley	External Auditor - Menzies	Yes
Siobhan Archibald	Internal Auditor - WBG	Yes
Amy Appleton	Wigan Governor Services Clerk	Yes

Business commenced at 17:33

Meeting closed at 20:13

The meeting was quorate.

The meeting opened in prayer.

ITEM & INTENDED OUTCOME

1. ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS

1.1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Nominations were invited for the position of Chairperson. One nomination received from Pam Tate was accepted.

By show of hands, Pam Tate was unanimously elected as the Chairperson of the Corporation Board for 2025/2026 academic year.

Nominations were invited for the position of Vice Chairperson. No nominations were received for the position of Vice Chairperson. Philip Collier agreed to remain as the Vice Chairperson for the 2025/2026 academic year, however, did inform governors that he did not wish to continue beyond this.

1.2 Apologies and consideration of consent to absence

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Foundation governors, Mark Dumican, Mark Higgins and Co-opted governor Anne White.

The above apologies were accepted.

1.3 Any other Urgent Business (AOB)

The Chair informed governors that there was a confidential item to be discussed at item point 7.5. Staff members were to withdraw from the meeting to allow for the conversation to remain confidential.

1.4 Declarations of Interest

Governors were invited to declare any interest on any items on this agenda. No declarations were made.

1.5 Minutes of the previous meetings held on Wednesday 15th October 2025

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 15th October 2025 were approved as an accurate record and authorised for publication.

1.6 Matters Arising / Actions

There were no matters arising, all action points had been completed.

1.7 Minutes of the Committee Meetings – (if available)

a) Finance and Resources Committee – 26th November 2025. Draft minutes were received and noted.

b) Audit Committee – 8th December 2025. Draft minutes had been reviewed by the committee Chairperson and returned to the Clerk on this date for minor amendments.

c) Quality and Standards Committee – 11th December 2025. As this meeting had been postponed there were no minutes to be received.

Governors agreed to proceed with section 4, to allow the Internal and External Auditors to present and then withdraw.

4. FINANCE AND AUDIT

4.1 Receive and sign off the audited financial statements and letters of representation

The Internal Auditor proceeded to summarise the Internal Audit Report for 2024/2025, highlighting the following salient points:

- The Internal Audit Report included the overall opinion from the Internal Auditors.
- The contents of the Internal Audit report and prime responsibility of Internal Audit, as explained within section 1 of the report received.
- The overall opinion as detailed in section 2 of the report received confirmed - *In our opinion the College did have adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes to manage its achievement of the College's objectives at the time of our audit work. In our opinion, the College has proper arrangements to promote and secure value for money. However, we would however highlight that we provided a 'weak' level of assurance following the audit of the payroll process, with a high risk recommendation raised in relation to payroll responsibility. Further details on this are included on page 7 of this report.*
- The summary of work undertaken included, Student Recruitment, Staff Absence, Payroll, CIF Funding, Follow Up Review. All were marked as complete.

- The Audit findings in relation to the 1 “weak” level of assurance for the audit of the payroll process was summarised as detailed within section 3 of the report received.
- Benchmarking was slightly above, meaning the College had a higher number of recommendations in comparison with colleges benchmarked against.
- The Key Performance Indicator target percentage met the actual percentage of 100%.

Questions and comments were invited.

The Finance Manager commented, the College recognised the “weak” level of assurance for the audit of the payroll process. However, since, the “weakness” had been addressed and actioned. HR processes had been implemented which resulted in appropriate processes in place.

Q: Noting that Payroll (the highest cost to the College) received a weak level of assurance, is it the Audit Committee responsibility to continue to monitor actions implemented and ensure the risk is mitigated and will Internal Audit review the risk next year?

A: The risk will be reviewed as part of Audit processes and governor should continue to monitor actions.

A governor suggested, as the Payroll responsibility processes have now been actioned and governors are aware of this, the action should be marked as complete. The Finance Manager and Principal proceeded to inform governors of the plans in place to cover sickness absence and training to upskill staff within the HR/Payroll department. College leaders were continuing to address the identified issue.

Q: May concerns be raised if the Internal Audit Report is read without context?

A: The Internal Audit Report includes the response, action and implementation. There is context and the report confirmed that the weakness has been addressed, confirming that measures have been put into in place to mitigate future risks.

A governor commented, the management response has been received and the weakness has been addressed, the response on page 7 of the report is robust and confirms that adequate processes have been implemented.

Governors confirmed that they were satisfied with the Internal Audit Report presented.

Governors thanked the Internal Auditor for her time.

External Audit Letter of Representation

Governors received and noted the External Audit Letter of Representation which included the three recommendations and response received from College Management.

The External Auditor highlighted the following salient points:

- As noted and discussed at the recent Audit Committee meeting held on 8th December 2025 there were three low recommendations (not 4 as originally noted), these being:
 - Bank Reconciliation – One reconciliation form was not dated, however, verification had been sought through signature process and identified that the reconciliation form had been completed 6 weeks after month end, which was outside of the time frame. This was noted to be an isolated incident. The recommendation was for bank reconciliations to be signed and completed in a timely manner. (Low recommendation)
 - Impairment review - An annual impairment review was to be completed in order to determine if any assets are impaired at year. The College was to assess the value of the assets. (Low recommendation)
 - Deferred Capital Grants – there had been a mismatch due to part funded assets. Both the External Auditor and the Finance Manager understood the reasons for the

mismatch. A full reconciliation was to be carried out to reconcile the deferred capital grants to the asset net book value carried forward. (Low recommendation)

The College had accepted the above recommendations and responses had been provided.

- Adjusted Misstatements:
 - One invoice for capital works was not approved at year end, however, was reflected within the financial statements.
 - Some deferred income in relation to T Level had been re-classification within creditors to government grants, which was an adjustment within the creditors note only.
- There were no other uncorrected misstatements.
- There were a small number of minor disclosure amendments.
- The External Audit had been fully completed, and the signed self-assessment had been actioned by college Management, an email confirmation was to be received the following day.

Questions and comments were invited.

Q: Why has it only been noted at this Audit and not at previous Audits that that the impairment review had not been completed at year end?

A: This has come about due to wider audit / external feedback received. Procedures are to be in place to ensure good practice, assets are to be scrutinised and there will be an impairment review prior to year end.

Q: The recommendation for deferred capital grants – where these reconciled at year end for last year?

A: No, and this should have been raised by Audit Team the prior year. The year previous was fully reconciled.

Q: Why was the recommendation for deferred capital grants missed last year?

A: I (AH) am unsure of the reasons for this, but it was noted on file, somehow it was missed by the Auditor last year.

Q: Who is the Colleges link partner, as there had been little communication from them for some time?

A: Sue Hutchinson is the College partner who is working with College leaders.

The Chair commented that there were some changes required, these being:

Page 18 - Dominic Jones (previous Vice Principal) resignation date to be included.

Page 19 - The Audit committee comprises of three members not four, currently Anne White had joined the committee temporarily for quorum purposes.

Page 20 - Dominic Jones (previous Vice Principal) and Finance Manager (Jim Winstanley) do not form the Committee, to be removed.

The Chair commented, the first two months finances were received at the Autumn Term Finance and Resources Committee meeting. The accounts and deficit were challenged by the Committee, and the challenge can be seen within the minutes. The Committee noted the challenges in relation to staffing.

The Principal commented, unexpected long-term sickness has impacted the College, however the College will continue to monitor sickness and absences. The College is continuously looking at ways to save money.

The Chair commented, the Finance and Resources Committee will continue to monitor and challenge the College finances and report back to the Full Governing Board.

Governors agreed to sign off the presented Menzies Management Letter, Letters of Representation and Financial Statements. The Chair agreed to permit her electronic signature to be used by the College on the relating documents as the agreement from the Governing Board.

The Internal and External Auditors were thanked for their time and for being present at this meeting.

18:10 the Internal and External Auditors withdrew from the meeting at this point.

On behalf of the governing Board, the Chair gave thanks to the Finance Manager for his time, preparing reports in shorter timescales and for his response to challenge.

4.2 Receive an update on college finances

Governors received an update on the College finances, the following was noted:

- As the College financial health was RI, additional scrutiny was in place from the DfE.
- Additional student growth was a concern without additional financial support. College leaders were hopeful that additional financial support would be received next year, to support Student growth.
- The College was on a positive trajectory.
- It was imperative that robust controls were in place to ensure proper management of and protection of the College finances.
- College finances were to continue to be managed well and scrutinised by governors at both Committee and FGB meetings.

The Principal commented, the College Marketing Manager had devised a Marketing plan, some services were being brought in house to reduce costs to the College. Design costs were in the process of being brought in house, this allowed the College to manage and edit internally without the costs of external services. The Marketing Manager had an excellent skillset and since her appointment had made Marketing improvements and savings for the College.

Q: Have the Auditors company name changed?

A: The company has merged due to a change in the sector, therefore the name had changed.

Q: Is there any risk attached to the merging of companies?

A: The College is not aware of any associated risks. We have used the company for approximately 5 years, it may be beneficial to explore a change in Auditor.

Q: When is the new Finance Manager expected to commence in their role?

A: 11th March 2026. The current Finance Manager had agreed to stay in role a little longer to support with the transition.

The Finance Manager was thanked for his flexibility in supporting with the transition.

4.3 Receive and approve the annual reports from the committees

Received and noted within item point 4.1.

18:26 the Finance Manager withdrew at this point.

2. COLLEGE ITEMS

2.1 College SAR

Governors received the College SAR and Development Plan in advance of the meeting. The Principal highlighted the following salient points:

- Following input from Students, Staff and Governors College Leaders had met to discuss and create a draft Development Plan.
- The Development Plan contained the priorities of the previous College Development Plan with the ambitions set out in the College Growth Strategy and SAR.
- The four strands of growth strategy and action plan which were detailed within the report.
- Actions identified which had been included within the SAR and Development Plan.
- Barriers to learning were to be removed, inclusivity was paramount with adaptive teaching methods in place.
- The focus on skills and careers was to remain.
- The Development Plan would be looked at externally by Ofsted.
- To align with the new Ofsted Framework, the following year there was to be a new layout to the Development Plan and re-design of the SAR processes. To confirm, this year's Development Plan was created in line with the New Ofsted Framework and grading system.

Q: Are the grading measures included within?

A: Yes the overall grading is included within the graphs section and had been checked against other Colleges SAR panels. Individual grading of subject is linked to targets, leaders continue to have the challenging conversations. The College performs above benchmarking data for learners as SJR has more high grades. Outcomes remain very good.

Governors approved the College SAR and Development Plan.

2.2 Football Foundation Update

The Principal gave a verbal Football Foundation update, the following was noted:

- There has been no progress since the last meeting.
- The legal team had been in contact and confirmed that there was no reason why the application could not proceed.
- An initial concern raised from the Archdiocese, linked to how funding was being used and used appropriately had been resolved following conversations. A percentage of income was to be reserved for maintenance purposes.
- As part of the application process, the College was to pay a percentage of the cost.

2.3 Risk Register Excerpt

The risk register excerpt was received from the latest Risk Register. The summary provided the overall risk grid and updates on the corporate risk, Academisation. Academisation was discussed at item point 6.11.

3. STRATEGIC MATTERS

3.1 Policies:

Governors reviewed and approved the below policies for publication.

- a) Lockdown
- b) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Q: When will the Student Voice Policy come to governors for approval?

A: This policy should come to the next Q & S Committee meeting.

ACTION:

Clerk to include Student Voice Policy on the Q&S Committee meeting agenda.

5. QUALITY AND STANDARDS

5.1 Curriculum Update

Governors received the Curriculum update, including SAR actions in advance of the meeting. The Vice Principal, Victoria Brown highlighted the following salient points:

- There was a focus on increasing high grade outcomes across all areas. ALPS targeting was being used more and was noted and evidenced within future Curriculum reports.
- I270 was to be used strategically, to improve Student engagement and develop autonomy.
- The i270 College strategy had been reviewed and updated (detailed progress update was provided within the report received)
- Monitoring of areas of underperformance was identified during the Summer Term. Staff had been provided with subject expertise support on actions agreed, progress was to continue to be monitored.

Questions were invited:

Q: Do you have any concerns to raise?

A: In regard to the Curriculum, some small changes have been requested which I feel will be impactful. Leaders are mindful of staff wellbeing and workload, the i270 approach is to be supportive and ensures that good practice is shared across the College. Feedback is welcomed from staff.

The Principal commented, the assessment process has been updated slightly to be less of a burden and to ensure assessments are even more impactful.

Q: How are interval verification and quality assurance processes of BTEC courses?

A: The Internal verifier processes are standardised across for the BTEC courses, which College adheres to.

Q: Are you satisfied that the processes are being followed correctly?

A: Yes.

Q: How are staff asked to cover additional lessons?

A: Generally we find that the team bring a solution to the Management Team, covering of lessons is discussed with the department to ensure that the students learning comes first. The concern with supply cover is the lack of quality, where possible departments usually prefer to cover internally. Staff are supported well, and we ensure that we go out for cover when needed and in a timely manner.

Q: Will College Leaders commit to appointing a full time postholder to cover Student growth and staffing needs?

A: Yes, for the area of need.

Q: It was positive to see that the recent staff bulletin detailed the increase in attendance figures, what have College leaders implemented that has raised this?

A: The recent use of Power of BI has been effective. The Pastoral Team remain strategic and follow College's robust attendance procedures along with continuing to meet with Parents. We are exploring all opportunities and continuously thinking of new ideas to raise attendance and inspire Students. There has been recent dip in attendance across schools which is being monitored closely.

Q: May there a link between lower attendance and Students undertaking seasonal work?

A: Looking at the attendance reports, there is no trend to suggest this trend. Recently, we have had an increase in Students going home unwell, which shows that the Students have come into College but not been well enough to remain for the day. Students are aware of their own attendance figures as this is shared with both them and parents, Students are aware of the link between absences and attainment. Attendance is important and everyone's priority.

Q: Have College Leaders considered introducing a system to record and track attendance?

A: We have explored systems, the system available to Colleges is called CEDAR, but it is too expensive to purchase.

Q: Does attendance remain high on Students agenda?

A: Yes, Students are proactive and do generally come into college if they feel well enough to do so, which is encouraging.

Q: Is there a return to work procedure in place for staff?

A: Yes and this is undertaken.

The Staff governor commented, students are committed to their learning and where possible come into College when they feel a little unwell. Students should be proud of their commitment to their learning which is encouraged by College staff.

Governors discussed the systems in place to record student attendance within different departments.

Student governors were asked to feedback their thoughts on SharePoint programme that was being used to access learning materials. Feedback included:

- Better communication for students was suggested, detailing how to correctly use SharePoint and how SharePoint supported with learning.
- Onboarding concerns were raised.
- Gradually as SharePoint was developed the platform resources and access were expected to improve.
- SharePoint was not suitable for all lessons.
- SharePoint was to compliment lessons and was not in any way replacing in person learning.

Governors continued to discuss the pros and cons of using SharePoint, the Vice Principal explained the expectations and how SharePoint was to be used to support Students in their learning.

The Chair commented, it was useful to receive a summary of the outcome of the SAR at the start of the report.

5.2 Marketing and Recruitment update

Governors received the Marketing and Recruitment report in advance of the meeting. The Assistant Principal Laura Murphy highlighted the following salient points:

- Social Media growth engagement and follower numbers had risen significantly across all platforms.
- Instagram and Facebook growth was positive, engagement and responses from Tick Tock was very good. The Assistant Principal explained how Tick Tock content was used and how schools and the local community were tagged into events / posts.
- Feedback from Student Voice was used in relation to Marketing strategies and the use of Social Media platforms. Filtering and monitoring of Tick Tock was of age-appropriate content. Comments were moderated and to date had been positive.
- Facebook growth with followers was positive, however, engagement growth was low.
- The content of each platform was constantly reviewed in line with audience participation.
- Open Event growth was positive and there had been an increase in attendance of approximately 3%. Press releases and advertisements had been issued in the local community.
- Website performance Google analytics was live on the College website, and a website audit was to be carried out in the near future.

- Marketing of the College was to continue; the College remained in demand.

Questions were invited.

Q: What are the reasons for the November open event having lower attendance than the earlier open events?

A: This has been discussed at length, we believe November is the wrong time of the year, there were also parking restrictions due to the building works which we feel had an impact. Next year we will look at having the third open day at a different time in the year.

Student governors fed back their thoughts on the open evening dates in line with application timescales. This was followed by an in-depth conversation on the schedule of open day/evening dates and times.

On behalf of Governors the Chair gave thanks to the Assistant Principal Laura Murphy for her hard work positively Marketing the College.

The Principal gave thanks to the Vice Principal's for supporting the Assistant Principal with Marketing the College.

5.3 Safeguarding / Pastoral Update

Governors received the Safeguarding Report in advance of the meeting, the Vice Principal Nuala Briscoe highlighted the following salient points:

- Link governor meeting with the Safeguarding Link governor Anne White had been conducted.
- There had been a rise in medical health and wellbeing needs amongst Students.
- Early interventions and strategies were in place to support Student needs.
- Robust Safeguarding practices were in place for both Staff and Students.

6. GOVERNANCE ITEMS

6.1 Annual Declarations

Governors were reminded to complete their annual declarations via GovernorHub, including Related Party Transactions and Eligibility.

ACTION:

Clerk to upload to GovernorHub Related Party Transactions for 25/26.

Governors to complete annual declarations, including Related Party Transactions and Eligibility.

6.2 Committee Membership

Committee membership comprised of:

- Finance & Resources - Pam Catherall, Pam Tate & Philip Collier. The College Principal Paula Nolan and Finance Manager Jim Winstanley sat on the committee.
- Audit - Peter Cudlip, Anne White & Mark Higgins. The Finance Manager Jim Winstanley sat on the committee
- Quality & Standards - Phil Collier, Anne White, Chris Chandler, Pam Tate, Katie Watts and Mark Dumican. The College Principal Paula Nolan, Assistant Principal Laura Murphy and Vice Principal's Victoria Brown and Nuala Briscoe sat on the committee.

6.3 Governing Board Terms of Reference

Governors received the Committee Terms of Reference in advance of the meeting.

- a) Audit Committee – Agreed
- b) Remuneration Committee - Agreed
- c) Search and Governance Committee - Agreed

6.4 Skills Audit

Governors agreed to complete their Skills Audit to be returned to the Clerk by the deadline date of Friday 13th February 2026. New governors were to be asked to complete the skills audit on induction.

ACTION:

Clerk to circulate via GovernorHub the Skills Audit for completion.

Governors to complete and return to the Clerk their Skills Audits by the deadline date of Friday 13th February 2026.

6.5 Undertake the governance self-assessment process in order to review findings in March

Clerk to include on Spring FGB meeting agenda. To link with recruitment and skills audit results.

ACTION:

Clerk to include governance self-assessment process / self-evaluation on Spring FGB meeting agenda.

6.6 Vacancies

Governors noted that there were four Foundation vacancies and one parent vacancy. Governor recruitment was ongoing; with three potential Foundation governors who were considering joining the governing board.

The Chair and Principal had met with the interested candidates and recommended them to the governing board, for approval as per the appointment processes. Governors agreed for appointment processes to proceed.

Q: Is there an update on the Parent vacancy?

A: Yes, one interested parent did come forward and express an interest, however, has not responded back to me following initial discussions. This will be followed up on as I (Chair) have sent out another email asking if he remains interested in joining the governing board.

Re-appointments / Updates

Mark Dumican, Mark Higgins and Pam Tate were re-appointed for a further four-year term of office from 30th November 2025.

Associate Members were being sought as part of governor recruitment processes.

Staff governor, Chris Chandler term of office due to end on 31st January 2026.

Assistant Principal, Laura Murphy confirmed that she would be supporting with governor recruitment.

ACTION:

Clerk to forward Foundation application forms to the Chair for forwarding onto potential new governors. Governor recruitment to continue. Clerk to check the process for Staff governor appointment/election.

6.7 Link Governor Reports

The below link governor reports had been received in advance of the meeting. Due to the link governor not being present at this meeting, governors agreed to defer this item to the Spring Term FGB meeting agenda to allow the governor to feedback.

- SEND (AW)
- Safeguarding (AW)

ACTION:

Clerk to include link governor monitoring reports on the Spring Term FGB meeting agenda.

6.8 Annual Strategic Conference

Governors discussed and agreed to move the Annual Strategic Conference back to May 2026, this would allow the new Finance Manager and new governors to settle into their roles.

6.9 External Governance Review and Governance Improvement Plan

Clerk to include on Spring Term FGB meeting agenda. To link with the Annual Strategic Conference.

ACTION:

Clerk to include External Governance Review and Governance Improvement Plan on Spring Term FGB agenda.

6.10 Governor Training Plan

Governors noted the recommended training (and links) to be completed.

- Safeguarding (All)
- Prevent (Safeguarding governor)
- Cyber Security
- SFCA Training / Webinars

The Clerk confirmed that she had sent out email reminders to those governors who were outstanding mandatory training.

ACTION:

All governors to undertake outstanding and recommended training.

6.11 Academisation Update

The Principal verbally highlighted the following:

- Met with Joan McCarthy, Director of Education at Liverpool Archdiocese and the Principal at Carmel College.
- Discussed the Estate Strategy which was due to be launched January/February 2026.
- Reassured that the Arcdoicese would work with the College and that Academisation would *not be done to* the College, there was recognition that College settings were different from School settings.
- There were two options to be considered, these being:
 - Option 1 – Large MAT (Multi Academy Trust) three to four Colleges within one MAT.
 - Option 2 – Become an Academy with Carmel College.

Q: Does Option 2 include schools?

A: No, option 2 is just for the SJR and Carmel College only.

Q: Is there to be a review of public funds towards sixth-forms?

A: Not as we are aware.

Q: What is Carmel College financial position?

A: We are unsure but believe their financial health may be *Good*.

Q: Is there a timescale?

A: Suggested 2 years.

The Staff governor commented, there may some positives of joining a MAT.

ACTION:

Clerk to include Academisation update on Spring FGB meeting agenda.

6.12 Annual Report from the Committees'

Governors received and noted the annual report from the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee Chairperson, Peter Cudlip thanked the FGB Chairperson Pam Tate for her support in creating the annual report.

Q: There is a variance between budget vs actual, what is the reason for this?

A: In 2024/2025 the pay award was set at 2%, but the percentage awarded was higher at 5.5%, the College received a small amount of financial support but did not cover the full percentage increase. The pay award was phased in, staff were awarded the 3.5% in September and 2% in April. Also, the 13% National Insurance increase impacted the College finances, as this was not budgeted for, again, the College received some financial support of approximately £50,000 but this did not cover the full amount. Marketing and non-pay cost centres went overspent, plus the recruitment of additional 77 students had also contributed to the variance. The College did not receive LAG Funding last year. Miscellaneous income was lower than expected which was disappointing and was not as expected. The variance was out of the Colleges control as it was unexpected.

Q: Noting the previous variance this year's budget robust?

A: Yes. A 4% pay award and an additional 20 students have been budgeted for. One full time equivalent teacher and a Finance Manager is to be recruited which will be an additional cost to the College finances. Temporary support in premises team due to the ongoing works is also an additional cost.

Q: Are Management satisfied that the College is liquid and solvent?

A: Yes, the variance has been reflected in the College forecast records including the move from *good* financial health to *requires improvement*. College Leaders have met with the DfE (Department for Education) who have asked for us to provide them with quarterly management accounts and cashflow reports, these I can confirm have been submitted today. The College remains solvent.

7. STANDING ITEMS

7.1 Meeting Reflection/Impact

Governors reflected on the meeting; the following was noted:

- Conversations were open and honest.
- Governors were satisfied with the Audit and Finance documentation and summary reports received, which were approved.
- Governor recruitment was looking positive.
- Questions were strategic with good responses received from Management.
- Financial health was being monitored closely by Management and scrutinised at Committee meetings.

7.2 Urgent Items (AOB)

There were no items of any other urgent business raised.

7.3 Confidentiality

Governors were reminded of the importance of confidentiality.

Item 7.5 was minuted in separate confidential minutes.

7.4 Date and time of next meetings:

Wednesday 26th March 2025 at 5.30pm.

Wednesday 2nd July 2025 at 6pm.

With there being no further business, governors were thanked for their time and wised a wonderful Christmas.

Staff members were asked to leave the meeting at this point to allow for the confidential item to be discussed.

7.5 Confidential Item

Principal's Remuneration. This item was minuted in separate confidential minutes.

The meeting closed at 20:13.

ITEM POINT	ACTION	WHO
3.1	Include Student Voice Policy on the Spring Q & S Committee agenda	Clerk
6.4	Circulate via GovernorHub the Skills Audit for completion.	Clerk
6.4	Complete and return to the Clerk their Skills Audits by the deadline date of Friday 13 th February 2026.	Gov's
6.1	Upload to GovernorHub Related Party	Clerk

	Transactions for 25/26.	
6.1	Complete annual declarations, including Related Party Transactions and Eligibility.	Gov's
6.6	Forward Foundation application forms to the Chair for forwarding onto potential new governors.	Clerk/Chair
6.6	Governor recruitment to continue.	All
6.6	Check the process for Staff governor appointment/election.	Clerk
6.5	Include governance self-assessment process / self-evaluation on Spring FGB meeting agenda.	Clerk
6.7	Include link governor monitoring reports on the Spring Term FGB meeting agenda.	Clerk
6.9	Include External Governance Review and Governance Improvement Plan on Spring Term FGB agenda.	Clerk
6.10	Undertake outstanding and recommended training.	All/as applicable
6.11	Include Academisation update on Spring FGB meeting agenda.	Clerk