MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11TH FEBRUARY 2026 AT THE SCHOOL AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

Name	Governor Type	Other Information	Term of Office	Present/Apologies/ Absent
Alessia Errico	Foundation	Chair	01.11.2024-31.08.2028	Present
Sylvia Lehrian	Foundation	Co-Vice Chair	01.09.2024-31.08.2028	Present
Father Godfrey Portphal Alois Msumange	Foundation		01.11.2025-31.08.2029	Apologies
Francesca Giacon	Foundation		01.10.2024-31.08.2028	Present
Peter Moger	Foundation		01.09.2021-31.08.2025	Present
Peter Collins	Foundation	Co-Vice Chair	01.09.2024-31.08.2028	Present
vacancy	Foundation			
Liz Reeve	Foundation		01.01.2023-31.08.2026	Present
Narell Dannie	Elected Parent		07.10.2025-06.10.2029	Apologies
Serena Horgan	Elected Parent		07.10.2022-06.10.2026	Present
Fiona Winters	Elected Parent		26.01.2024-25.01.2028	Present
Maureen Kelly	Staff	Headteacher	Ex-officio	Present
Una Turner	Staff		08.06.2022-07.06.2026	Present
Gordon Fisher	LA		26.05.2025-25.06.2029	Present
Non-voting attendees				
Nicki Whatley	SLT			In attendance
Jane Pemberton	SLT			In attendance
Caroline Winston	Clerk		N/A	In attendance

PART ONE

The meeting opened with a prayer.

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Consent was recorded to apologies for absence submitted on behalf of Narell Dannie and Fr Godfrey.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 No business or other interests were declared for this meeting.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7TH OCTOBER 2025 AND MATTERS ARISING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2025, copies of which had been previously shared, were confirmed and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

4.2 There were no matters arising or actions.

5. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

5.1 The report of the Headteacher, copies of which had been shared with governors, was received and noted. Arising from the report:

5.2 Roll There were currently 475 children on roll. One child was joining Year 1, and one in Year 2.

5.3 Una Turner was currently carrying out parent tours of the Nursery.

5.4 **ASKED** whether the additional child in Year 1 would take the cohort over numbers, the Headteacher explained that another family in Year 1 were in the process of finding a school closer to home so this would not be an issue.

5.5 RE, Catholic Life & Mission and Collective Worship It was highlighted that the school was currently in the window for a Section 48 inspection this academic year. The CSED was continually updated to represent the school's current provision. The entire school was now using the updated RE curriculum, To Know You More Clearly, since September 2025.

5.6 School Travel Plan A full update on this had been provided by Mrs Groom.

5.7 The Explorer Ambassadors would be delivering an assembly that Friday.

5.8 Household Support Fund Vouchers The Local Authority were providing schools with money to distribute to vulnerable and disadvantaged families. The school had identified 22 children who would benefit from this fund. They received a payment of £21.15 per child for last October 2025. The deadline for the February half term numbers was 29th January 2026. They were not releasing the cost of the vouchers just yet.

5.9 PE and Sports Premium It was noted that, this academic year, St Catherine's had received £19,630 in PE and Sport Premium funding.

5.10 To maximise the impact of this investment, the school had funded after-school club places for targeted pupils to reduce barriers to participation, replaced and supplemented PE equipment to ensure every child had access to the resources required for high-quality, active lessons and secured a five-day intensive swimming programme for Year 6 in the Summer Term.

5.11 These actions supported the school's strategic focus on broadening access, increasing participation and ensuring high-quality provision for all.

5.12 The Headteacher added that the LA had advised that the school should not expect to receive PE and Sport Premium funding next academic year, although this has not yet been formally confirmed.

5.13 SEND It was highlighted that there were currently 10 pupils on roll with an EHCP.

5.14 The main area of need for children with an EHCP was Autism.

5.15 There were currently 62 children on the SEN register who were receiving additional support. The main are of need was Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SCLN).

5.16 The school was currently gathering evidence for 2 pupils (1 in KS1 and 1 in KS2) in order to apply for an Educational Healthcare Needs Assessment (EHCNA).

5.17 Pupil Premium Approximately 5% of the school population was disadvantaged.

5.18 20 children received Free School Meals (FSM); 3 pupils received Early Years Pupil Premium, and 2 were Looked After Children (LAC).

5.19 Currently, their additional provision focused on their Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs through targeted interventions and resources. The school had 1 child under a special guardianship order who attracted Pupil Premium Plus (PP+).

5.20 Safeguarding There had been one Team Around the Child Meeting attended this term for a LAC, three referrals made to Children's Social Care Service due to domestic abuse and one referral to the LADO.

5.21 There were currently 3 LAC on roll.

5.22 Exclusions The Headteacher reported that one child had been suspended for 3.5 days and the school had been in contact with the relevant professionals whilst dealing with this. The suspension had been due to violence against staff and other pupils.

5.23 Communication with Parents Parent links included:

- Parent Partnership Meetings
- Nativities
-Carols in the playground
- After School Book Look
- Internet Safety workshops for children & parents
-Individual year group masses
- Year Group Prayer Services
- PTA meetings and events
- Individual Parent Meetings
- Speech & Language Therapy Coffee morning
- Parent survey

5.24 Academies The Headteacher reminded governors that St Catherine's would not now be joining ASCAT at the end of this academic year. The Academy Working Party had met with Peter Sweeney, Director of Westminster Diocese, to explain that their due diligence showed ASCAT would not enhance the education provision at St Catherine's and academising at this stage would be a detriment to the school's financial position. The school would continue their relationship with Stephen Wheatley, ASCAT CEO, and support other schools in Barnet should they wish to academise. The school hoped to join ASCAT at a later stage, once they become one of the four main Catholic Academy Trusts in Westminster.

5.25 The Headteacher added that she had attended a Deanery meeting the previous week and none of the schools involved had made progress in academising to date.

5.26 Staffing It was reported that Mrs Savva started her maternity leave in the second week in November 2025. She gave birth to a baby boy on Boxing Day. Mr Nathan was appointed to teach 2S a week before Mrs Savva left so that a full handover could be carried out. At the end of the Autumn term the school appointed a more experienced and highly skilled teacher Mrs Betty Moody. She had embraced the policies and procedures, and the children were settled and were already making good progress. Mrs Horkuc, Year 1 Teacher, left at Christmas to teach in Ms Evans' Primary School in Borehamwood where she had been given the role of Phonics Leader. Ms Sara Lee Ward replaced Mrs Horkuc as Year 1H class teacher. She was an experienced teacher and was providing lots of learning opportunities in the continuous provision.

5.27 Appraisals Teacher appraisals took place in Autumn 2025. The support staff would have their appraisals by the end of March 2026.

5.28 Premises The Headteacher reported that the Autumn term 2025 saw the majority of the boiler works being completed. Work started at the end of the summer break and continued until just after the half term break. All three boilers and associated pipework had been replaced, including the pressurisation units in both plant rooms, the ongoing leak from a pipe on the boiler room ceiling had been remedied and all the radiators around the school had new thermostatic mixer valves and their flow had been corrected. The seven very old fan convector radiators had been replaced with five new ones and air conditioning in Year 5 was completed in the summer break, which replaced the need for their fan convectors (air conditioning was funded by the Governors as no funding from the DoW was received for this).

5.29 There had been a couple of issues; the new boilers initially were locking out but had now been programmed correctly which had been better, but the increased power of the new units had flagged that of the two pumps which send the heat around the school, one is aged and considerably weaker than the other. This was outside the scope of the funded project and currently SJP are putting together a quote for a replacement pump.

5.30 Unfortunately, whilst awaiting the final fan convector to be commissioned, which was delayed by electrical issues, one of the pipes behind that unit came apart during the tail end of the Christmas break. This caused the Reception classroom to be flooded, damaging furniture and requiring carpet cleaning to be commissioned to rectify the odour. This was successful and the carpet was saved, and SJP had donated money for the school to cover the costs of replacement furniture and rugs, which were currently on order.

5.31 The final part of the new gate commissioning was dependent on software installation and training, which was taking place that week so the inner locks should be switched on in the next few days.

5.32 The investigation of the leak in the staff room ceiling was ongoing. Barkers had added this to the school's condition survey with a high priority and the Headteacher was now waiting to see if funding would be allocated for this.

5.33 Finance It was noted that teachers received a 4% cost of living increase which was approved and applied in September. The support staff were awarded a 3.2% cost of living increase which was applied in September and backdated to April as usual, which was the start of their salary year, following prolonged negotiations between unions and government.

5.34 Work would commence in March 2026 on the 2026/2027 budget. This would need to be submitted to Barnet by the end of May 2026.

5.35 The PTA had agreed a donation of £20,000 to the school to cover the costs incurred for the groundworks to the memorial garden to create the new outdoor classroom area, with the addition of the new weatherproof structure (including lights and heating). The next fundraising project would be to complete the remaining outside classroom groundworks with paving and a grotto.

5.36 EYFS This term had already seen a successful settling in of new starters in the 2 and 3-year-old provision. All children had settled extremely well and were all very happy in the Nursery.

5.37 The Admissions processes for September 2026 had begun, and the school was also taking in-year admissions for the Nurseries.

5.38 There had been 147 applications for Reception 2026 admissions. The school had reviewed their admissions process for the nurseries to be more in line with the private sector and to make them more attractive to prospective families. This now began with a personal tour, allowing parents to ask questions and gain insights into how staff could best meet their children's needs. This aimed to build strong partnerships with families from the outset, ensuring a smooth transition into nursery life. This had been advertised on the school website, on Instagram and in local shops and community centres, such as libraries and leisure centres. Additionally, the EYFS Lead had developed a clear invoicing system for the Nursery children that enabled parents to see precisely what their funded hours covered and where any additional charges applied.

5.39 The school's ongoing assessments indicated that the main areas of need in EYFS were speaking and listening, and personal, social and emotional development. A number of children had been identified across the EYFS with communication difficulties. In response, staff were actively engaging children with rich language and targeted conversations, particularly for the EAL (English as an Additional Language) pupils and those with additional needs. This approach ensured that all children had ample opportunities to acquire the key language skills required to access the EYFS curriculum.

5.40 The Learning and Achievement Committee had analysed the school's progress data in detail.

5.41 English This year, the School Improvement Plan prioritised developing children's appreciation of poetry and high-quality literature, building the skills and cultural capital they needed for future success. The two main areas of focus were: strengthening teachers' confidence in teaching poetry and increasing pupils' exposure to rich poetic experiences.

5.42 Maths The information was noted.

5.43 It was highlighted that the school promoted Numbots and TTRS across the school for home learning, increasing home engagement and number fact fluency. Progress was celebrated through certificates, competitions and assemblies, fostering a positive Maths culture.

5.44 Computing and AI The information was noted.

5.45 SIP The School Improvement Plan for Autumn Term 2025 had been shared with the Learning & Achievement committee. Whilst the results were well above national, the school would like to continue to embed effective teaching and learning strategies which increased opportunities for children to achieve greater depth in RE, reading, writing and maths. The impact of the training that had been carried out so far was already being seen.

5.46 SEF The SEF would be changed to reflect the new Ofsted Framework. The Headteacher was currently gathering evidence for each of the bullet points in the expected standard and strong standard for each of the 8 areas. Once this task had been completed, strengths and areas of development would be apparent. The school's Ofsted inspection window had opened September 2025.

5.47 Next Steps The Headteacher reported that next steps included:
- Prepare and be ready for Section 48 inspection
- Prepare and be ready for Ofsted Inspection
- To continue to fundraise so that the school could pave over the gravel surrounding the outdoor classroom.
- Create a Prayer garden with grotto.
- Create the "Play Hub" for babies and toddlers to increase income
- Introduce evening and weekend lettings to increase income.
- Purchase a school server.

5.48 **ASKED** what the impact would be if there was no PE grant next year, the Headteacher said that the clubs run after school were all profitable and PP children would continue to be offered subsidised spaces.

5.49 **ASKED** when the survey results would be available, the Headteacher said that she had these and would be reviewing them with Sylvia Lehrian and these would then be published on the school website after half term.

6. UPDATE ON MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

6.1 There was nothing further to report as this had been covered elsewhere.

7. SAFEGUARDING

7.1 A safeguarding meeting had been held at the school on 13th October 2025, the minutes of which had been shared with governors.

7.2 The safeguarding governor had also undertaken a check of the SCR on 11th November 2025.

7.3 There were no staff wellbeing issues to report. It was noted that teacher feedback about the continued practice of parent consultations being conducted online at home were very positive.

7.4 The 'Education Support' service that the school had bought into for the past 2 years was not being used and had been cancelled. Barnet were now offering an employee assistance programme which would be shared with all staff.

7.5 Governors were encouraged to update their safeguarding training if they had not completed this within the last 12 months. The safeguarding governor had shared a link for a one-hour training session taking place online on 24th February at 7.00pm. Governors were asked to complete this training and confirm their attendance after completion.

7.6 Alternative safeguarding training would be sourced for those unavailable on that date.

7.7 Sylvia Lehrian reported that she was booked to attend governor training on the New Ofsted Framework.

7.8 The LA safeguarding audit and child on child audit had been completed and sent to Barnet.

7.9 A school buildings audit had also been completed.

7.10 Cyber security in school continued to be closely monitored. Training was given yearly at the start of the Autumn term and secure systems were in place.

7.11 The DfE had published guidance on how schools could prepare for Martyn's Law, the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025. The Act would make those responsible for premises and events

legally accountable for minimising the impact of a terrorist attack. There was a 24-month implementation period before legislation came into force, during which time the government would issue statutory guidance to support compliance.

7.12 The SCR had been checked, and everything had been in order. Both the Headteacher and the safeguarding governor also regularly undertook spot checks of the SCR.

7.13 The Headteacher informed governors that there would be an independent audit of the SCR.

8. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

8.1 Catholic Life The minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2025, copies of which had been shared, were received and noted. The committee had also undertaken a learning walk on 30th January 2026. Arising from both meetings:

8.2 The learning walk had been really positive, and the committee had seen collective worship and child led worship in Year 4 and Year 6 in action.

8.3 It was reported that the Nativity and Carol Services held at the end of the Autumn term had been really well attended. The Headteacher said that the school had offered a package for £13 for the Christmas Jumper fundraising Day, the Christmas Panto and the filming of the Nativity and this had been received positively by families.

8.4 Staff have been moderating the RE books with teachers from Pope Paul and Sacred Heart schools. This collaboration benefited all parties.

8.5 The Committee felt that there was a real feeling of enthusiasm for RE and Catholic Life learning in school, with pupils relating it now to their own worlds.

8.6 Fr Godfrey was praised for his work with the children. He was now doing all of the masses in school, and the children were really positive about him. The Headteacher said that the carol service had been thoroughly enjoyed by all, with the parishioners welcoming the children into the Church.

8.7 The Committee had reviewed the new Catholic Life area of the school website.

8.8 The Committee heard that the Department for Education had issued new uniform guidelines that schools were only allowed to insist on three branded items of uniform. Most schools were against this as it was very restrictive. The three compulsory items of logoed uniform that were going to remain were the hoodie, the jumper or cardigan and the polo shirt. The PE t-shirts with logos would still appear on the website as school uniform items and Smiths would continue to stock these t-shirts, although parents would have the right to buy plain t-shirts.

8.9 Learning & Achievement Committee The minutes of the meeting held on 29th January 2026, copies of which had been shared, were received and noted. Arising from the minutes:

8.10 The committee had analysed in detail the Autumn term data and it was highlighted that:

- Children in all groups had made significant progress from their starting points in the prime areas in both Nursery and Reception.
- There was no significant gap between EAL and Non EAL children's achievements in Reception.
- There was a gender gap in attainment across EYFS (Girls>Boys). To try to remedy this, staff were auditing the indoor and outdoor provision to ensure the environment was inviting to boys and that there were writing and maths opportunities for boys.
- EAL pupils were not achieving in line with Non EAL pupils in Nursery. The staff were flooding the children with language and targeted conversation so that EAL children had as many opportunities as possible to acquire key language skills.
- In KS1, EAL children were achieving broadly in line in Yr1 and Yr2.
- 76% of the children in Yr1 were already achieving the pass mark in the Phonics Screening Check.
- The percentage of children identified as "at risk" during Pupil Progress Meetings in September decreased on review at the end of the Autumn Term.
- There was a 20% gap in Writing between the girls and boys in Yr1. The new Yr1 teacher had been trained up in Tales Toolkit.
- There was a gender gap in Reading, Writing and Maths in Yr2, where boys were outperforming girls. This was cohort specific due to the number of girls (38) compared to the boys (20). The English

leader had supported the teachers in their planning; targeted interventions had been put in place including phonics support. Teaching Assistant support had been prioritised when available. The Deputy Head was supporting the children in Maths and Writing to ensure the unusually large group of girls who had high support needs were making progress.
- In KS2 the percentage of children identified as "at risk" during Pupil Progress meetings in September decreased on review at the end of Autumn Term.
- In all KS2, children were achieving broadly in line in Reading, Writing and Maths.
- There was a gender achievement gap in Yr4 and Yr5 writing (Girls>Boys). The staff were aware of these gaps, and the children had been discussed in depth at Pupil Progress meetings and were being targeted through Quality First Teaching and were currently in interventions targeting handwriting or SPAG.

8.11 The Committee had also completed their Autumn term review of the SIP.

8.12 Moderation of RE books had been completed in conjunction with Pope Paul Primary School and Sacred Heart Primary School.

8.13 Child led worship had been planned again for this term. It was embedded in each classroom. The RE leader had continued to attend courses at Westminster and had disseminated the information to Teachers.

8.14 The Committee had discussed the new Ofsted Framework which was now assessed against a five-point scale. During the inspection, case sampling would be carried out and six children would be identified by the inspectors and were followed throughout the school day so their daily experience was observed. There would now be four inspectors in school over two days.

8.15 The SEF document was now null and void due to the new Ofsted Framework. A new document was being devised under the new system.

8.16 The Marking & Feedback policy had been reviewed.

8.17 The Committee's next Learning Walk would be on Thursday 19th March 2026 at 9.30am. The focus of this visit would be Inclusion.

8.18 **ASKED** about the fact that the Year 1 data was stronger compared to other year groups and whether this was due to the change of teacher and possible assessment discrepancies, the Headteacher said that this was not the case. It was explained thar this was a very able cohort of children.

8.19 A brief discussion ensued about higher proportion of needs in Year 2, particularly a group of 14 girls. This was why there was a gender gap with the outcomes and there was lower progress overall than other year groups.

8.20 **ASKED** about the Year 5 and Year 6 data and whether these outcomes represented a trend, it was explained that the current Year 6 were not as strong as last year's, with more EHCPs, late joiners to the school and more overall needs. The Headteacher said that some would not sit the SATs as they were working below KS2 and due to some emotional needs in the class.

8.21 Governors were reminded that the Autumn term data drop was often more cautious than the rest of the year.

8.22 It was reported that there had been lots of interventions introduced in Year 6, with Monday Booster sessions before school and some after school booster sessions.

8.23 **ASKED** whether they were well attended, this was confirmed. The Headteacher said that there was an issue with one pupil regularly arriving late to the sessions and this had been addressed with the family.

8.24 A brief discussion ensued about the tracking of pupil data. Governors heard that the school currently used Route Map but were in the process of moving to a cloud based online assessment platform called Insight. The company were currently in the process of populating the data backdated to 2018.

8.25 <u>Resources Committee</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2025, copies of which had been shared, were received and noted. Arising from the minutes:

8.26 The Committee had undertaken a line-by-line review of the Q2 forecast.

8.27 Governors heard that when the budget had been set, the year-end figure forecast had been £59,000. This had now reduced to £34,000.

8.28 A review had been undertaken of benchmarking data, which included three other similar schools, and there had been nothing identified as problematic.

8.29 The profit and loss accounts had been reviewed for Breakfast Club, After School Club and the Nurseries and this had all been in order.

8.30 A new oven which had improved capacity for the Arts Hub kitchen had been put in the budget to cope with the additional demand.

8.31 A range of resources policies had been reviewed and ratified by the Committee. The terms of reference had also been reviewed and approved.

8.32 Some contracts required renewal now that the school was not joining ASCAT.

8.33 **ASKED** whether some companies including payroll, HR and finance had been served notice when it was anticipated that the school would be joining the MAT, this was confirmed. The Headteacher said that the school was now in negotiation with them to agree new contracts.

9. UPDATE ON ACADEMISATION

9.1 This had already been discussed in the report of the Headteacher.

10. REVIEW OF POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

10.1 There were none.

11. GOVERNOR TRAINING

11.1 The BELS training information had been shared on GovernorHub.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 There was none.

13. WHAT WAS THE IMPACT ON THE CHILDREN

13.1 The impact of the Governors' work was as follows:

- The Safeguarding of children remained a high priority in school.
- The Governors continued to monitor and implement strategies to ensure the wellbeing of staff and children.
- Pupils' academic outcomes continued to be strong.
- Close financial monitoring meant that the budget remained healthy enabling focussed spending for the benefit of the children.
- The Catholic Life of the school was visible throughout and pupils were engaged with this.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

14.1 The date of the next meeting was changed to:

- **Tuesday 2nd June 2026 at 7.00pm**

There being no further business, the meeting closed.