Here at St Peter's, we strive to be a joyful, active, Catholic community, belonging to, and guided by, our Lord, Jesus Christ

St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Winchester

Full Governing Body

MEETING

Thursday 29th January 2026 6.30pm-8.30pm

held at St Peter's School

Present:	
Mary Alveyn (Chair) Louise Blake Louise Buxton Fr Mark Hogan Harriet Hunt Emily Prince Brigid Quest-Ritson Beth Welsby Tim Wootton-Beard	Foundation Governor Associate Governor Headteacher Governor Foundation Governor Parent Governor Parent Governor Foundation Governor Staff Governor LA Governor
In Attendance	
Joanne Lawford Matt Quinn (for agenda item 2 only)	LA Clerk CEO, Edith Stein Multi-Academy Trust
Apologies	
Nadine Donnelly Alexis Artaud de La Ferriere (Vice Chair) John Paul Foley	Associate Governor Foundation Governor Foundation Governor

1. **Welcome, Apologies and Opening Prayer**
   MA welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced MQ to the Board. Apologies were accepted as noted above. MH gave an opening prayer.

2. **Edith Stein Multi-Academy Trust (ESCAT) – CEO, Matt Quinn**
   MQ gave a presentation giving the Board an overview of his background leading to his current position as CEO of the Trust. The presentation began with the Bishop's vision for Academisation. The Bishops of England & Wales all want to move in the direction of forming MATs. Many schools have moved already i.e. most of Birmingham, all of Nottinghamshire. ESCAT strategy and vision is committed to providing the highest quality Catholic education.

   MQ said that they are encouraging schools to sign up to a commitment to say they will work towards joining a MAT even though it may take some time to make that move.

   MQ went through the presentation which would be made available to all Governors following the meeting for further review and discussion.

   The following questions were raised:

Why not collaborate in a less formal way?	A MAT is a legal entity. An ESCAT Organisational Structure overview showed that the MAT has: Advisory

	and steering groups consisting of CoGs, HTs and SBMs, to shape and influence the direction of the MAT. There are also committee structures for finance, audit and risk, education standards, ethos, executive pay. The MAT negotiates service costs on behalf of its schools.
What does it mean for school governance?	Individual schools retain control of HT appointment, curriculum, monitoring of education, many strategic functions remain. The budget has to be approved by the MAT. There may be some functions that the Trust could manage for schools, H&S was mentioned as an example. Ultimately the leadership and governors are held accountable for the school outcomes.
The School currently has a surplus budget, but projections show that it will be in deficit by the time the conversion to a MAT took place, how would this work?	The MAT cannot take on a school with a budget deficit but can work with the school to address this. MQ outlined the budget management detailed on the presentation.
What about capital funding	There would be no contribution to the Diocese fund. Schools bid for funds from the Trust. There is a CIF (conditional improvement fund) for high-priority repairs and a School Conditions Allocation – annual fund for estate improvements which is the Trust responsibility.
What are the steps to join ESCAT?	Stakeholder consultation; Due diligence – finance, HR, estates, safeguarding; Legal docs: funding agreement, supplemental agreement, CTA. TUPE consultation protects staff; Onboarding to ESCAT systems precedes conversion and takes approximately two months. MQ said the payroll process timing is tricky i.e. dropping the LEA and moving to the Trust.
What is the pay structure for support staff	There is a model format, some different situations have to be resolved over time. The MAT uses the national teachers pay scale, they don't have to, but it is unlikely to change.
What is the financial impact on a school?	This is unknown until the Trust can have a good look at the finances. There is no cost to signing the partnership agreement, which schools in deficit may sign up to.
What are the risks to the School and the Trust?	There are legal fees for conversion, which are currently around £25k. Many schools cannot fund it so have to start saving towards it. It is hoped that the costs may be reduced in time.
What are the benefits of signing a partnership agreement if the School cannot join immediately due to the financial position?	Once signed, the school can start making use of the services that the MAT negotiates, hopefully reducing costs and improving their financial position. The Trust can work with the School to address the budget.
What happens if we remain outside the MAT because of a deficit?	The school becomes vulnerable. MQ suggested the School considers the community budget surplus, combining both budgets and moving everything under the MAT.

The Diocese reason for joining the MAT is to develop the faith, what is hoped to be gained from this?	We want to find someone to take on faith formation for the MAT across all of the schools. It would be an element of school improvement.
What happens to SEND funding?	This allocation remains with the local authority but its use sits with the Trust, centralised support and policies may be beneficial. We would maintain that our schools are among the most inclusive.
How would the Admissions process work?	It would be approved by the MATs but set by the school. PAN process is the same.

Governors voted and unanimously agreed that they would like to proceed to signing an agreement. MQ said the Governing Body needs to pass a resolution and there is specific wording for this which he would forward. MQ explained that the entire on-boarding process takes approximately 24 months from now to joining. The optimal times of the year to join are 31st August, start of the MAT academic year or 31st March, start of the fiscal year.

Governors agreed that they were happy for MQ to report to the Steering Group that we will move forward. It was noted that there were three other schools also wanting to join currently.

MA thanked MQ for his time and for sharing the presentation.

3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

None.

4. Previous minutes and matters arising

Received: FGB minutes November 2025 and action table

The minutes of the FGB meeting held November 2025 were approved. The follow actions were updated:

Responsible	Action	Deadline	Update
JL	Create an action list after each meeting and circulate ASAP to members.	Ongoing	Trial completed, Will continue.
LBu	Add reminder about smartphone-free site in the next newsletter.	Next newsletter	Completed
HH/RF/MA/LBu	Hold staff structure meeting next week to agree plans following EYFS lead departure.	Next week	Completed
MA/AdlF	Continue recruitment for two Foundation Governors; re-advertise in parish newsletter post-Christmas.	Post-Christmas	Completed, received one expression of interest.
MQ	Attend January FGB meeting to answer questions on academisation.	29 Jan 2026	Completed

5. Head teacher's report

Received: Updated report

Safeguarding was discussed in more detail at H&S, no minutes provided prior to this meeting but would be shared asap. LBl said that safeguarding continues to take a lot of time and additional time has also been spent on 17 IARFS, 14 formal information requests from Children's Services, 8 early help meetings and frequent subject access requests.

Governor Question	School Response
Professional resilience – is any support needed there?	We've had training and are all very experienced with 10-15 years experience.
Is there anything in place for where two-staff share the class to hand over, particular wrt safeguarding	They have a handover report and safeguarding is included in that. The teachers are also tagged in CPOMS entries.
Father Pedro had been coming in – how has that been going?	He's been very enthusiastic and is welcomed in the school.

LBu said that they held an Ofsted-style walkthrough the School using the new format with an Oftsed inspector. It was felt that inclusion and behaviour is expected to be heading towards strong, however attendance is below national average. It was agreed that there needs to be a focus on improving attendance, particularly relating to PP children.

6. Committees

i. Resources Committee (Inform/Consult/Decision)

Received: Minutes January 2026

TWB gave an overview of the last Resources Committee meeting, the projected outcomes and deficit for delegated, surplus for community. LF numbers look low so we are looking at promoting over the next couple of months. TWB agreed to track where LF children have older siblings in the School.

ii. Admissions Committee (Inform/Consult/Decision)

MA/LBu reported that with the deficit looming and numbers reducing causing a further increase to the deficit, they had considered various PAN scenarios. The information had been shared with Governors and run through at this meeting. It was noted that the School is aware of 40 1st choice for this coming YR, nearly reaching the 45 cap.

1st scenario: shows 5 years of combined YR/1. TWB was asked to confirm that the £45k deficit in 2027/28 was accounted for in the budget or if it would be an additional loss.

2nd scenario: Y2 cap at 32 to have a combined Y2/3 in 2027/28. This gives an initial reduced income followed by a saving, making a net surplus of £22.8 in 2027/28, and £14.1 in 2028/29. This scenario could mean the School having to turn away late applicants to join later years which may be catholic. However, the parents could appeal, win and join anyway.

3rd scenario: Showed savings in 2029/30 but income falls further.

MA asked governors to look further at the scenarios for ongoing discussion.

iii. Curriculum and Standards Committee (Inform/Consult/Decision)

Received: Minutes January 2026

MA gave an overview of the last Curriculum Committee meeting. The main thing was the attendance data, particularly persistent absences. MA said that she had monitored the process and was happy that the school is engaging with the families.

iv. Health and Safety Committee (Inform/Consult/Decision)

LBu confirmed that JF undertook a check on the SCR, which is done half termly, and updated on safeguarding. The next additional big project the Committee is working on is the outside EYFS area.

7. Governor Training, new governors and terms of office

MA reported that she had undertaken training on complaints. MA advised of parent governor online training available. MA said that the points learned from WGBT will come to a later meeting.

8. Correspondence

Financial benchmarking data across Hampshire and nationally had been received for analysis and reporting in due course.

9. Policies

Received: updated policies

i. Separated parent policy – could the points be bulleted to make it easy to reference BQR to check once changes made.
ii. Grievance policy – no changes, CES policy

10. Any other business

MA said that she is unable to attend the governor forum on 3rd February (online 7-8.3-pm) and asked for another governor to attend in her place. No offers to attend were forthcoming.

11. Closing prayer

MH gave a closing prayer.

Date of next meeting: 25th March 2026 6.30pm-8.30pm