MidKent College

GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on Thursday 26 March 2026 at 17.00hrs in CG03 at UCM Maidstone.

Present: (79% attendance)

Mr P Fleming	Chair	Mr S Cook	Principal CEO	Mrs A Orhiere	
Professor M Abdel-Maguid		Ms A Currie		Mr M Prentis	
Mr S Adebisi	Student Governor	Mrs J Dyakova		Mrs L Snedden	Staff Governor
Mr N Baveystock	MKCTS Chair	Mr A Hindson		Mrs S Vaux	
Mr A Cole		Miss B Jossi	Staff Governor	Mrs A Woodhouse	

In attendance:

Ms C Burkin	Governance Professional
Mr C Hare	Deputy CEO & Executive Director of Employers & Corporate Services
Ms C Hart	Executive Director of Student Experience
Dr Jim Mawby	Executive Director for Curriculum & Quality
Mr J Thirgood	Chief Financial Officer
Guests	
Mr J Egan	Director of Quality
Ms E Mernagh	Director of Safeguarding

1 Declaration of Interests

All members' interests are numbered and referenced on the Declaration of Interest log available from the Governance Professional.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Miss L Adcock, Mr S Hardie, Mr S Jackson and Mrs M Quadri.

The Chair welcomed guests to the meeting.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 December 2025 - Paper SGB25/1910

The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2025 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising & Any Urgent Action – Paper SGB25/1911

All the outstanding matters were either actioned, completed or on the agenda. No urgent action was requested.

STRATEGY

5 Strategic Away Day Outcome - Paper SGB25/1912

Simon Cook, Principal CEO presented the paper which summarised the direction of travel in formulating the MidKent College Strategy following the discussion at the Strategic Away Day. He used slides to show current thinking and plans for implementation.

He explained the work from the Away Day had been summarised by the facilitators and the Executive following the direction agreed and set by the Board to ensure the "determine the educational character and mission".

This was presented as:

1. The Strategic Vision for MidKent College that was agreed in 2025 - An inclusive College that Creates Opportunities and Transforms Lives.

2. The North Star developed at the Strategic Away Day in February 2026

3. The clear message from the Board to keep the Strategy simple and focus on the College's unique situation. (The Accelerator Strategy).

4. A recognition that the College is well run and so an opportunity to treat part of the strategy differently (The Business as usual (BAU) Strategy)

Members held a robust discussion and agreed the broad headlines but asked for less detail and simplified language to ensure the intent it is clear for all readers. They wanted to ensure the direction and ambition was clearly set out, stressing the importance of the strategic plan being student centred with a balance of business as usual and strategy, aligned with budget and business planning.

Members agreed the timeline for future Governing Body meetings:

- May 2026 – bring a list of projects to the Board for review with revised language.
- July 2026 – agree the projects and how they are linked to business as usual.

Members thanked S Cook for the update and looked forward to further discussions at the next meeting.

Action: S Cook

6 Accountability Statement - review of the current objectives and plans for the 2026/27 Statement - Paper SGB25/1913

Chris Hare, Deputy CEO, presented the report which provided a mid-year review of the objectives as defined in the College's 2025/26 accountability statement and plans for the 2026/27 statement.

Members were reminded that they must comply with their duty to review provision in relation to local needs and that the legislation required governing bodies to consider, in light of the review, what actions might need to be taken to better meet local needs. It was expected that the review would be undertaken every three years. The College was also required to produce an Annual Accountability Statement to provide commentary and an agreed set of objectives to monitor and improve the position on meeting local needs. The Board noted the review was last carried out in 2023 and was therefore due for review with submissions due by 31 July 2026.

Members recognised that all the objectives from the 2025/26 statement were on track or had been achieved. C Hare described the preparations for the next iteration of the accountability statement for 2026/27 and suggested the previous Governors from the Task and Finish group reconvene in April 2026 to discuss and review the drafting of the next statement. Members agreed and looked forward to receiving the updated Statement at their meeting in July for approval and submission by 31 July 2026 and publication on the College's website in September.

Action: C Hare July 2026

Members thanked C Hare for the update and the Executive for the review.

SCRUTINY

7 Principal & CEO Report – Paper SGB25/1914

Simon Cook Principal/CEO presented the report to members including the latest data report, good new stories and a summary of key Government Policy.

Members discussed the report and data questioning the attrition rates. They were assured that processes had been tightened impacting the data. They were reminded of the business planning processes currently taking place and how certain aspects of this would address areas of improvement previously identified.

The report highlighted the Schools White Paper and the proposed changes to SEND provision. C Hart explained the College is participating in the SEND consultation and Governors were invited to contribute by attending the SEND Governor visit on 29 April 2026 or contacting her direct.

Members noted curriculum reforms and changes to the Ofsted framework/reporting. They were reminded the QTL Inter-meeting on 28 April 2026 would focus on Ofsted and all Governors were welcome to attend.

S Cook explained the funding changes and possible impact, reminding members that the College has partnered with other Kent Colleges to access grants and funds to meet local need.

Governors thanked S Cook and **accepted** the report.

8 Safeguarding Update – Paper SGB25/1915

Sarah Vaux, Safeguarding Governor presented the report which set out the Safeguarding Position statement and overview of safeguarding in the College noting good practice.

Members noted the report which included information regarding safeguarding activity and evidenced the trend of an increase in referrals. The referral themes were included, setting out the continued high levels of mental health need and highlighting the emerging theme of on-line risk. The Board asked if further assistance was required and offered further support if needed to ensure the wellbeing of staff.

Search activities were also provided and an update on Prevent activity, with examples of referrals and work that identified risks. Members gained assurance that the search procedures were being conducted in line with the College's Search Policy, part of the Security Policy reviewed by the F&R Committee, which mitigated any bias and ensured they were carried out correctly.

They were informed of the launch of Myconfide. It was explained that this system provided an opportunity to strengthen safeguarding culture, in line with best practice and that it was already leading to improvements in arrangements.

Members asked if the new mobile phone regulations would have an impact and were assured the College does not fall under the scope of the new rules.

Governors thanked S Vaux and **accepted** the report. They were assured and confident that the College was meeting its statutory responsibilities, and that Safeguarding is effective.

9 Update from Chair of MidKent College Training Services Ltd (MKCTS) - Paper SGB25/1916

Nick Baveystock introduced the update as the Chair of MKCTS Ltd. regarding the performance of MKCTS since the last meeting.

This item was minuted as confidential.

Governors accepted the report.

10 Quality, Teaching and Learning Committee (QTL) - Paper SGB25/1917

Andy Cole introduced the following minutes of the QTL Committee.

- Intermeeting 27 January 2026
- Committee 3 March 2026
- Committee 2 December 2025 verbally reported at the last Governing Body meeting, were included in the papers for completeness.

A Cole updated members on items discuss at the Committee meeting on 3 March 2026 where they received a comprehensive overview of the learner journey, covering enrichment, tutorials, safeguarding, additional learning support (ALS), careers and student voice. Governors noted continued progress in strengthening inclusion and ensuring support systems enabled all students to succeed. Members noted the Enrichment activities had expanded, with initiatives including social action projects and the introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

The Committee also received an update on the national SEND reforms following publication of the SEND White Paper and the Safeguarding Report which confirmed that systems remain robust.

A Cole reported that the Committee reviewed the Quality and Curriculum report and were pleased to note that Contextualised Maths and English delivery was embedded within vocational programmes with improved engagement and attendance. Good progress against the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was being made.

Recommendations for approval by the Governing Body:

- Complaints and Appeals Policy (under item 13) – **approved.**

Governors **accepted** the minutes and **agreed** with the recommendations of the Committee.

11 Group Risk & Audit Committee meeting held on 5 March 2026 - Paper SGB25/1918

Alex Hindson introduced the minutes and closed session discussion.

Members noted that the Committee received papers regarding Information Security which reported that Data Subject Access Requests (DSAR) levels continued to rise. They reviewed the key movements in the risk profile on the Strategic Risk Register and provided feedback to management on how best to embed and adopt the new risk appetite approach.

A Hindson reported that there had been an extended discussion about the implications of SEND provision and government policy changes, with some proposed risk monitoring metrics outlined to enable this to be tracked.

The Committee received a Deep Dive presentation regarding Staff Retention and Wellbeing. which focused on key exposures and actions being taken. They agreed a two-part deep dive to report at their next meeting regarding i) External IT consultant-led review of the balance between security and engagement in Governor digital access, and ii) a Management-led discussion of AI Governance and Multi-Factor Authentication adoption for students. A Hindson informed members that the Committee were trialling deep dive guidance and a review of the draft papers which may be adopted by other committees.

Members noted the Internal Auditors had updated the Committee on progress with two further audits delivered with the plan for 2025/26 on track and that the External Auditors had introduced the new MKC audit partner who had returned as partner for the College after a two year gap ensure independence.

Governors **accepted** the minutes.

12 Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 25 February 2025 - Paper SGB25/1919

Alison Currie introduced the minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee which reported that the Committee assessed the financial position of the group, considered resourcing issues and key aspects of influence**.**

The Committee received an update from the People Team which reported that staffing metrics were positive and tracked in the right direction. A deep dive into the demographics of the workforce was provided. This identified different expectations and aspirations of the growing number of different generations in the workforce and challenges this presented managing diverse groups. It was recommended that members read this deep dive available on Boad Intelligence.

A Currie informed members that a review of the financial position of the MSA was undertaken, noting that student numbers continued to grow. Members noted a further review will take place as part of the upcoming annual business planning process.

Members were informed that the DfE had completed its audit of Individual Learner Record (ILR) and noted minor errors resulting in a small repayment to be made by the College. The Management Accounts demonstrated a modest improvement in the financial position, reflecting careful management of costs in line with student needs and additional income received.

Three policies were reviewed and were recommended to Board for approval under item 13. James Thirgood, the new Chief Finance Office, had reviewed the Decarbonisation project costs and met with key providers. An additional amount was approved for final costs required. J Thirgood informed the Board of a challenge resulting in a delay with 'switch on' which he was resolving. The investment portfolio was reviewed noting good performance.

Recommendations for approval by the Governing Body:

- Group Financial Regulations & Procedures – **approved**.
- Group Anti-Fraud and Response – **noted.**
- Security – **noted.**

Governors **accepted** the minutes and **agreed** with the recommendations of the Committee.

13 Policies for approval

Members noted the following policies, which had been scrutinised and recommended by the relevant Committee:

a) Group Financial Regulations & Procedures (F&R) – **approved**.
b) Complaints and Appeals (QTL) – **approved**.
c) Security (F&R) – noted.
d) Information Charter (GR&A) – noted
e) Freedom of Information (GR&A) – noted

The **approved** polices will be published as required.

Action: Governance Professional

GOVERNANCE

14 Search & Governance Committee meeting held on 29 January 2026 - Paper SGB25/1921.

Angela Woodhouse introduced the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee.

The Committee considered Board and Committee membership and vacancies with actions agreed. They noted the required succession planning for further discussion at their next meeting. This will include consideration of any skills gaps supported by the skills audit data.

The Committee discussed the co-option of a member with expertise onto the Group Risk and Audit Committee and recommended this to the Board for approval.

A Woodhouse informed members that the Committee also considered attendance and Governor visits with no concerns, with a suggestion to hold visits on Board days. They discussed Governor training with the suggestion of considering the Nolan principles and governor role and duties as a refresher session and this was agreed for the 13 May 2026 session.

The Committee reviewed the External Board Review Action plan and recommended this for approval by the Board. It is recommended that this action plan is monitored by the Committee and used as the Governance Improvement Plan for 2026/27.

Recommendations for approval by the Governing Body:

- Appointment of Socrates Coudounaris as a co-opted member of the Group Risk and Audit Committee – **approved**.
- External Board Review Action Plan – **agreed**.

Governors **accepted** the minutes and **approved** the recommendations above.

15 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held at the College's Medway Campus on Thursday 21 May 2026 at 17.00hrs

16 Next Governor training session

The next training session is scheduled for Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 5pm and the topic is – Governor Duties in the Current Landscape presented by Rob Lawsoin AOC.

Members are encouraged to do all they can to attend.

Confidential Item

18 Remuneration Committee meeting held on 12 March 2026 – Paper SGB25/1922

Angela Woodhouse introduced the minutes of the Remuneration Committee.

Members noted the annual discussion held at the meeting with senior post holders with no concerns raised.

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2025 were included in the papers for completeness.

This item was minuted as confidential.

Governors **accepted** the minutes.

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The meeting closed at 20.04hrs.