MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOURNES GREEN SCHOOLS ACADEMY COMMITTEE PARENT FORUM
HELD ON 12 JUNE 2026
AT 16:30PM
AT THE SCHOOL

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 The meeting was opened and parents were welcomed to the Bournes Green Academy Committee Parent Forum.

1.2 Amelia Morgan explained that the purpose of the meeting was to introduce Academy Committee members to parents and carers, explain their roles and responsibilities, and provide parents with a point of contact should they have any questions or concerns.

1.3 Amelia introduced herself as Chair of Governors, noting that she had been a governor for nine years and that her children had now left the school. She advised that she would be stepping down at the end of the academic year and handing over to governors who still had children at the school.

1.4 The following governor roles were outlined:
Peter Hawkins – Vice Chair, with responsibility for community matters.
Nadia Stillwell – Governor with responsibility for sustainability.
Claire Patel and Iain Watkins – Governors with responsibility for SEND, Pupil Premium and Sports Premium.
Amelia Morgan – Governor with responsibility for the School Improvement Plan.

1.5 Governors collectively monitor curriculum on behalf of the Trust Board.

1.6 It was explained that the Academy Committee acted as the “eyes and ears” of the Trust Board, with matters beyond the Committee’s remit falling to either the Headteacher or the Trust Board.

1.7 Amelia confirmed that questions had been received in advance from parents and that governors would answer as fully as possible. However, she explained that some questions fell outside the Academy Committee’s remit and would need to be addressed by the Trust Board.

2. POP-UP POOL AND SWIMMING PROVISION

2.1 A question was raised regarding the amount received by SECAT when the plastic pop-up pool was disposed of the total financial loss over the 18-month period, and how any money from the sale of the pool and marquee would be used to benefit children at Bournes Green.

2.2 Governors confirmed that they were unable to answer the question fully as they had not received the relevant information. However, they advised that the pop-up pool was not sustainable going forward, as it was costing approximately £15,000 per term in energy costs. It was noted that the Headteacher had therefore made the decision for the current Year 6 pupils to swim at Shoebury Leisure Centre.

2.3 A parent commented that, historically, children had swum from Reception onwards, and later twice a week in the juniors. The parent expressed sadness that swimming provision had reduced to once in Year 6, particularly as Bournes Green is in a seaside area. The parent asked whether SECAT could do more to improve swimming opportunities for pupils.

2.4 Governors explained that the National Curriculum requirement was for children to be able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. It was acknowledged that swimming provision had changed over time, but that practical considerations, including cost, travel time and risk assessments, affected what could be offered.

2.5 Governors agreed to take the comments regarding swimming provision back to the relevant individuals within SECAT.
Action: Governors to feedback parents' comments regarding swimming provision and the desire for improved opportunities across SECAT

3. FUTURE USE OF THE FORMER SWIMMING POOL AREA

3.1 A question was raised about the future of the swimming pool area, which parents described as dirty, unkempt and abandoned.

3.2 Governors advised that the area was on the school's radar and was discussed at Academy Committee meetings. However, the current priority was the second nursery room to allow younger children to start.

3.3 It was explained that there were ideas for the space, but no confirmed plan. Suggestions previously mentioned included an astroturf area, forest school provision, or another facility that would benefit both the school and the wider community.

3.4 A parent asked what the actual plan was. Governors clarified that there was not yet a confirmed project plan, but that the Headteacher was aware of the concerns and the area was recognised as unsightly and inappropriate in its current state.
Action: Governors to continue raising the former swimming pool area at Academy Committee meetings and seek further updates from the Headteacher/Trust.

4. MONKEY BARS AND PLAYGROUND SAFETY

4.1 A question was raised regarding serious accidents on the monkey bars, after which two children required surgery. Parents asked what the plan was to ensure children's safety and whether the apparatus, which was understood to be manufacturer-rated for age 14+, would be removed or replaced.

4.2 Governors advised that the school had attempted to widen the bars to make them safer, but this had not resolved the issue. The equipment had therefore been taken out of use. It was stated that the equipment would be removed, but the original company that installed it had gone out of business, meaning a new company would need to be found.

4.3 A parent expressed strong concern that the equipment remained on site and stated that children had still been seen climbing on it during events and outside school hours. The parent stated that no other child should have to experience the injuries suffered by the children involved.

4.4 A question was asked in the chat about whether the equipment was cordoned off and how children knew not to use it. Governors confirmed they could not comment fully on the current position, as some had not been on the playground recently. A parent stated that a photograph from that week showed the equipment was not cordoned off.

4.5 Governors acknowledged the seriousness of the concern and stated that health and safety sat with the Trust Board. It was noted that Ben Stickley had a meeting the following week which parents could attend to raise health and safety matters directly.
Actions: Governors to raise the monkey bars/play equipment issue with the Headteacher and Trust Board. Governors to ensure the issue is raised for Ben Stickley's parent meeting.

5. DEPARTURE OF MR LUPTON

5.1 A question was raised regarding comments made by SECAT CEO Ben Stickley that Mr Lupton had voluntarily left Bournes Green to write a book. Parents asked whether Academy Committee members were satisfied that this information was honest and that stakeholders had been properly informed.

5.2 Governors advised that they had no reason to believe the information was not accurate. Amelia noted that, as a parent at the time, the letter received stated that Mr Lupton was leaving to write a book. Governors stated that they had since seen Mr

Lupton's resignation letter, which confirmed that his departure was voluntary and that he wished to take time out to pursue writing.
5.3 Governors considered the matter closed from their perspective.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITY

6.1 A question was raised regarding the pop-up pool and whether adequate daily records and water quality checks had been maintained. Parents asked who had overall responsibility for health and safety at Bournes Green.
6.2 Governors stated that, as the pop-up pool was no longer in use and an alternative swimming solution had been found, they did not consider the specific question around the former pool to be directly relevant to current provision.
6.3 It was confirmed that the Trust Board had overall responsibility for health and safety across SECAT schools.

7. BUILDING WORKS, NURSERY AND USE OF PUBLIC FUNDS

7.1 A question was raised regarding reports that building work at Bournes Green had stopped due to rising energy costs not being properly accounted for.
7.2 Governors stated that they could not comment on the whistleblowing allegation. They advised that building work at Bournes Green had been paused to prioritise the nursery, which was intended to open in September.
7.3 It was also noted that SECAT was now using external contractors for future building projects rather than completing works in-house, following changes within the estates team.
7.4 Parents asked whether the Year 6 classrooms would be completed during the summer. Governors advised that the nursery was currently the priority and could not confirm whether the Year 6 classrooms would be completed over the summer.
7.5 A parent asked why the nursery was being prioritised over children already in the school. Governors explained that there had been an identified local need for nursery places, and the nursery would enable Bournes Green to offer provision from age two to 11, in line with other SECAT schools.
7.6 Parents expressed concern that the nursery appeared to be prioritised because of available public funding and suggested that existing pupils had experienced poor classroom conditions for some time.
Action: Governors to ask for an update from Ben Stickley/SECAT regarding the refurbishment programme, nursery prioritisation and Year 6 classrooms.

8. LEADERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

8.1 A question was raised asking whether Mr Kent was now running the junior school.
8.2 Governors clarified that Mr Martinson was the Executive Headteacher of both schools. Mr Martinson's office was based at the infant school and Mr Kent's office was based at the junior school. Mr Kent was the Deputy Headteacher.
8.3 Parents raised concerns about the visibility of the Headteacher, particularly at the junior school gates. One parent stated that, compared with previous headteachers, Mr Martinson had not been visible enough and that this affected parental engagement.
8.4 Governors acknowledged the concern and noted that Mr Martinson had experienced serious medical issues during the year, which had affected his attendance. Peter Hawkins stated that he was willing to raise the issue of Headteacher visibility with Mr Martinson.
8.5 Parents also commented that email responses from the Headteacher could be more personable, particularly where an email was forwarded to another member of staff to respond.
8.6 A question was raised regarding Year 6 residential arrangements and whether it was usual for the Headteacher to attend. Governors advised that it was not usual for the

Headteacher to attend residential trips and that Mr Denchfield attending the previous year had been an exception rather than the rule.
Action: Peter Hawkins to raise Headteacher visibility and communication with parents with Mr Martinson.

9. APPOINTMENT OF MR MARTINSON

9.1 A question was raised regarding Mr Martinson's appointment to Bournes Green and whether the process had complied with SECAT's commitment to open competition.

9.2 Governors stated that they could not comment on confidential recruitment processes or on where individuals may have placed in other recruitment exercises.

9.3 Amelia advised that she had met with Mr Martinson and Mr Stickley prior to the appointment and that the appointment had been explained on the basis that Mr Martinson was already within the Trust and the school needed urgent leadership support.

9.4 Amelia stated that, from her meetings with Mr Martinson, she felt he had positive ideas for the school, including an adaptive teaching approach focused on the needs of individual children.

9.5 Parents questioned whether this approach had been communicated and whether it was new. Governors confirmed that adaptive teaching was in early stages and that Peter had attended an introductory session led by Mr Martinson. Peter advised that governors had asked what success would look like and that the Academy Committee would seek further updates on how the approach was being embedded.

9.6 Parents suggested that communication with parents about new initiatives would be helpful.
Action: Governors to request an update on adaptive teaching and how it is being embedded across the school.

10. ACADEMIC STANDARDS

10.1 A question was raised about published SECAT accounts referring to outcomes at Thorpedene Primary School during Mr Martinson's leadership and what steps the Academy Committee would take to ensure standards remained strong at Bournes Green.

10.2 Governors stated that they could not comment on Thorpedene, as they did not have detailed knowledge of that school.

10.3 It was noted that Bournes Green standards would continue to be monitored through the Academy Committee's curriculum monitoring role. Governors also stated that the teaching staff at Bournes Green were strong, committed and engaged.

10.4 Governors confirmed that they would continue monitoring the curriculum to ensure standards were maintained and improved.

11. SECAT TERMINATION PAYMENTS

11.1 A question was raised regarding SECAT accounts showing more than £600,000 spent on termination payments over six years, and whether Academy Committee members considered this a good use of public funds.

11.2 Governors advised that this was a Trust Board matter and did not relate specifically to Bournes Green. They stated that the breakdown of those payments between schools was confidential and that governors did not know whether any of the payments related to Bournes Green.

11.3 Parents accepted that this should be raised with the Trust Board.

12. STAFF ABSENCE IN CLASS 6R

12.1 A question was raised regarding Class 6R being without a teacher for several weeks and what steps had been taken to prevent pupils being disadvantaged by prolonged staff absence.

12.2 Governors acknowledged that Miss Rich was a valued and well-regarded member of staff. They noted that, unfortunately, teachers could be absent for extended periods due to illness.

12.3 Governors stated that other teachers and HLTAs within the school were able to provide cover and support pupils. It was acknowledged that no guarantee could be given that long-term staff absence would not happen again.

13. PARENTKIND QUESTIONNAIRE

13.1 A question was raised regarding the ParentKind questionnaire, including the cost of implementing the SECAT ParentKind project and how it would benefit children and staff.

13.2 Governors explained that ParentKind had been engaged by SECAT as an initiative to support schools in strengthening parental engagement. The initial step had been a parent survey.

13.3 The parentKind survey response for both schools was very low and we are due to repeat the survey.

13.4 Parents asked how much had been paid to ParentKind. Governors advised that they did not have that information and that it should be raised with the Trust Board.
Action: Parents to raise the cost of ParentKind with the Trust Board/SECAT.

Post Meeting note:
Mr Martinson has since clarified that due to a change of staff at Parent Kind, the trust will continue to use their services.

14. PARENT PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS AND PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

14.1 A question was raised regarding the cancellation of Parent Partnership meetings and concerns that parent/carer engagement had declined since Mr Denchfield left.

14.2 Governors noted that Mr Martinson had run phonics and maths meetings for the infant school, and there had been meetings for parents regarding the nursery. It was also noted that a PSHE meeting had taken place across both schools, although turnout had been low.

14.3 Parents commented that these were not the same as Parent Partnership meetings and that similar forums should be reinstated. Peter Hawkins advised that he had found previous Parent Partnership meetings valuable and agreed to discuss this with Mr Martinson.

14.4 Parents reiterated concerns about Headteacher visibility and the importance of being present at school gates and events to build relationships and resolve concerns early.

14.5 One parent gave a balanced view, noting that while engagement could improve, they had seen Mr Martinson engaging positively with pupils during a Book Look session.
Action: Peter Hawkins to discuss the potential reinstatement of Parent Partnership meetings with Mr Martinson.

15. REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMME

15.1 A question was raised asking where the school was on the refurbishment programme and when the Year 6 classrooms would be updated. Concerns were also raised that SECAT may have stopped the project because it had run out of money.

15.2 Governors referred to the earlier discussion and advised that SECAT was now using separate contractors for building projects rather than completing work in-house. Governors were unable to confirm the timing of the Year 6 classroom works.
Action: Governors to seek clarification on the refurbishment programme and Year 6 classroom timescales.

16. PARENT VOLUNTEERS AND DBS CHECKS

16.1 A question was raised regarding parents and carers being invited to volunteer at school, DBS checks being undertaken, but limited opportunities being offered since September 2025.

16.1 Governors advised that some parents had supported school trips, including trips at the infant school. Claire confirmed that she had attended a Year 2 trip to the zoo after being asked directly by the class teacher, as she already had an enhanced DBS check.

16.2 Parents raised concerns that DBS checks had taken time and cost money, but the initiative had not appeared to be fully rolled out.

16.3 Governors stated that parent volunteers had been used where needed, but that large numbers of volunteers had not necessarily been required. It was noted that this could change in the next academic year.

17. NURSERY WRAPAROUND CARE

17.1 A question was raised asking whether wraparound care would be extended to the Bournes Green nursery, particularly as attending the nursery had been added to the infant school admissions criteria. A parent stated that the lack of wraparound care disadvantaged working parents.

17.2 Governors explained that the nursery planning conditions only allowed children to attend between 8:30am and 3:30pm, Monday to Friday. Offering wraparound care would therefore breach the planning permission set by the council.

17.3 A parent asked whether governors agreed that this disadvantaged working parents. Amelia acknowledged they did but advised that the condition was part of the council's planning approval.

18. WRAPAROUND CARE FOR THE MAIN SCHOOL

18.1 A parent asked about the future of wraparound care from September, noting that there appeared to have been uncertainty about whether an external provider would be used. They also asked whether capacity could be increased, particularly in the afternoons, as short-notice places were difficult to secure.

18.2 Governors advised that they could not comment on capacity but agreed to raise the matter. It was noted that wraparound care at Bournes Green had always been popular and that demand remained high.

18.3 Governors stated that, as far as they were aware, wraparound care would remain on site but agreed that communication should be timely and transparent if there were to be any substantial changes.
Action: Amelia Morgan to raise wraparound care provision, capacity and September arrangements with Mr Martinson at the governors' meeting on 1 July.

19. ROAD SAFETY AND PARKING

19.1 Peter advised that he had received a response from Daniel Cowans regarding road safety and had been given two possible July dates. He had forwarded these to Mr Martinson and was awaiting confirmation of which date would be most suitable. Once confirmed, he would contact Elspeth and asked that two or three parent representatives attend to move the matter forward with the council.

19.2 A parent confirmed that parking had not improved. Concerns were raised about dangerous and inconsiderate parking, including near misses involving children. It was noted that the issue appeared to be caused by a small minority of drivers.

19.3 Governors acknowledged the seriousness of the matter and noted that civil enforcement officers and residents had previously experienced verbal abuse from some parents.
Action: Peter Hawkins to confirm the date for the road safety meeting once agreed with Mr Martinson.

Action: Parent representatives to attend the road safety meeting with the council.

Governors thanked parents and carers for attending and for providing questions in advance.

Amelia confirmed that notes had been taken of comments and actions to be fed back to the Trust, the school and the Headteacher. Governors would communicate any responses or updates to parents in due course.

Governors thanked Elspeth Spall for her help with the parking and street scheme.

The meeting closed with thanks to all attendees.