

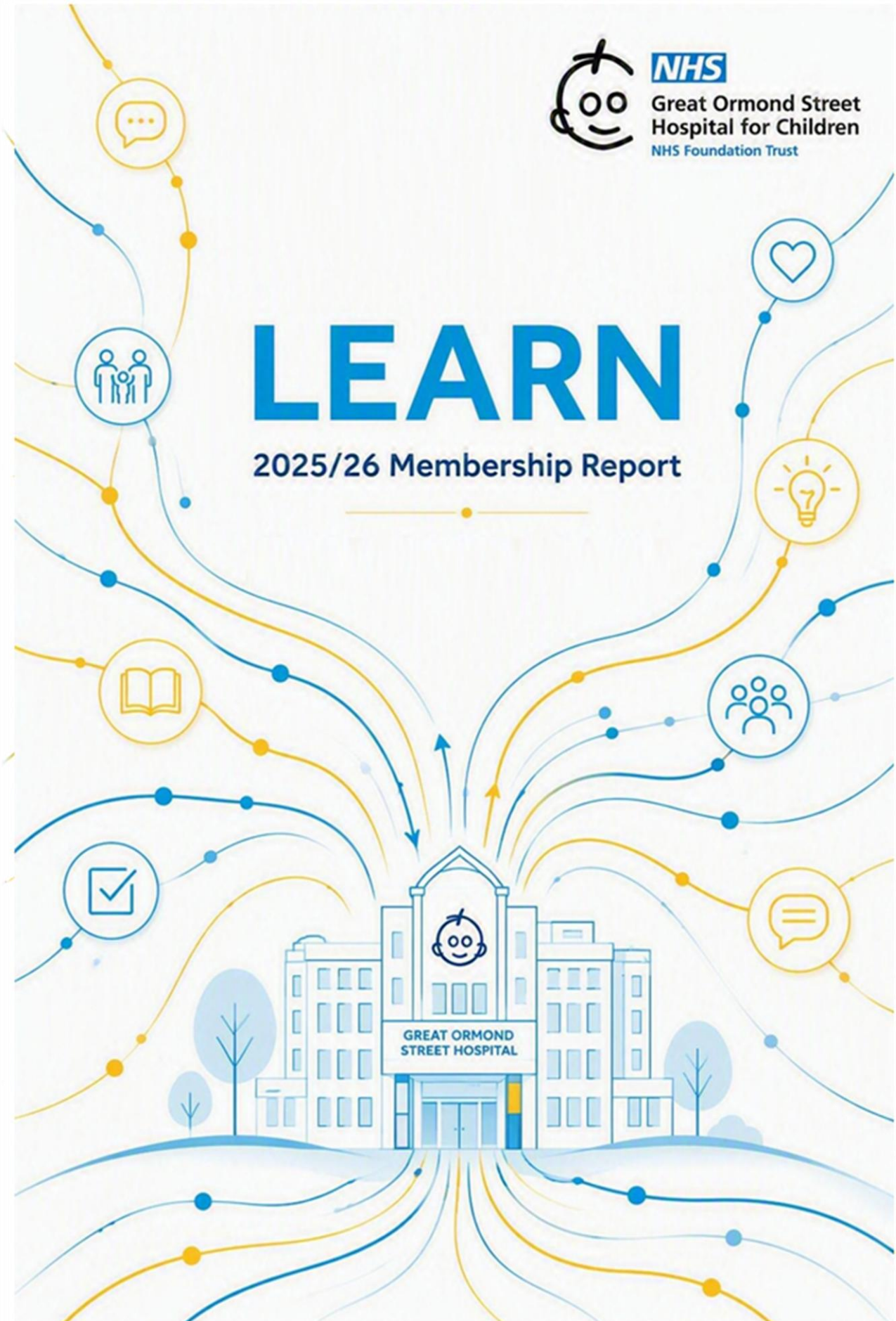


NHS

Great Ormond Street
Hospital for Children
NHS Foundation Trust

LEARN

2025/26 Membership Report



Contents

Foreword from the Lead Governor	3
Introduction	4
What does it mean to be a member of GOSH?	5
Progress during 2025/26	7
GOSH Children's Charity events	8
Membership	9
2025/26 Council of Governor elections	10
Performance	12
Looking ahead	13

Foreword from the Lead Governor

Dear Members,

This report marks the conclusion of GOSH's current Membership Engagement Strategy and reflects on a year of practical, outward-looking work to recruit, involve and listen to members.

During 2025/26, the Trust continued to gain new members, strengthened links with schools, charities and community partners, and supported members interested in becoming Governors.

The year also brought uncertainty about the future statutory framework for Foundation Trust governors and membership. That uncertainty does not reduce the importance of listening to patients, families, staff and the public. Until the future arrangements are clearer, GOSH will continue with the existing aims and performance measures, while helping to shape what meaningful engagement should look like next.

Thank you to everyone who joined, voted, attended an event, volunteered or shared a view during the year. Your contribution helps GOSH remain connected to the communities it serves, accountable in its governance, and responsive to the voices of patients, families, staff and the public.

With appreciation,

Beverly Bittner-Grassby

Lead Governor

Parent/Carer Governor from London



Introduction

The Membership Engagement, Recruitment and Representation Committee, a committee of the Council of Governors, presents this report on membership activity during 2025/26.

It summarises progress in the final year of the current Membership Engagement Strategy, including changes in membership, engagement and recruitment activity, Governor elections and performance against the measures agreed for the year.

At a glance

By 31 March 2026, public, patient and parent/carer membership stood at 9,964, a net increase of 118 from 1 April 2025.

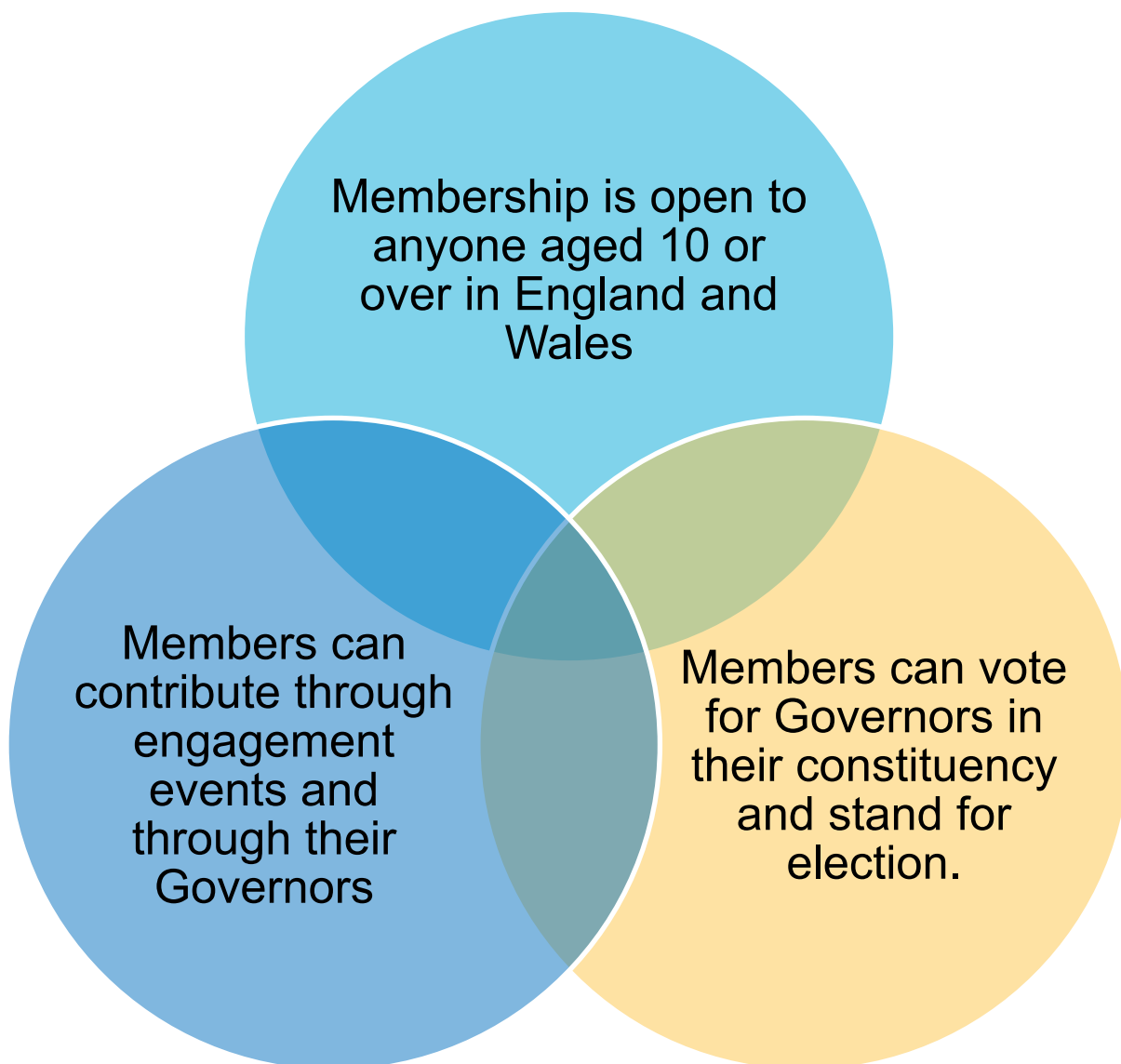
Public membership accounted for all of the net growth, while patient and parent/carer membership reduced slightly overall.

2025/26 highlight	What happened
Membership growth	Public, patient and parent/carer membership increased from 9,846 to 9,964
Race for the Kids	65 new members were recruited at the event in Hyde Park on 11 October 2025.
External outreach	Relationships were initiated or strengthened with schools, charities, community organisations and health partners.
Governor elections	Eight of the ten available Governor seats were successfully filled. No nominations were received for two Patient - Home Counties seats.
End of strategy	The current membership strategy reached the end of its planned period, with existing aims and measures continuing while future arrangements are clarified.

What does it mean to be a member of GOSH?

Membership is one of the ways GOSH connects with the communities it serves. Public, patient, parent/carer and staff members can receive information, share views, take part in events and, where eligible, vote in or stand for elections to the Council of Governors.

Governors represent the interests of members and the public and help ensure that these perspectives are heard within the Trust's governance arrangements.



Membership Engagement, Recruitment and Representation Committee

MERRC oversees the recruitment and engagement of members and considers how representative the membership is. Membership updates were reported to each Council of Governors' meeting throughout the year.

The current Membership Engagement Strategy was organised around three themes. These continued to guide activity during 2025/26:



Theme	Purpose	Highlights from this year
Knowledge	Equip members to understand GOSH and act as informed ambassadors.	Membership and governorship were explained more clearly to internal and external stakeholders, supported by improved information, stronger communications with existing partners and wider engagement with new partners.
Inclusivity	Develop a membership that reflects the patients, families, staff and communities GOSH serves.	Engagement focused on local schools, London-based children's charities and other community partners, alongside consideration of more targeted recruitment approaches for demographic groups underrepresented within the membership.
Sustainability	Connect members with the Trust's wider sustainability agenda.	The Governors Sustainability Working Group continued to work with the Trust to ensure sustainability and climate change remained high on the agenda.

Progress during 2025/26

A refreshed recruitment and engagement approach was developed, with a stronger emphasis on the quality and value of engagement rather than recruitment and retention numbers alone. This approach was supported by MERRC and the Council of Governors.

Outreach was extended to 74 stakeholder organisations, including schools, universities, paediatric societies, charities, youth groups and libraries, broadening the Trust's opportunities for sustained community engagement.

Membership information was strengthened through the refreshed GOSH "Get Involved" website area, improving visibility and access for people interested in becoming members or learning more about the role.

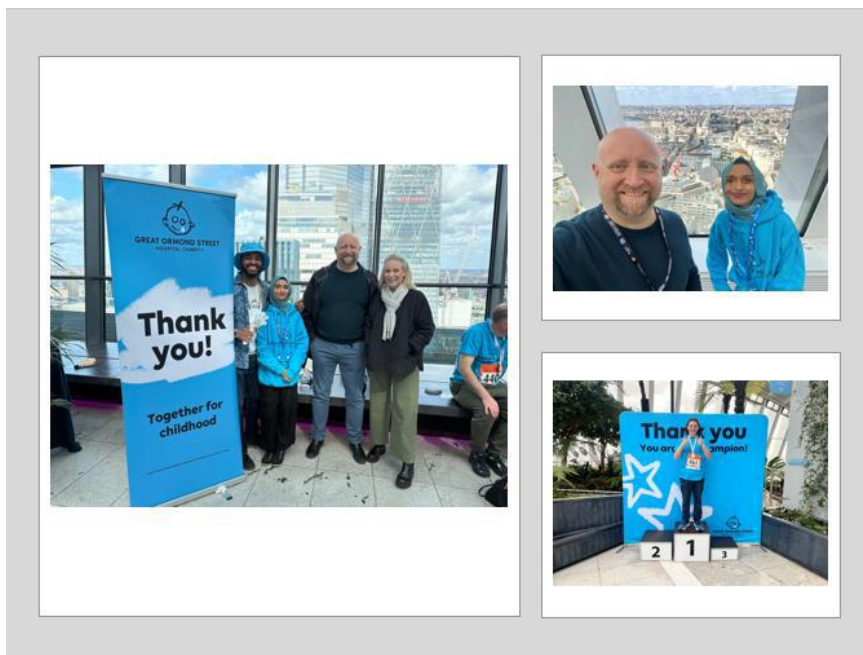
The GOSH Governor elections were promoted to the membership through targeted communications, including an online "So you want to be a Governor?" webinar led by experienced Governors reaching the end of their final term and those concluding their first.

Governors were given further opportunities to support member engagement and recruitment activity, particularly through events run by GOSH Children's Charity.

The Trust contributed to national stakeholder discussions and considered the implications of the changing national context for Foundation Trust membership and governance.

GOSH Children's Charity events

Events organised by GOSH Children's Charity continue to provide some of the most effective opportunities for membership engagement. They bring together people who already have a strong connection with GOSH in a positive, outward-facing environment, making conversations about membership more natural and meaningful. We are grateful to the Charity for continuing to welcome Governors and the Corporate Affairs Team at these events, and for enabling us to connect with supporters, families and members of the wider GOSH community.



We are grateful to the Charity for continuing to welcome Governors and the Corporate Affairs Team at these events, and for enabling us to connect with supporters, families and members of the wider GOSH community.

RBC Race for the Kids

On 11 October 2025, Governors and the Corporate Affairs Team supported membership recruitment at RBC Race for the Kids in Hyde Park. The event resulted in 65 new members being recruited.

MERRC noted that this type of low-pressure, outward-facing event created a more positive environment for engagement than some on-site recruitment activity.

Walkie Talkie Tower Climb

On 10 March 2026, Governors and the Corporate Affairs Team supported membership recruitment at the Walkie Talkie Tower Climb. The team recruited 35 new members and had several meaningful conversations about membership and engagement.

One of the Governors signed up on the day to climb the 36 floors and 896 steps and raise some additional funds.

Membership

Final year-end figures for 31 March 2026 are as follows:

Membership group	1 April 2025	January 2026	Change
Patients, parents and carers	6,690	6,684	-6
Public	3,156	3,280	+124
Total (excluding staff)	9,846	9,964	+118

Geographic and constituency pattern

In year, public membership growth was concentrated in London and the Rest of England and Wales. Patient membership was reported as static overall, while parent/carer membership showed small declines across regions.

Public constituency	June 2025	January 2026	Change
London	1,686	1,799	+113
Home Counties	796	798	+2
Rest of England and Wales	648	683	+35

2025/26 Council of Governor elections

The Council of Governors connects the Trust with its members and wider stakeholders. Governors represent members and the public, hold the Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board, and undertake the other statutory functions assigned to Foundation Trust governors.

The Trust supported members who wanted to understand more about governorship, including opportunities to observe Council meetings and explore standing for election. Election communications emphasise membership as a way to give back, shape future patient experience and contribute to the next chapter of GOSH.

Ten seats were due to be filled through the 2025/26 election process. Eight seats were filled through the election process, while no nominations were received for the two Patient — Home Counties seats.

Election results

Below are the election results and turnout statistics.

Seat	Elected	Total votes	% of total membership that voted
Parent/Carer Member from Home Counties	Emily MacCormick Hanna Rusted	37	1.6%
Parent/Carer Member from London	Beverly Bittner Grassby	47	2.1%
Patient Member from London	Eric Zoica	11	1.8%
Public Member from Home Counties	Sally Blaxall	28	3.5%
Public Member from London	Maria Barron Baratech	80	4.6%
Staff	Cordelia Aliga Dilys Addy Anthony De Souza	555	8.6%

The Council structure at the end of 2025/26 is on the next page.

Join our
Membership



NHS

Great Ormond Street
Hospital for Children
NHS Foundation Trust

Council of Governors

	Patient	Parent / Carer	Public	Staff	Appointed
London	 Lara Ingham	 Beverly Bittner-Grassby	 Joshua Street	 Dilys Addy	 Angela Gjellaj YPF
	 Sameera Kamran	 Edwin Selvaratnam	 Mary Rose Thomson	 Louise Harding	 Ryan Aoudjet YPF
	 Eric Zoica	 Ruth Stalker-Firth	 Maria Barron-Baratech		
Home Counties	 Vacant	 Emily MacCormick	 Rohan Vijjhalwar	 Sabu Sebastian	
	 Vacant	 Hanna Rusted	 Sally Blaxall	 Anthony De Souza	 Giovanni Baranello UCL GOS ICH
Rest of England and Wales	 Rhienna Morar	 Gemma Edbrooke	 Ros Robertson	 Cordelia Aliga	 Vacant – Camden Council

Performance

MERRC retained seven measures to assess engagement quality; performance outlined below:

Measure		Commentary																
Measure 1: The number of members in each Class and Constituency will not go below 150% of the constitution minimum	Achieved	In 2025/26 all classes and constituencies remained above their constitutional minimums. Membership levels are particularly strong across the London and Home Counties constituencies for Patient, Parent/Carer and Public members. However, Patient membership from the Rest of England and Wales is only 8 members above the minimum, representing a much narrower margin than other groups. The Trust is prioritising targeted engagement and recruitment activity for patient members in the Rest of England and Wales during 2026/27 to strengthened resilience in this constituency.																
Measure 2: Each of the nine classes and constituencies will gain at least one member more than last year.	Partially achieved	There were increases in four classes and consituencies and no change in two classes and constituencies. However there were minor decreases in three classes and constituencies: patients from London; parents and carers from London; and parents and carers from the Rest of England and Wales.																
Measure 3: All seats in the Council of Governor elections will be contested.	Partially achieved	There were nine seats up for election in seven constituencies in the 2025/26 elections. There were sufficient nominations for six contested elections. There were no nominees in the two Patients from Home Counties seats. As of 31 March 26 there were two elected vacancies on the Council of Governors.																
Measure 4: There will be no vacancies on the Council of Governors.		There are two elected Governor vacancies in the Patients from Home Counties.																
Measure 5: Election turnout will be higher than last year.	Not achieved	The Trust under achieved an election turnout of 5.5% which was 2% less than last year. At present there are no plans to hold elections in 2026/27 - please see page 14 of the report for more information.																
Measure 6: There will be an overall increase in the number of 'opens' for membership communications.	Not achieved	The average open rate for communications sent in 2024/25 was 43%. In 2025/26 is was 26%, a decrease of 17%. Improving the readability of membership communications is a priority for the Trust in 2026/27.																
Measure 7: Member events will be well attended/ a significant number of new members recruited.	Partially achieved	The number of attendees at these events provides a measure of quality of engagement. The table below shows how the number of attendees will be assessed. <table><tr><th>0-5 attendees</th><th>6-14 attendees</th><th>> 15 attendees</th></tr><tr><td>Poor</td><td>Adequate</td><td>Good</td></tr></table> In 2025/26, four of the five events were good and one was adequate. <table><tr><td>11 June 2025 Governor and Member Surgery on the new Strategy</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>16 September 2025 Annual General Meeting</td><td>52</td></tr><tr><td>11 October 2025 RBC Race for the Kids</td><td>65</td></tr><tr><td>3 December 2025 'So you want to be a Governor'</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>28 March 2026 Walkie Talkie Tower Climb</td><td>34</td></tr></table>	0-5 attendees	6-14 attendees	> 15 attendees	Poor	Adequate	Good	11 June 2025 Governor and Member Surgery on the new Strategy	13	16 September 2025 Annual General Meeting	52	11 October 2025 RBC Race for the Kids	65	3 December 2025 'So you want to be a Governor'	15	28 March 2026 Walkie Talkie Tower Climb	34
0-5 attendees	6-14 attendees	> 15 attendees																
Poor	Adequate	Good																
11 June 2025 Governor and Member Surgery on the new Strategy	13																	
16 September 2025 Annual General Meeting	52																	
11 October 2025 RBC Race for the Kids	65																	
3 December 2025 'So you want to be a Governor'	15																	
28 March 2026 Walkie Talkie Tower Climb	34																	

Looking ahead

In July 2026, after the end of the reporting year, the Council considered a discussion paper on proposed national reforms which could remove the statutory requirements for NHS Foundation Trusts to maintain councils of governors and trust memberships. Although legislation is expected, but not certain, to take effect from 1 April 2027, no replacement model had been agreed when the paper was considered. GOSH's stated position is to continue working with the Council and operating as usual while considering how patient, family, staff and public voice should be protected in the future.

As this work develops, the Trust will seek to carry forward the principles that independent patient voice should remain visible and influential, young people should continue to have meaningful opportunities to shape decisions, family and carer perspectives should be actively heard, and engagement should be inclusive, practical and connected to decisions rather than maintained only as a statutory process. The Trust is grateful to all members for the contribution they have made to GOSH as a Foundation Trust, through joining, voting, standing for election, attending events, sharing their views or supporting the wider work of membership.



End of report
