

THE GOVERNING BOARD OF SOUTHGATE SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Board held at 5.30 pm at the school on Wednesday 2 July 2025.

PRESENT

Mr R Baines (Chair), Ms R Cranmer (Head Teacher), Mr M Cleve, Mrs L Drye, Mr M Holland (Vice-Chair), Ms L Jackson (Associate Member)
Mrs W May, Mr C McCombe, Ms A Morris, Mrs J Wittrick.

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs S Dunn (Minute Clerk)
Ms K Emptage (Deputy Head Teacher)
Ms J Hallas (School Business Manager) – part

The meeting started at 5.35 pm

	Item	Minutes	Action
96.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs S Norman (consent). There were no declarations of interest.	
97.	NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS	There were no items notified to be raised under Any Other Business.	
98.	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2025	RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2025 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.	

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99.	MATTERS ARISING	<p>(a) <u>Financial Management and Monitoring (Minute 83 (a) refers)</u></p> <p>It was confirmed that although the staff pay increase award had been higher than anticipated, the unfunded element would be covered by the amount already planned for in the budget.</p> <p>(b) <u>Financial Management and Monitoring (Minute 83 (c) refers)</u></p> <p>There was no further update on the Friends of Southgate (FOS).</p> <p>(c) <u>Head Teacher's Report and Governors' Questions (Minute 86 (a) refers)</u></p> <p>The Governors' query regarding the 15 days consecutive absence had been checked with Kirklees Council. The process remained unchanged; however, Governors would be informed if the process changed in the future.</p> <p>(d) <u>Head Teacher's Report and Governors' Questions (Minute 86 (e) refers)</u></p> <p>The calendar in SharePoint would be set up for use from September 2025 onwards.</p> <p>(e) <u>Annual Evaluation of the Governing Board's Effectiveness (Minute 91 refers)</u></p> <p>The updated action plan had been added to SharePoint. The analysis of current Governor skill sets had been completed.</p>	
100.	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & MONITORING	<p><u>Finance and Resources Committee – 2 July 2025</u></p> <p>The Finance and Resources Committee had met on 2 July 2025.</p> <p>Action: Minutes of the meeting would be prepared and shared with Governors.</p> <p>Governors had received a Budget Monitoring Report ahead of the meeting. Ms Hallas presented a summary of the report which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget monitoring had been carried out to Period 2 of the 2025-2026 financial year - Some annual payments for supplies and services had been made; however others were still to be made - The report showed that the income and expenditure were heading in the right direction 	Ms Hallas

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school was awaiting a quote from the provider for staff absence insurance for 2025-2026 which would be based on the last 12 months' claims experience - Mileage/Taxi Fares – a bus pass and a new mileage claim form had been introduced. The personalised curriculum pathway was also reviewed to reduce the cost of journeys - Agency costs were analysed by reason for use and other options for cover were considered - Almost a third of the IT budget had been spent on the annual contract with Global and some new software - Personalised Curriculum expenditure had been incurred on the Quarry Hill Centre - Training expenditure included re-accreditation of Team Teach Trainers and safeguarding training - A new Senior Business Support Officer had been appointed, was in post and had settled in well - The school had advertised for new lunchtime staff and had appointed two - In respect of income, seven banding changes had been raised with Kirklees Council's Finance team - Approx £540 had been donated for outdoor resources and school trips - Invoices had been raised for out of area pupils and receipt of payments were monitored - The meeting had discussed the possibility that more Kirklees Council traded services may be withdrawn in the future - The school had started the pre-termination phase of the PPP contract. The Head Teacher and School Business Manager were attending steering group meetings. A premises condition survey would be required, and the school had been asked by the LA to provide some additional funding to cover some financial costs associated with the process - The Special Schools' Funding Review was still ongoing and there was concern that this may not be resolved before the next round of budget setting began - The school had submitted its return to Kirklees Council last week and would receive a full financial report <p>Q. Are there any reasons behind the level of staff sickness requiring agency cover?</p> <p>A. Individual cases had led to the use of agency staff, however the overall usage had not been high compared to other schools. The school is trying to improve absence levels and there are robust absence management processes in place and a good wellbeing package available. Experience has shown that rewarding good</p>	

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		<p>attendance can lead to unfairness. Use of agency staff is not the default and other options are considered.</p> <p>Q. What Kirklees Council traded services could be withdrawn and what could remain?</p> <p>A. It is more likely that services such as payroll and HR will remain. At the end of the PPP contract, the school will need premises, catering and cleaning services and it is not clear if the council will provide these. Structural changes within the council were affecting the services provided. The school needs to keep an eye on the cost and quality of traded services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school had been asked to sign up to new three-year SLAs for speech and language services. Due to uncertainty around the outcome of the funding review the school had negotiated one-year agreements with an option to renew - Quotes had been received for the sensory garden and a contract variation would be requested. Adjustments to the quiet rooms were being explored <p>Governors thanked Ms Hallas for the information.</p> <p><i>Ms Hallas left the meeting at this point</i></p>	
101.	REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES	<p>(a) <u>Finance and Resources Committee – 2 July 2025</u></p> <p>This item was discussed under Financial Management and Monitoring (Minute 100 refers).</p> <p>(b) <u>Standards and Effectiveness Committee – 2 July 2025</u></p> <p>The Standards and Effectiveness Committee had met on 2 July 2025.</p> <p>Action: Minutes of the meeting would be prepared and shared with Governors.</p> <p>Mr Holland presented a summary of the key points discussed at the meeting, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Special Schools' Funding Review - The ongoing issues of Government funding - Forthcoming local elections 	Ms Hallas

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultations - requests coming in late had meant any more pupils named at this point in the year would be unable to join the school at the start of September as they could not transition - Pupil numbers - Post 16 provision would be required for 34 pupils for 2025-26. 2024-2025 had been difficult to manage with 23 pupils requiring provision and many having to go out of area <p>Q. Can post 16 pupils remain at the school?</p> <p>A. Unfortunately, no. There is no available space or funding. This is something Ms Cranmer keeps raising with the Local Authority. There will be new pupils joining the school in September. When children leave the school from different year groups and pathways, it can be difficult to match up replacements.</p>	
102.	HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS	<p>The Head Teacher had provided a written report to Governors which had been shared ahead of the meeting. She presented some key points from the report, which included:</p> <p>(a) <u>Welcome</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Permanent appointments to the wider leadership team had been made - The school had been part of the Local Area SEND Inspection undertaken by Ofsted and CQC. The report was awaited - There had been a positive visit by Harpreet Uppal, MP - Local Ward Councillors Longstaff, Munroe and Davies had also visited the school and provided positive feedback <p>(b) <u>Pupil Numbers and Admissions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were 183 pupils on roll and the school expected there to be the same number in September 2025 - Year 11 leavers with no Post 16 provision had reduced to one, however the school expected this would be resolved before the end of term - Moderations under the Special Schools' Funding Review had gone ahead, however the process had been paused due to some issues arising. There would be a meeting shortly to decide the next steps - The school cohorts had continued to shift and the school was continuing to work with ECHP managers to get the placements right <p>Q. Why has there been such a shift in cohorts?</p>	

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		<p>A. Possibly this is due to Covid 19 when children were not able to access assessments as infants. Backlogs in processing ECHPs may also have contributed. The reason for low Year 7 numbers is not clear.</p> <p>(c) <u>Safeguarding</u> Ms Emptage presented key points which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One child on a Child Protection Order (CPO), four pupils on a Child in Need plan, five pupils with a Child in Need respite package, two with a Team Around the Family (TAF) plan and one pupil with a Family Support Worker - DSLs had attended six strategy meetings and in the last 12 months 26 Duty and Advice calls had been made - Two pupils were on the Dynamic Risk Register - Nine pupils are Looked After and 12 children are Post Looked After - The school had hosted a recent DSL network meeting which had been a positive event - Following the Josh MacAlister review, a new model for social care working has been developed - In 2025-2026 Ms Fan would become part of SSAFE (System Safeguarding Assurance Group for Educators) which would play an essential role in enhancing safeguarding in schools across Kirklees <p>(d) <u>Pupil Attendance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance for the year to 27 June 2025 was 90.63%, which compared well against local, regional and national data - The gaps in attendance levels between boys and girls and between PP and non PP pupils were closing due to improved attendance <p>Q. Do the 188 days lost due to pupil transport issues get included in the pupil attendance measure?</p> <p>A. No, these are coded separately.</p> <p>Q. Are the missed days for pupil transport linked to seasonal factors?</p> <p>A. No, it is an all year-round issue, for example driver sickness. Kirklees Council are piloting the purchase of eight new minibuses which should help reduce transport costs and reliance on taxi services. The council has also been asked to look at reinstating the Training for Travel initiative.</p>

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	<p>(e) <u>Quality of Education</u> Ms Emptage presented key points which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Quality Assurance process was being reviewed - The collaborative peer sessions carried out this term had received positive feedback and would hopefully be rolled out to ETAs in some capacity over the coming year - Ms Emptage had attended an interesting webinar on teacher appraisals - There had been a number of successful internal recruitments which included Provision Leads for Orchard and Woodland, Maths Lead, and a two-year extension to the PHSE Lead - Unfortunately, there had been no interest in the Technology for Life position and SLT would consider further options for this area of the curriculum, such as life skills <p>(f) <u>Pupil Progress and Attainment</u> Mrs Drye presented key points which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good progress had been made with support provided where needed. The use of our Academic Mentor has been successful - Pupils had achieved good results across a wide range of accreditations - Primary age pupils had completed a range of assessments, screening and tests - Results Day would be held on 21 August 2025 - Pupils studying for the BTEC Music Course had been withdrawn as they had found the demands of the course too challenging - The online Multiplication Tables Check had also been too stressful for the one pupil who could have accessed the mathematics, due to strict response times <p>Q. Are there any alternative ways of doing the Multiplication Tables Check? A. There are some access arrangements we can utilise, but we cannot change the time allowed.</p> <p>(g) <u>Behaviour and Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall pupils' behaviour and attitudes have been positive with a downward trend for Physical Interventions and Stage 2 behaviour <p>Governors complimented the school for the positive results in the light of increasing complexity among the cohort.</p> <p>Q. Is there a sense of how the transitions are going this year?</p>	

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	<p>A. Two children have had issues; however overall the process is working well and a significant spike in behaviour is not anticipated.</p> <p>(h) <u>Bullying, Discrimination and Exclusions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interventions were in place and staff had been trained to implement these - The number of incidents was minimal - There had been no exclusions, however Governors were notified about a case of a pupil displaying very challenging behaviour due to a significant change of need <p>(i) <u>School Organisation and Staffing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There had been a successful teacher recruitment round with 22 applicants leading to three successful appointments. These staff are beginning to transition into their new roles ready for September. - The four new ETAs were flourishing - A new Senior Business Support Officer had been appointed - Two new ASOs had been appointed to start in September - There had been two resignations and a Staff Dismissal Committee meeting had been arranged - There had been a CPD Celebration Evening to showcase the impact of CPD on pupils - There had been positive feedback on the Cultural Heritage Lunch held on the INSET day <p>(j) <u>School Self Evaluation (SEF) and School Development Plan (SDP)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The main outcomes from the current SDP had been achieved - Work on a new three-year SDP had been started and stakeholder feedback had been collected. The new SDP would cross reference to the new Ofsted framework - The SEF had been updated <p>(k) <u>Enrichment and Opportunities for Pupils</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors noted the wide range of activities which had been held at the school during the Summer Term - The ASDAN moderation report had been received with no areas for development - The Business Support team had organised a successful Parents' Evening for both current, new and prospective families 	

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		Governors thanked the school for facilitating the provision of uniforms for pupils to try on.	
103.	SAFEGUARDING	This item had been discussed as part of the Head Teacher's Report (Minute 102 (c) refers).	
104.	POLICIES FOR REVIEW/APPROVAL	There were no policies for review or approval at this time.	
105.	GOVERNOR TRAINING & GOVERNOR VISITS	<p>The Chair stated that the school had done well. The new SLT was strong and reports were showing the school was in a good place. The school had earned a good reputation. The hard work put in by staff had achieved much.</p> <p>The Vice Chair stated that the calm environment around the school showed that systems were working and that staff knew the procedures to follow. It was good to know that people outside the school thought well of it.</p> <p>Q. Are the SLT enjoying their roles? A. Yes, staff feel the school is a good place to work. There is a breadth of skills across the school. Staff and parents' feedback has been positive.</p> <p>Governors shared their impressions of the school and their highlights of working with the school over the year. The Chair thanked Governors for their support for the school and asked the Head Teacher to pass on the comments to staff.</p> <p>ACTION: To share Governors' comments with the school staff.</p>	Head Teacher
106.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	There were no items raised under Any Other Business.	
107.	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS	<p>The date for the next Governors' meeting would be circulated to Governors. Dates for meetings for the remainder of the year would be agreed at the next meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: To circulate the date of the next meeting to Governors.</p>	Head Teacher

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108.	AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY	RESOLVED: That no part of these minutes, agenda or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the school, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.	

Meeting closed at 7.35 pm.