

THE GOVERNING BOARD OF SOUTHGATE SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Board held at 5.30 pm at the school on Wednesday 20 May 2026.

PRESENT

Mr R Baines (Chair), Ms R Cranmer (Head Teacher), Mrs L Drye, Mr M Holland (Vice Chair), Ms L Jackson (Associate Governor), Ms W May (part), Ms A Morris.

IN ATTENDANCE

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

The meeting started at 5.38 pm.

Minute	Item		Action
65.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair introduced Ms J Bartholomew to Governors. Ms Bartholomew had expressed an interest in becoming a Governor from September 2026. Governors were pleased to learn about the skills and experience Ms Bartholomew would bring to the Governing Board. Apologies for absence had been received from Mr M Cleve, Mr C McCombe, Mrs S Norman and Ms J Wittrick, all with consent. There were no declarations of interest.	
66.	REPRESENTATION (1)	Governors noted the following matters of representation: (a) <u>Appointment Name</u> <u>Category</u> <u>With Effect From</u> Jeanette Wittrick Co-opted 22.5.26	

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		It was confirmed that the Safeguarding checks had been completed. (b) <u>Appointment of Co-opted Governors (2 vacancies)</u> The Chair informed Governors that, at the end of his term of office as LA Governor, he would like to continue to serve as a Governor at the school in a co-opted seat. This would leave a vacancy for an LA Governor and the school would need to approach Kirklees Council for a nomination. Governors supported this proposal. RESOLVED: That Mr Richard Baines be invited to serve as Co-opted Governor at the end of his term of office as LA Governor Governors supported the proposal to appoint Ms Bartholomew as a Co-opted Governor which would mean there were no further vacancies to be filled. RESOLVED: That Ms Joanne Bartholomew be invited to serve as Co-opted Governor with effect from 1 September 2026 Action: To liaise with Kirklees Governor Service (KGS) regarding the LA Governor vacancy	Head Teacher
67.	NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS	There were no items notified to be raised under Any Other Business.	
68.	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 MARCH 2026	RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2026 be approved and signed by the Chair, subject to the following amendment: Minute 55 (g): the date for the AGM to read '10 June 2026'	
69.	MATTERS ARISING	(a) <u>Representation (Minute 53 (a) refers)</u> The information regarding the re-appointment of Governors had been submitted to the Governor Clerking Service and the Head Teacher had been liaising with the service.	

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		- the income and expenditure position at Period 12 had been reported and Governors noted that the overall actual financial position was in line with the profile - the contingency had not been required and would be carried forward - accruals at Period 13 had been completed and some new iPads had been purchased before year end. A total amount of £54k would be transferred to 2026/27 - there was a time lag in receiving settlement on staff absence insurance claims of up to three months which affected financial monitoring and year end procedures Q: When does the school pay the staff agencies? A: They are paid weekly. The school wants to maintain a good relationship with the agencies it uses. There is no guarantee an absence claim will be agreed. Support staff agency costs account for 88% of total agency costs. Teaching absences are more easily covered internally. Most claims submitted are for sickness or maternity leave. Alternative solutions to supply are used when possible, for example when Forest School staff were on DofE expeditions, pupils were sent to an external adventurous activity provision as this provided better value and better opportunities for pupils. - IT costs were over the planned amount due to unexpected repairs and replacement of IT resources. Higher investment in IT would be made in 2026/27 - Personalised curriculum expenditure had been incurred on Quarry Hill, Eden Forest and Elite Training in line with the planned budget - Taxi and mileage expenditure had intentionally reduced to 58% of budget. The school had four minibuses (two owned and two leased) and two electric cars. The school also provided a bus pass for public transport - most of the expenditure on training had been on Team Teach and medical training. Extensive in-house training had also taken place and was not included in the expenditure - systems to claim funding for out-of-area pupils was working well and good relationships had been built with the relevant local authorities - two major premises projects were being progressed: an adaptation to the Beech Class and improvements to the quiet rooms <i>Ms May joined the meeting at this point</i>	

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		- the PPP Contractor's Lifecycle plan for the summer included repainting six classrooms, the dining room and breakout rooms. New flooring in six classrooms would also be laid. The school proposed to pay staff overtime to help empty the rooms in preparation for the works and to reassemble them afterwards before the start of term Q: Will the same colours be used to repaint the walls? A: No, there may be new colours used in keeping with previous re-decoration work. (b) <u>2026/27 Budget</u> The School Business Manager presented information to Governors on the budget for 2026/27. The school would receive £5.987m budget share and £140k Pupil Premium. Other income of £178k had been estimated making total income for the year £6.305m. Expenditure for the key budget areas had been estimated as follows: - Staffing - £500k - Premises - £620k (including £462k PPP Contract) - Transport - £38k - Supplies and Services - £690k (including agency costs £230k) The deadline to approve the budget was 5 June 2026. The key areas of expenditure for 2026/27 were premises (Beech Class, quiet rooms, carpark) and IT (Laptops and iPads). The key areas of oversight on expenditure would be agency, IT, training and premises costs. Governors noted that the recent recruitment exercise to replace 1.5 FTE teachers had gone very well and there had been some strong applicants. A decision had been made to recruit three FTE teachers to allow the school to have additional leadership capacity to progress on the School Development Plan priorities. Governors thanked the School Business Manager for her report. RESOLVED: That the budget for 2026/27 be approved and signed.	

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	<u>New Ofsted Framework</u> • The school had reviewed the framework and had RAG rated itself • All areas were either strong or expected, however, some further evidence gathering was required • Senior leaders would go through the plans and evidence and this would inform the new SDP • Next steps will include preparing a script and crib sheets for staff and Governors to ensure consistent messages would be given • The school would also work with Governors to help them prepare • It is likely to be two years before Ofsted would visit the school • The two day inspection process and possible inspection outcome had been explained • Intelligence had been received that Ofsted were currently being very strict and rigorous and that it was a very different inspection system Q: Have there been any inspections of special schools using the new framework? A: Not that are published yet. Other topics discussed at the meeting included : • SEND White Paper – further information was awaited • Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – a new document was expected and whilst this would include several changes, the changes were what schools were already doing • SDP – progress and ideas for 2026/27 • ALP visit and report <u>Governor Training and Development</u> The Governor Induction Plan had been completed and Ms Bartholomew would be trialling it. Ms May presented a summary of ongoing training requirements for Governors. It was proposed that not all Governors needed to attend every training course and Governors should specialise where appropriate. Where Governors had received professional training on a relevant area through an external source, this should be acceptable.	

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		There was a statutory requirement for all Governors to attend Safeguarding training. It was also recommended that Governors attend training around the Prevent Duty and SEND. There should be a general awareness among Governors about equality and diversity and health and safety (including restrictive interventions). Specialised training included finance, Head Teacher performance management, safer recruitment, cyber security and data protection. Governors identified that Safer Recruitment also needed to be added to the list. Governors thanked Ms May for the information. The next step would be to develop a training matrix to identify gaps. The current system in school for recording Governor Training would be used as a basis for this. The matrix would be reviewed at the AGM in September. Action: Develop a Governor training matrix for review at the AGM in September	Head Teacher
72.	REPRESENTATION (2)	The Chair reported that Ms May had resigned as Parent Governor and her last meeting would be the next meeting on 1 July 2026. He thanked Ms May for her work as a Governor. Governors discussed the Parent Governor vacancy. It was discussed that Ms Jackson is an active and experienced associate member and previously stood in an election at Southgate School for Parent and Carer Governor. Action: Seek advice from GCS about Parent and Carer Governor process and if Ms Jackson can be appointed into this role Action: To inform GCS about Ms May's resignation .	Head Teacher Head Teacher
73.	PREMISES UPDATES AND PROGRAMMES OF ANY SUMMER WORKS	This item was discussed as part of Financial Management and Monitoring (Minute 70 (a) refers).	
74.	HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT / DATA REPORT AND	The Head Teacher provided a verbal report to Governors. She reported that the year so far had gone very well and that a recent Enrichment Celebration Evening had been a huge success. The report included the following:	

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	GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS	(a) <u>Pupils and the wider SEND system</u> There were 183 pupils on roll. There would be 33 new starters in September. To date over 140 consultations have been responded to and witness statements provided for 12 tribunals. The Head Teacher continued to work closely with the local authority for the benefit of the school and the wider SEND system. Post 16 provision remained at the forefront of discussions. A mainstream school had commissioned the school to audit and provide advice on its SEND and Inclusion provision. (b) <u>Important Updates</u> The school had received a complaint which was going through the complaints procedure. The Chair of Governors had responded to the complainant as it has moved to stage 2. A Subject Access Request (SAR) had been received and was being responded to. Q: Who is the school's Data Protection Officer? A: It is the School Business Manager. Some pupils had been accessing AI generated material and the content was a concern. The concerns had been reported to police and the platform. There had been a GDPR breach when ECHP paperwork had been issued to the wrong family. Advice had been sought and there had been no need to report it to the ICO. The school would be addressing the issue with the staff involved and was able to demonstrate that full training had been provided. (c) <u>Quality Assurance</u> Identity and Wellbeing and Careers and Independence Audits and Maths work scrutiny had been carried out. An in-depth subject review for the Our World Curriculum had also taken place. The school was planning a CPD Celebration Event in June. The ALP had noted the consistent themes in core values on her last visit.	

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	(d) <u>Attendance</u> Year to date attendance was 91.3%. Eleven pupils had 100% attendance, 83 with 95% or above, 17 with less than 80% and two with less than 50% who were both on part time timetables. Six pupils were on part time timetables and 1 pupil had left but was still on roll. The latest benchmarks for attendance included Kirklees Specials Schools (88.14%), Regional Special Schools (86.38%) and National Special Schools (87.1%). (e) <u>Behaviour</u> The Deputy Head Teacher reported that the improving approach was a real strength and had made a massive impact. The number of good and outstanding days had increased and the Stage 1 and Stage 2 days had reduced. Pupils were less anxious and there had been two or less physical interventions each day for the last three weeks. Staff were seeing the benefit of their hard work in ensuring the provision was right. Q: Are the restrictive interventions involving many pupils? A: No, it is a few pupils generally. Q: Is the school comfortable with the April 2026 guidance on recording and reporting restrictive interventions? A: Yes, there had been some guidelines introduced in the guidance; however, the school was already working to the guidelines. Leaders are waiting to see if the LA issues further clarification and guidance for maintained school. (f) <u>Stakeholder Voice</u> The annual staff survey had gone out and there had been a good level of response. The pupil questionnaire would be issued shortly and this would be making more use of technology and visuals to capture views. The parent/carers survey had also gone out. (g) <u>Health and Safety</u> Since the last meeting there had been 23 IR/22 (Incident, Accident and Near-Miss) reports completed. There were no RIDDOR reportable incidents. (h) <u>Celebrations and Upcoming Events</u>	

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		Governors were pleased to learn about several events and celebrations at the school. These included: • pupils had written and performed a song in the Music for Youth competition, reaching the national finals to be held in Birmingham in July • four pupils had completed the Bronze level Duke of Edinburgh award and 19 had completed the Silver level. The Arts Award Program had been expanded and the partnership with Elite had continued to provide motor mechanics and construction training • some pupils had successfully sat exams including GCSE Maths, Functional Skills Maths, Functional Skills English and SATs, which had boosted pupils' confidence and had inspired others • the ALP had visited the school and had provided very positive feedback. The ALP would be attending the next meeting. Governors were invited to several events which included: • Parent/Carers' Evening, including the FOS AGM – 10 June • CPD Celebration – 25 June • Sports Day – 23 and 24 June • Big Sing – 17 June • Year 11 Leavers' Assembly – 25 June • Exhibition at Huddersfield Town Hall including the work of two classes in conjunction with Historic England	
75.	SAFEGUARDING	The Deputy Head Teacher presented information to Governors which included: • Two pupils on a Child Protection Order • Five pupils on a Child in Need Plan • Three pupils with a Child in Need respite package • Eight pupils who are Looked After • 10 pupils who are Post Looked After In the last 12 months: • Four strategy meetings had been held • Five Encompass calls had been received • 25 duty and advice calls had been made or received.	

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		In the last six months two exploitation checklists had been completed and one prevent referral had been made. Ms N Fan had attended several strategic meetings which included: • System Safeguarding Assurance For Educators (SSAFE) with a focus on a whole family approach to domestic abuse • hosting a Governors' meeting on attendance and CLA • SEND DT Network sharing Southgate work with Virtual Schools • SEND DSL Network which covered Ofsted, KCSIE 2026 and Working Together 2027	
76.	ATTAINMENT AND PROGRESS DATA OVER THE YEAR	Governors had been given a report titled "Pupil Progress Summary Spring 2025-26" ahead of the meeting. Mrs Drye presented key point from the report which included: • There had been an emphasis on teachers giving account of pupils' progress and their professional judgements on progress • A focus for Ofsted was the accuracy of baseline data and the school continues to work on developing this • In the core curriculum, ensuring pupils' breadth of understanding was being worked on rather than moving straight to higher level skills • In the core curriculum progress continues to be good, whilst changes were being made to how the school made judgements about expected progress which would cause temporary variations in the data • There had been continued good progress made by pupils towards their Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) • There had been an exceptional improvement in the personalised curriculum which correlated with the significant adaptations in provision that had been implemented and improved staff skills • Developments continue to be implemented into the engagement assessment tools and this is going well Governors thanked Mrs Drye for her report.	

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77.	REVIEW PROGRESS AGAINST SIP AND SEF	The Head Teacher provided an update for Governors on the SDP. The actions in the 2025/26 SDP were well underway and impact was being measured and evaluated. There would be a final review and update carried out in the Summer 2 term. The 2026/27 SDP was under development and initial priorities identified included: • Professional learning communities • Aspirational Preparation for Adulthood Curriculum for Years 9 to 11 • A new focus for the Forest Pathway to reflect the shift in complexity • Precise assessment of progress for all pupils • Personal development becoming part of the Core Curriculum • Coregulation and self-regulation (quiet room developments) • Ensuring reinstated EYFS provision remained high quality • School's website update	
78.	STAFFING UPDATES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2026/27	The Head Teacher reported on recruitment, retention and staff leaving. Governors had supported the recruitment exercises. The recruitment activity included: • Physical and Sensory Officer appointed (internal recruitment) • Three Teacher appointments to fill vacancies and provide extra leadership capacity • Advertisements had been placed for Personal Care, Pastoral and Intervention Officer and ETA positions Some ETAs would be leaving the school. One teacher would be leaving the school and the fixed term contract for another teacher would be ending. Overall staff retention was good and the leadership team remained stable. Two new ETAs were doing well in their role.	
79.	PE AND SPORT PREMIUM – ANNUAL REPORT REVIEW	Governors noted that the reports were being prepared and would be presented to Governors for approval at the next meeting.	School Business Manager & Assistant Head with responsibility
80.	POLICIES	The following policies had been circulated to Governors for review prior to the meeting: • Visitor Code of Conduct • Charging and Remissions Policy	

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		• A Relational Approach to Behaviour (including guidance on the use of reasonable force in schools) RESOLVED: That the above policies be approved. Kirklees Council had been requested to provide standard definitions for reasonable force in mainstream schools. Governors noted that a new Allergy Policy was being drafted and all staff would need to be trained in dealing with allergies.	
81.	GOVERNOR TRAINING, GOVERNOR ACTION PLAN AND GOVERNOR VISITS	Governors reported on the visits they had made to the school. Mr Baines had attended the Careers Day, taken part in teacher recruitment and had been at the Celebration Evening. Governors discussed that the Celebration had seemed quieter than in previous years and this might have been due to the online ticket system and the school's communication about the event. Action: Review the online ticket system and communications for the next Celebration event. Governors thanked all the staff for their commitment to providing the breadth and quality of enrichment opportunities for pupils at the school. Mr Holland had also attended the Celebration Evening. Mr Holland and Mrs Wittrick had attended a meeting with Ms Fan to review attendance and looked after children. The meeting had discussed the school's holistic view of safeguarding, the value of attendance and some individual stories had been shared. Pupils' medical issues and the school transport cancellations affected attendance but the Governors were confident that attendance was well managed and there was a strong system in place. The Governors had made checks on staff wellbeing and understood that staff were doing well. They noted that there was one pupil without any post 16 provision in place. Ms Morris and Mr McCombe had carried out a curriculum review on careers and independence. They had been impressed by Marvin's (Personal Development Lead) enthusiasm. The review had looked into the work experience programme, independent	Deputy Head Teacher

Minute	Item		Action
		skills for early ages and succession planning. There was a new and emerging programme with a lot to offer. Action: Email a Governor visit report template to Ms Morris and Mr McCombe and upload the template onto SharePoint. Action: Complete a visit report for the curriculum Quality Assurance. Ms May had attended the Celebration Evening. Ms Jackson had attended the Careers Day, Our World (history and science) and had taken part in staff recruitment. She had also heard feedback from the Pupil Voice and the key messages were that pupils wanted the funding to continue, for teachers to be more hands on (less paperwork) and to talk less. She would complete a visit report for the school. Action: Complete a visit report for the curriculum Quality Assurance.	Deputy Head Teacher Ms Morris/ Mr McCombe Ms Jackson
82.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	<u>School Transport</u> Q: Has Kirklees Council evaluated having its own minibuses? A: Not that I know of, however the service is much better. Days are still lost due to transport cancellations but these are due to the private providers. Approximately 150 days have been lost due to transport issues. This does not help with attendance and parents feel let down. Q: How many Kirklees Council buses does the school use? A: There are currently four used by the school.	
83.	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS	RESOLVED: That the next Governors' meeting be held at the school at 5.30 pm on Wednesday 1 July 2026.	
84.	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 7:26 pm.