THE FEDERATED GOVERNING BODY OF SAVILE TOWN CE (VC) INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL AND THORNHILL LEES CE (VC) INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the full Governing Board held at 5.30 pm at Savile Town CE (VC) Infant and Nursery School on Tuesday, 10th February 2026.

PRESENT

Miss K Allen (Chair), Mrs K Asquith-Dolan, Mr H Bismillah, Mrs A China, Mrs D Douglas (Headteacher), Ms K Iqbal, Mrs F Lee and Mrs A Nyhan.

In Attendance

Mrs T Maguire (Minute Clerk)
Mrs Wilson (SBM at Thornhill Lees)

The meeting opened with a prayer.

The Chair welcomed all governors and attendees to the meeting and expressed appreciation for their continued commitment to the governance of both schools. The meeting was formally opened with a prayer, in keeping with the schools' Church of England ethos. This moment of reflection set a respectful and purposeful tone for the discussions that followed.

115. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Mrs C Baker, Mrs S Hussain and Mr F Patel (all with consent).

There were no declarations of interest.

116. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE RAISED UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following matters would be discussed under Any Other Business:

(a) Student Support Centre
(b) Compassionate Leave Request from member of Support Staff
(c) Professional letter regarding compassionate leave requests

117. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2025

Miss Allen had not received the link to the minutes of the previous meeting.

ACTION: Clerk agreed to chase this issue with the Clerking Service.

The governing board reviewed the minutes of the previous full governing board meeting held on 7 October 2025. The Chair invited governors to raise any queries or amendments. No corrections were proposed, and the minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2025 be approved and signed by Chair as a correct record.

118. MATTERS ARISING

The Board reviewed the Action Log from the previous meeting held on 7 October 2025.

It was noted that points 3 and 4 had been agreed in the previous meeting. The following points were still outstanding.

(a) Apologies for absence, Consent and Declarations of Interest (Minute 91(b) refers

Declaration of Business Interest information

One form is outstanding and the Head Teacher was expecting to see this governor tomorrow and agreed to chase the documentation.

(b) Review of Committees and Panel Arrangements (Minute 95 (a) refers)

Governors had not received the updated membership list.

ACTION: Clerk to chase with Clerking Services.

119. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS

The Headteacher presented a comprehensive report to the board, covering key developments across both schools since the start of the autumn term. The following points were updated:

- **SEND White Paper** – Item still pending, information from the Education Secretary confirmed a delay until 2026 in order to get things right.
- **Ofsted –** A brief overview of the revised grading system was provided. Governors noted there had been a few schools inspected in the local area, however little information had been shared.

  The Dewsbury Learning Partnership (DLP) have a training day planned on 13 March, the focus will be Ofsted with a guest speaker providing information on the new framework.

- **Restrictive Interventions including the use of reasonable force** - From 1st April the DfE are issuing new guidance with enhanced responsibility and the use of restrictive interventions. The Head Teacher will be writing this policy and will share with Governors before Easter.
- **Parents guide to school complaints** – collaborative document now complete and ready to be added onto both school websites this week

Local Authority

Kirklees have been holding meetings with maintained schools to talk about how they can provide support with limited resources, and how schools can work together to support each other. There are still many schools who are not part of a MAT and the meetings raised a lot of different opinions.

School

- **Staffing**

  - Mrs Hayman at Savile Town, starts her maternity leave this weekend. Her role is being covered by existing staff who have increased their hours.

  - One member of cleaning staff will be leaving her role at the end of the Easter holidays. There have been 7 application requests to date.

  - One teacher at TL on long term sick, one support assistant/ lunchtime supervisor who has been off since November and one support assistant/ cleaner at ST who has been off since the start of term. Many other staff have been off ill with flu-like symptoms.

- **Staff Development**

  - Makaton Level 1 training continues, another 20 staff members have now received this training, as well as 40 staff trained at Level 2.

  - Staff meeting time has been allocated to complete 3 sessions of Locala training on Sensory Awareness and one session about being asthma aware.

  - Chatta – Sessions have been completed at both schools demonstrating how this can support the speech, language and ultimately reading and writing skills in children. Training followed for all teaching staff how to use Chatta in the classroom, ongoing support will be provided to complete implementation.

    Governors acknowledged the positive impact derived through using this approach.

  - Opera North continue to support in both schools. The package for next year will not include 'strings' as this funding has come to an end. Costings are split across both schools, based on student numbers.

- **Pupil Numbers**

  Governors noted projected admissions for Reception at Thornhill Lees next year could be 70. These numbers impact on how many classes are in each year group. Final admission numbers will be confirmed in April.

- **Attendance**

  Figures up to 30th January were included in the report. Attendance is a national focus. Targets are based on Primary Schools, which is a disadvantage for our schools as younger children have not had the opportunity to build up immunity against infections.

  Both Schools are putting posters on the websites and information is going out to parents around the importance of attendance and the impact of non-attendance.

  School issues letters to children with attendance below 90% each half term. The Head Teacher has held meetings with parents whose children have attendance below 80% to explain the impact on their child. These discussions have included how children are registered and the timings required which determine attendance. Six families are subject to an 'attendance and punctuality agreement' which sets out a

number of expectations. If no improvement is recorded following a three week review period, an 'attendance contract' will be put in place.

Penalty notices are issued if a child is absent on 5 consecutive days or 10 days within a 10-week period, this could result in a fine.

Q: How do the parents react?
A: Some are genuinely shocked, some are in denial and there are a number of excuses put forward. There are other more complex situations with children who have additional needs who may have Autism and poor sleeping habits, school needs to strike a balance.

Q: Is this a common theme at the Cluster meetings?
A: Yes, this is an issue across the board. If you can be persistent with parents, the children do get used to it, it is important to get them into school early, then you can be a little more flexible around leaving times. When a child comes in late, this also causes disruption to other children and can be unsettling when lessons are underway.

Buildings, Premises and Resources

Thornhill Lees:
Fire safety work continues upstairs, new contractor is looking at fire doors and investigating what else requires attention. There seem to be discrepancies between what two different companies are recommending.

Q: In terms of insurance where would we stand?
A: There should not be any impact on insurance, we have written confirmation from the LA about the numbers of pupils we have been allowed upstairs and that temporary work has been completed on the existing fire doors.

A meeting with Asset Management was held last week regarding new lighting as we are constantly having to replace lights, this will go ahead, we have been asked to contribute out of DFC for this work.

Savile Town:
Security door devices and fencing has been completed and payment for this will also come out of the DFC budget.

School Development Plan (SDP)

The SDP had been circulated to governors including a review of targets and summary of work completed up until Christmas.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Governors noted an increase in numbers on the SEN register and children with medical needs in both schools. Decisions on a number of EHCP's are awaited, a dramatic increase is anticipated. Review meetings with Educational Psychologists and Early Years Support Team continue.

Safeguarding

- Savile Town: CP – 0; CIN – 1; TAF – 3; LAC – 0

- Thornhill Lees: CP – 1; CIN – 2; TAF – 1; LAC – 1

School are involved in a number of open cases and meetings with social workers and core groups continue.

Baseline data

End of autumn term data was reported, the next data drop will be at end of Spring 2 in time for parents evenings.

120. SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding information across both schools was provided in the Head Teacher report.

ACTION: Remove as agenda item as covered in the Head Teacher report.

121. SCHOOL WEBSITES

There were no further items to report at this time.

122. OUR SCHOOLS AS CHURCH SCHOOLS

Helen Lever from the Diocese had visited school and evaluated the SIAMS framework. She identified areas which are currently being met by school and where further work is required, the SEF for Thornhill Lees will be monitored and feedback provided to governors before the next meeting.

Mrs Asquith-Dolan informed governors that Collective Worship continues at Savile Town and students have confidently led 2 assemblies themed around nativity and Ramadan.

123. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

Complete / Approve School Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

The SFVS for both schools had been circulated prior to the meeting and governors confirmed they had examined the document.

There are similarities between the schools and this document helps to provide assurance that they are meeting the basic standards necessary to achieve a good level of financial health and resource management. The SFVS is completed annually and returned to Kirklees audit team. Governors are responsible for ensuring the relevant standards are in place and questions were invited.

RESOLVED: That the SFVS documents for both schools be approved and signed off by the chair.

Finalise next year's Budget – **Document 2** **Enc**

Budget Update – Savile Town

Up to date budget and financial monitoring reports were shared with governors outlining the current position. Governors noted a budget adjustment which was a reduction due to the number of EY students.

Governors confirmed matching cashflow figures against the T5 LA finance report and up to date budget report.

Financial Benchmarking – Savile Town

The annual DfE benchmarking exercise had taken place and reports were circulated to governors.

Information is based on the previous financial year and the report selects a number of comparable schools based on similar characteristics, providing headline information.

The following key areas were outlined:

Catering staff and supplies – Savile Town spend per pupil is high in relation to other comparable schools and this is because School is an Infant School and all students are entitled to Free School Meals (FSM)

Teaching and Support Staff – Cost is high predominantly as school offers provision for 2-year olds which requires higher staffing ratio's, there is an ETA in every classroom and additionally school has a high number of students with SEN.

IT – Increased cost per pupil due to low pupil numbers in class (27)

Non educational support staff and services – There are a number of non-educational support staff including office staff and cleaning staff. Schools share a Caretaker in an effort to reduce these costs.

Some of the areas where school expenditure is lower per pupil in comparison include:

- **Educational supplies**
- **Administrative supplies**
- **Utility costs**
- **Premises staff and services**

Q: Is the Benchmarking Exercise used for internal purposes?
A: We have to scrutinise the document to see where school is spending the money and this in turn can inform budget setting.

Budget Update – Thornhill Lees

Up to date budget and financial monitoring reports were shared with governors outlining the current position. Governors noted a budget adjustment which was an increase and determined by the number of students in EY.

Governors confirmed matching cashflow figures against the T5 LA finance report and up to date budget report.

Financial Benchmarking – Thornhill Lees

A similar picture was reported at Thornhill Lees, governors noted the following points:

Catering Staff and Supplies – Higher spend per pupil than similar schools

Teaching and Support Staff – Higher spend due to staffing ratios in EY and the high number of students with SEN.

Utility costs – These costs are comparatively similar to other schools

Premises Staff and Services – These costs are slightly higher, cleaning hours have reduced and other savings are being explored.

Some of the areas where school expenditure is lower per pupil in comparison include:

- **Educational supplies** – school are using old supplies.
- **Administrative supplies** – using more digital resources
- **ICT**
- **Utility costs**
- **Non Educational Support Staff** – some office hours have reduced

124. MONITOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP)

This item has been covered in the Head Teacher Report

125. REVIEW / APPROVAL OF POLICIES

The following item was covered in the Head Teacher Report, requiring review.

(a) Reactive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools

RESOLVED: That Governors approved the following policies for both schools:

- Fire Evacuation Policy - part of when H&S audit took place, brought forward from spring.
- Emergency Planning Policy.
- Health & Safety Policy.
- Medication policy – LA relooking at this but was reviewed as part of H&S audit.

126. DEDICATED HEADSHIP TIME

The Head Teacher confirmed dedicated time had been utilised to prepare for this meeting and to ensure all documents were in order.

127. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS
(Sharing learning outcomes and key points)

Mrs Asquith-Dolan had attended a meeting to consider the differences around equality and equity.

She explained the different scenarios and outlined the importance of equity rather than equality in schools to ensure that all students receive the specific resources, opportunities and support they need to succeed, rather than providing the same for everyone.

Mr Bismillah is due to attend training around ‘leading a governors team’.

Miss Allen attended a course run by the Diocese providing opportunities for chairs. She had visited Thornhill Lees and spoken to Lorraine abut Early Years Resource Provision and remarked on the many strengths and development of staff, based on the needs of children.

Miss Allen and Mrs Douglas attended a LA Well -Being in School course and fed back the key points to governors.

The Head Teacher had attended the Head Teacher briefing run by the Diocese where discussions focussed on AI, further training will be rolled out.

128. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Student Support Centre

The bungalow at Savile Town has been used for a number of things previously, following refurbishment after the flood.

A request had been previously registered for Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) to be used in that building, and this never materialised. In September school was approached about the building and ARP was mentioned again, this time, more consideration was taken and things have taken off from there. Kirklees have identified two schools, Savile Town has been chosen to cover North Kirklees and would be the pilot school, hopefully in operation after Easter. This would be fully funded for two years.

The proposal is that the building will have provision for students up to KS1 with SEMH needs and who find it challenging in mainstream schools. Support will be offered to up to 6 students, the aim of which will be to reintegrate the students into their own schools.

There will be three staff members working in the provision, job descriptions have been written and are currently with HR to be graded.

There are two rooms in the bungalow, one would be a sensory room and other would be another breakout space. A curriculum needs developing and weekly meetings are currently taking place to work through the plan.

The Head Teacher asked whether governors would support this enterprise prior to approval from the Diocese.

Q: Who would manage the provision when it is up and running?
A: It would be managed by school.

Q: Would there be any impact on the extra personnel who are employed?
A: No, these staff would be funded by the LA and there would be no cost to school. The students would be on a dual register and the staff would be employed on a temporary contract.

Q: Might it be too much?
A: There would be a lot of work involved in set up but moving forward there should not be that much work.

The Head Teacher is supportive of this provision and added that in many ways this could be used as opportunities to learn as we go along, it will be a learning curve. It could also support ideas and strategies which could be used in our own provisions.

An SLA would be signed with the LA for the pilot to ahead, and for funding to come to school. The Head Teacher has seen at first sight how other schools with RP operate and noted similarities in our schools, however those children are not in 'step in step out' provision.

Provision is not always adequate for these children and it is important get in early to prevent escalation and to create a safe space for them. All children are entitled to receive the right education. Parents also need support, sometimes things happen without reason and families struggle to know what to do.

At this time, the Head Teacher feels that the bungalow space is not fully utilised and school do not need that space for anything. The building is in good repair, standing empty and there are children who need it.

Q: Would there be children from different schools?
A: Yes, schools would go through a process to establish whether the provision would be appropriate for that child.

Whilst establishing this provision seems time intensive at the moment, once operational the burden will lessen. There are a number of variables at the moment and a lot of external agencies involved, however everybody who is involved want it to be successful.

RESOLVED: That governors confirm full approval for the bungalow to be utilised for SSC.

(b) Deletion (Minute 130 refers)

(c) Deletion (Minute 130 refers)

129. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS

Governors noted the following date may be subject to change.

- Tuesday, 28th April 2026.

130. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

RESOLVED: That Minute 128(b) and 128(c) be excluded from the copy to be made available at the School, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and excluded as confidential under Regulation 15 (3) School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013 from the copy of the minutes to be circulated to Staff and Public Copy.

The Chair and Headteacher thanked the Governors for attending.

The meeting closed at 19:35 pm

ACTION LOG:

Min Ref	Action	By Whom

117	MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2025 Clerk to speak to clerking service regarding Miss Allen not receiving link to minutes	GCS
118(a)	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Declaration of Business Interest information Governor reminded to complete/update online forms (one outstanding)	o/s one Governor
118(b)	REVIEW OF COMMITTEES AND PANEL ARRANGEMENTS Committee Structure and Membership Circulate the final version to all governors.	GCS
120	SAFEGUARDING To remove as agenda item as covered in HT Report	GCS