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 Thornhill Lees CE (VC) Infant and Nursery School on Tuesday, 7th October 2025.

PRESENT

Miss K Allen (Chair), Mrs K Asquith-Dolan, Mr H Bismillah, Mrs D Douglas (Headteacher), Mr F Patel, Mrs S Hussain, Ms K Iqbal, Mrs C Baker.

In Attendance

Mrs P Suman (Minute Clerk)
Mrs Wilson (SBM at Thornhill Lees)

The meeting opened with a prayer.

The Chair welcomed all governors and attendees to the annual 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.

The Chair acknowledged the importance of the meeting in setting the strategic direction for the academic year ahead and invited members to engage fully in the agenda items.

90. ELECTION OF CHAIR

The Headteacher reiterated that the board was continuing with the two-year cycle for the Chair's appointment and that the position would be reviewed again in 2026. There were no objections or further nominations, and governors expressed their support for the continuation of Kate Allen's term. The board acknowledged the value of consistency in leadership and agreed that the arrangement remained appropriate.

RESOLVED: No Election was necessary as Kate Allen was elected Chair for 2 years at the annual meeting held on 1st October 2024.

91. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Mrs F Lee and Mrs A China (all with consent).
Mrs A Nyhan was expected but had been delayed.

There were no declarations of interest.

(a) Approve the Governors' Code of Conduct

Governors were reminded of the importance of upholding the principles and expectations outlined in the NGA Model Code of Conduct. It was noted that all governors had received and reviewed the updated version in advance of the meeting. The board formally agreed to adopt the NGA Model Code of Conduct for the 2025/26 academic year. The Chair emphasised that any school-specific

adaptations or additional expectations would be shared with new governors as part of their induction process.

RESOLVED: That the Governors adopt the NGA model Code of Conduct.

(b) Declaration of Business Interest information

In line with statutory requirements and the Local Authority's financial audit expectations, governors were reminded to complete the annual Register of Business Interests form. The board confirmed that the register had been updated and was available for inspection with the exception of one outstanding form.

RESOLVED: Headteacher also confirmed that the school's Declaration of Business Interests had been published on the school website in accordance with compliance requirements.

ACTION: Governor reminded to complete/update online forms (one outstanding)

(c) Get Information about Schools (GIAS)

The Governors acknowledged the need to maintain accurate records on the Department for Education's "Get Information About Schools" (GIAS) portal.

RESOLVED: The Chair confirmed that the governing board's GIAS record had been reviewed and was up to date, ensuring transparency and regulatory compliance.

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

The following matters would be discussed under Any Other Business:

- SEND funding changes - briefly discuss the anticipated national changes to SEND funding and the implications of the forthcoming White Paper
- Two staff Compassionate leave requests.
- Date for Resources Committee to be set.

93. REPRESENTATION

The governing board reviewed the current composition of its membership and noted two vacancies that remained unfilled. These included one position for a Co-opted Governor and one for a Foundation Ex-officio Governor. The Chair reminded the board of the importance of maintaining a full and diverse membership to ensure effective governance and representation across both schools in the federation.

Governors discussed the potential impact of these vacancies on committee structures and statutory panels, particularly in relation to ensuring a sufficient pool of eligible governors for ad hoc panels such as staff dismissal, complaints, and pupil discipline. It was agreed that efforts should continue to identify suitable candidates, particularly individuals with relevant skills or links to the local community and church, in line with the schools' ethos and governance needs.

94. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

No Election was necessary as Mrs Saima Hussain was elected vice chair for 2 years at the annual meeting held on 1 October 2024.

The Chair acknowledged Mrs Hussain's continued service and thanked her for her ongoing commitment to the role. Governors noted the importance of continuity in leadership roles, particularly during a period of increasing complexity in school governance and educational policy.

The Governing Board expressed its appreciation for the stability provided by having both the Chair and Vice-Chair positions securely in place for the current academic year.

95. REVIEW OF COMMITTEES AND PANEL ARRANGEMENTS

The governing board undertook its annual review of the committee structure and panel arrangements for the 2025/26 academic year. Governors were provided with documentation outlining the previous year's committee membership, terms of reference, and delegated responsibilities. These were reviewed in detail, and the board confirmed that the existing structure remained appropriate and effective for the federation's needs.

(a) Committee Structure and Membership

Governors reaffirmed their commitment to the current committee model, which provides strategic oversight of key areas including finance, curriculum, staffing and performance management. New governors would be offered opportunities to shadow or co-hold roles to build experience.

ACTION: GCS: The Clerk will update the membership list and circulate the final version to all governors.

(b) Statutory Panels

- Arrangements for statutory panels (covering staff dismissal, appeals, complaints, pay, and pupil discipline). A pool of eligible governors will be maintained to ensure panels can be convened promptly when required. Governors were reminded of the importance of impartiality, confidentiality, and availability for these duties.
- Resources Committee would continue to oversee finance, premises, and pay matters.
- The Resources Committee would act as the Pay Appeals Committee when necessary.
- Pay Committee – it was agreed to convene annually, linked to the Resources Committee, and formed from non-staff members only.

(c) Head Teacher's Performance Management

In relation to the Headteacher's Performance Management (HTPM), it was confirmed that the review meeting had been scheduled with the Diocese for the afternoon of Thursday, 6 November 2025. The board agreed to finalise the appraisal panel membership ahead of that date, ensuring that selected governors had received appropriate training. The appointment of an external adviser was also discussed, and the Chair agreed to liaise with the Diocese to confirm the adviser's details.

RESOLVED: Headteacher Performance Management: Scheduled for

6 November 2025. Panel: Kate Allen, Huzaifa Bismillah, Karen Iqbal, supported by the Diocese External adviser: Helen Lever.

(d) Terms of Reference

Finally, the board reviewed the terms of reference for all committees. It was agreed that the Kirklees Model Terms of Reference would be adopted without amendment. The Chair reminded governors that if any bespoke terms were developed in future, a copy would need to be submitted to the Governor Clerking Service for record-keeping and compliance purposes.

RESOLVED: That the Governing Board agreed to adopt the Kirklees Model Terms of Reference.

96. TO APPOINT GOVERNORS WITH SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

"The role of Governors with Specific Responsibilities" guidance was shared prior to the meeting.

The Headteacher welcomed the continued support of governors in these areas and noted that link visits would be arranged in line with the monitoring cycle and SDP priorities. Governors were reminded to record the outcomes of their visits and share key findings at future meetings.

RESOLVED: The following specific responsibilities agreed:

- SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disability) Governor – Kiran Iqbal
- Governor Training Contact – Debbie Douglas
- Governor for Children Looked After – Saima Hussain
- Child Protection Governor – Saima Hussain and Huzaifa Bismillah
- EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) - Kate Allen
- Safeguarding Governor – Saima Hussain and Huzaifa Bismillah
- Wellbeing Governor – Kate Allen
- Equality Governor - Fiona Lee
- Pupil/Sports Premium Link Governor - Huzaifa Bismillah
- Attendance Governor – Mr Fayaz Patel (new)
- Website Compliance Governor - Huzaifa Bismillah
- GDPR: Kiran Iqbal
- Key Stage 1: To be confirmed with Aisha China.

97. DELEGATION OF FINANCIAL POWERS TO THE HEAD TEACHER

The Headteacher proposed increasing delegated financial limits to reflect rising costs and inflation. Current limits, unchanged since 2012, were no longer sufficient for routine capital works such as fencing, playground equipment, and security upgrades.

(a) Savile Town CE (VC) Infant & Nursery School

- Previous Limit: £5,000
- New Limit: £10,000
- Rationale:
  - Security improvements (mag locks, fencing)
  - Playground equipment now regularly exceeds £5,000
  - Inflation and cost increases
  - Procurement procedures remain in place (three quotes unless using an approved contractor).

(b) Thornhill Lees CE (VC) Infant & Nursery School

- Previous Limit: £10,000
- New Limit: £15,000
- Rationale:
  - Fire safety works (compartmentalisation, fireproof boarding)
  - New fire doors and structural upgrades
  - Larger site with greater capital needs
  - Grounds maintenance and equipment purchases.

Governors agreed the proposed increases were reasonable and aligned with operational realities. All spending will continue to comply with Local Authority financial regulations and internal controls.

RESOLVED: That the Headteacher to implement the following budget increases:

- Savile Town: Limit increased to £10,000
- Thornhill Lees: Limit increased to £15,000.

The Board noted that spending thresholds and virements will be reviewed at the next Resources Committee meeting. The Clerk will ensure this item is included on that agenda. The Headteacher confirmed all financial decisions will continue to follow internal controls and audit requirements.

ACTION: Resources Committee to Review and provide confirmation of the specific financial limits associated with this delegation - such as spending thresholds and virements.

RESOLVED: That the Governing Board delegates to the Head Teacher the power to carry out on its behalf the following delegated duties:

(i) Planning and conducting the affairs of the school to remain solvent.
(ii) Establishing proper financial management arrangements and accounting procedures, which comply with the Local Authority's financial regulations and standing orders and maintaining a sound system of internal controls.
(iii) Ensuring that funding from the LA and any other sources is used only in accordance with the conditions attached to that funding.
(iv) Providing such information as the LA may reasonably require to satisfy the LA that the financial management and organisation of the Governing Board are such as to enable it to fulfil the obligations specified for it.

RESOLVED: The Governing Board delegated financial powers to the Headteacher as outlined in the agenda, including planning, financial management, and compliance with LA regulations. Revised limits approved:

- Up to **£10,000** for general expenditure
- Up to **£15,000** for capital works.

The Headteacher thanked the board for their continued trust and confirmed that all financial decisions would continue to be made in accordance with the schools' internal controls and audit requirements.

98. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 MAY 2025

The governing board reviewed the minutes of the previous full governing board meeting held on 20 May 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.

The board noted that the minutes had been circulated in advance and had provided a clear summary of the discussions, decisions, and actions taken at that meeting.

Governors acknowledged the importance of maintaining accurate and timely records of board proceedings, particularly in relation to statutory responsibilities and accountability.

The Chair signed the approved minutes, and the Clerk confirmed that a signed copy would be retained on file and made available in accordance with the school's records management and Freedom of Information procedures.

RESOLVED: Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

99. MATTERS ARISING

The Board reviewed the Action Log from the previous meeting held on 20 May 2025. The Chair led governors through each item, providing updates on progress and inviting further comment where necessary. It was noted that most actions had either been completed or were in progress.

(a) Governor Visits

ACTION: Visits to be planned in the coming months.
UPDATE: This was on the agenda and would be discussed in Minute 110.

(b) Governor Link Newsletter

ACTION: An annual Governor link newsletter was to be drafted by the Chair.
UPDATE: This action was completed.

Other updates included:

- Breakfast Club: Fee increased to £2.50. Discounts offered for families with multiple children. No payment issues reported.
- School website to ensure compliance with statutory requirements
- The circulation of the revised Complaints Policy
- The scheduling of safeguarding training for staff.
- The Headteacher confirmed that the updated safeguarding policy had been shared with staff following the release of the revised *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) guidance on 1 September 2025.
- Governors also received confirmation that the planned security improvements at Savile Town had been implemented, including the installation of mag locks and additional fencing. These measures were introduced in response to safeguarding concerns raised in the previous academic year and were welcomed by the board.
- One outstanding item related to the finalisation of the Climate Action Plan, which had been delayed due to the complexity of the national guidance. The Headteacher

advised that a draft was in development and would be shared with governors at the next meeting.

100. 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. She began by welcoming governors back and noted that pupils had settled well into the new academic year, despite several late admissions. She highlighted that the needs of the current cohorts were even more complex than in previous years. The following key points were updated:

- **Pupil Numbers:** Savile Town – 101; Thornhill Lees – 279.
- **Attendance (to 29 September):**
  - Savile Town: Reception – 97%; Year 1 – 95%; Year 2 – 92%; Overall – 93.8%
  - Thornhill Lees: Reception – 90.56%; Year 1 – 92.99%; Year 2 – 92.74%; Overall – 91.6%
  - Governors noted that attendance was slightly below target due to late returns from overseas travel. Letters have been issued for attendance below 90%.
- **Buildings & Premises:**
  - Fire safety upgrades completed; upstairs capacity limited to 120 people.
  - Security improvements at Savile Town: mag locks installed on Green Room doors, additional fencing, and pergola netting added (following lessons from Thornhill Lees).
  - DFC balances: Savile Town £23,616.31; Thornhill Lees £16,394.10. Planned spending on security and fire safety.
- **Staffing:**
  - Maternity leave begins 7 November; covered by experienced Early Years teacher.
  - Lunchtime supervisor vacancy at Thornhill Lees advertised.
- **Curriculum & Enrichment:**
  - Opera North partnership continues: Year 2 learning strings, Year 1 singing tuition; Reception staff training to embed singing.
- **CPD:** Safeguarding, Makaton, writing, SEND, wellbeing training ongoing; staff attended external sessions on inclusion and curriculum development.
- **SEND:**
  - Savile Town: SEN Register – 21; Medical – 26; EHCP – 4; MSP – 3
  - Thornhill Lees: SEN Register – 60; Medical – 38; EHCP – 11; MSP – 19
  - Governors acknowledged the high level of need, particularly at Thornhill Lees, and noted the implications for staffing and budget.
- **Parental Engagement:** Weekly maths and ESOL courses at Savile Town; Stay and Play sessions twice weekly (Wednesday session low attendance).
- **Policy & Monitoring:** Annual cycle shared; autumn focus on safeguarding, writing, and health & safety. Book scrutiny and learning walks ongoing; performance management targets aligned with SDP priorities.
- **School Development Plan (SDP) Priorities 2025/26:**
  - Develop writing skills and early writing pedagogy.
  - Design curriculum for changing cohorts.
  - Enhance inclusive provision for all learners.
- **Safeguarding:**
  - Savile Town: CP – 0; CIN – 1; TAF – 0; LAC – 0
  - Thornhill Lees: CP – 1; CIN – 0; TAF – 0; LAC – 1
  - DSLs confirmed as Mrs Debbie Douglas, Deputy DSLs are Kirsty Asquith-Dolan, Fiona Lee & Debra Roberts at Savile Town, and Lorraine Booth, Karen Gratino &

Rebecca Wilson. DSL refresher training completed by Debbie Douglas & Kirsty Asquith.

- **End-of-Year Data** (improvements noted in EYFS and KS1 outcomes. GLD and phonics outcomes strong; future data may be impacted by high SEND numbers):
  - **Savile Town**: EYFS GLD 68.6%; Year 1 phonics 64%; KS1 – Reading 74%, Writing 61%, Maths 74%.
  - **Thornhill Lees**: EYFS GLD 55.6%; Year 1 phonics 71.3%; KS1 – Reading 61.6%, Writing 55.1%, Maths 60.2%.

- **Other Updates:**
  - Changes to Early Years Framework (healthy eating).
  - Ofsted inspection changes – introduction of report cards.
  - Climate Action Plan development underway.
  - Allergy management procedures updated; staff training completed.
  - KCSIE updates (filtering, AI risks, RSHCE guidance) shared with staff.
  - Kirklees update: Emma Brayford appointed Head of Outcomes; vacancies to be advertised.
- **Budget Pressures:** Staffing costs rising due to high-need pupils and long-term absence; additional SEND funding expected but insufficient.
- **School Fund:** Audited; used for enrichment activities (e.g., Eid gifts, gardening).
- **Governor Training:** Governors encouraged to attend relevant sessions; new governors to complete induction.
- **Resources Committee:** To meet before 31 October 2025 to agree pay awards.

Governors asked questions regarding strategies to improve attendance, the impact of SEND reforms, and how the curriculum was being adapted to meet the needs of increasingly diverse cohorts. The Headteacher responded in detail, and governors expressed their appreciation for the clarity and depth of the report.

Q: Can I just ask about the trees at the end of the summer, what was decided?
A: The trees were trimmed back as planned.

Q: Does the current insurance that we have suit the need?
A: No. Support staff are not covered due to high costs. The school has had to cover long-term sick leave without insurance support.

Q: Have we had any other ETA (support staff) off long-term in the last five years?
A: No. This was described as an exceptional case.

101. SAFEGUARDING

The Headteacher provided an update on safeguarding matters across both schools. She confirmed that safeguarding remained a standing priority and that all staff had been briefed on the latest statutory guidance following the release of the updated *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* document on 1 September 2025. Due to the late publication of the guidance, the usual safeguarding INSET session at the start of term had been replaced with a dedicated staff meeting later that week to ensure all updates were communicated effectively.

The board was informed that the updated guidance included new expectations around online filtering systems, the risks associated with artificial intelligence (AI), and changes to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHCE). Staff had been made aware of

their responsibilities under the revised framework, and the safeguarding policy had been updated accordingly.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) were confirmed as Mrs Debbie Douglas, Kirsty Asquith-Dolan, and Lorraine Booth. DSL refresher training completed by key staff. The board was satisfied that the DSL team had the appropriate training and capacity to manage safeguarding across both sites.

In terms of current safeguarding cases, the Headteacher reported that at Savile Town there were no Child Protection (CP), 1 Child in Need (CIN), 0 Team Around the Family (TAF), or Looked After Child (LAC) cases. At Thornhill Lees, there was one CP case and one LAC. The DSLs continued to attend core group meetings and liaise with social workers as required.

Governors were assured that safeguarding procedures remained robust and that all staff had been reminded of the importance of vigilance, accurate record-keeping, and timely reporting of concerns. The board thanked the Headteacher and DSLs for their continued diligence in this critical area.

102. SCHOOL WEBSITES

The governing board received a brief update regarding the statutory compliance of both school websites was up to date. The Headteacher confirmed that the required information had been reviewed and updated in line with Department for Education (DfE) expectations. This included the publication of key documents such as the Complaints Policy, SEND Information Report, Equality Objectives, and details of the Pupil Premium and Sports Premium spending.

Governors were reminded of their responsibility to ensure that the websites for both Savile Town and Thornhill Lees remained accurate, accessible, and compliant with statutory guidance. The Website Compliance Governor agreed to carry out a termly review of the websites to monitor ongoing compliance and report back to the board.

The Chair thanked the Headteacher and administrative staff for their continued efforts in maintaining the websites as effective tools for communication and transparency with parents, carers, and the wider community.

103. OUR SCHOOLS AS CHURCH SCHOOLS

The governing board reflected on the distinctiveness and ethos of both Savile Town and Thornhill Lees as Church of England schools. The Chair opened the discussion by reaffirming the importance of maintaining the Christian character of the schools and ensuring that this ethos continued to underpin all aspects of school life, including teaching, leadership, and community engagement.

The Headteacher reported that collective worship continued to be delivered regularly and in line with the schools' Christian values. Staff had been supported in planning and delivering inclusive and reflective worship sessions, with a focus on themes such as kindness, respect, and community. The board was informed that pupils were actively engaged in these sessions and that feedback from staff and children had been positive.

Governors discussed the importance of ensuring that the schools' Christian distinctiveness was evident not only in worship but also in the curriculum, displays, and

wider school culture. It was noted that the schools continued to foster strong links with local churches and clergy, who were invited to participate in school events and services.

The board acknowledged the role of the SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) framework in evaluating the effectiveness of the schools as Church schools. Although no inspection was currently scheduled, governors agreed that it was important to remain prepared and to continue embedding the values and practices that reflect the schools' Christian foundation.

Diocese support has been booked for environmental action and a wellbeing audit, and the Headteacher appraisal will be conducted with diocesan involvement. These initiatives were welcomed by governors as further evidence of the schools' commitment to their Christian ethos and holistic development.

The Chair thanked the Headteacher and staff for their ongoing commitment to nurturing the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils in line with the schools' Church of England identity.

104. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

The Headteacher provided an update on the financial position of both schools, with a particular focus on capital funding and ongoing premises work. Governors were informed that the Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) balances stood at £23,616.31 for Savile Town and £16,394.10 for Thornhill Lees. These funds were being used to support essential site improvements, including the installation of security door devices and fencing at Savile Town, and fire safety works at Thornhill Lees.

At Thornhill Lees, fire safety upgrades were still in progress, with fire doors yet to be fitted. Additionally, repairs to the outdoor climbing equipment were pending, with completion expected by mid-October. Governors noted that these works were necessary to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations and to maintain a safe environment for pupils and staff.

The Headteacher advised that an update on the schools' revenue budgets to the end of Period 5 would be shared at the meeting if the information had been received in time from the Local Authority. If not, it would be circulated to governors as soon as it became available. The Chair emphasised the need for regular and timely financial monitoring to ensure effective oversight and value for money.

Governors acknowledged the prudent use of DFC funding and thanked the Headteacher and site teams for managing the projects effectively. It was agreed that the Resources Committee would meet before the end of October to review the financial position in more detail and to approve any necessary pay awards in line with performance management outcomes.

The Headteacher presented budget updates for both schools (Period 6 figures):

- Savile Town: Revised budget £748,430; actual spend to date £391,098.86.
- Thornhill Lees: Revised budget £1,802,542; actual spend to date £866,672.93.
- Governors noted budget pressures due to increased staffing costs for high-need pupils and long-term staff absence (cover costs not insured for support staff).
- Additional SEND funding expected but will not fully offset costs.
- Governors acknowledged DFC balances and planned spending on security and fire safety.

- School fund accounts were audited and used for enrichment activities (e.g., Eid gifts, gardening).
- Governors agreed that financial monitoring would continue closely, and the Resources Committee will review spending thresholds and virements at its next meeting.

105. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PRIORITIES 2025/26

The Headteacher presented the key priorities outlined in the School Development Plan (SDP) for the 2025/26 academic year. She explained that the plan had been shaped by the schools' self-evaluation processes, pupil outcomes, and the evolving needs of both school communities. The SDP was designed to ensure a clear strategic focus while remaining responsive to the challenges faced by staff and pupils.

Three core priorities were identified:

(a) Writing Development: The priority focused on improving writing outcomes across the federation. The Headteacher explained that this included developing staff confidence in supporting early mark-making, strengthening fine motor skills in younger pupils, and building towards more structured composition. This priority was informed by internal assessments and national trends and would be supported through targeted CPD and curriculum planning.

(b) Curriculum Design to Meet Pupil Needs: The second priority aimed to further develop a curriculum that was meaningful, inclusive, and reflective of the schools' diverse cohorts. The Headteacher referenced ongoing work on a values-based curriculum and the "Maximising Memory" research project, which had informed the development of subject-specific schemes of work. Governors were assured that curriculum planning would continue to be informed by evidence-based practice and the lived experiences of pupils.

(c) Inclusive Provision**:** The third priority focused on strengthening the schools' inclusive ethos and provision for pupils with additional needs. This included enhancing the support available through the Resource Provision, improving access to specialist services, and ensuring that all staff were equipped to meet the needs of children with SEND, medical needs, and those facing social or emotional challenges.

Governors welcomed the clarity and ambition of the SDP and acknowledged the alignment between the development priorities and the issues raised in the Headteacher's Report. The board agreed that regular monitoring of progress against these priorities would be essential and that link governors would play a key role in supporting and challenging the leadership team throughout the year.

106. GOVERNING BOARD DEVELOPMENT: ACTIONS AND PRIORITIES 2025/26

The Chair led a discussion on the development priorities for the governing board for the academic year 2025/26. Governors were reminded of the importance of continuous professional development to ensure the board remained effective, informed, and compliant with statutory responsibilities.

The Headteacher encouraged all governors, particularly those newly appointed or taking on new responsibilities, to engage with the training opportunities available through the Local Authority and other providers. She highlighted the value of the Governor Induction Course, which provides a comprehensive overview of governance roles, responsibilities,

and expectations. Governors were invited to express interest in attending, and the Headteacher offered to assist with bookings.

In addition to formal training, the board discussed the importance of Governor visits as a means of strengthening strategic oversight and building relationships with staff and pupils. It was agreed that link governors would arrange visits aligned with the School Development Plan (SDP) priorities, and that outcomes from these visits would be shared at future meetings.

The Chair also proposed that the board reflect on its own effectiveness later in the year, possibly through a self-evaluation exercise or external review. This would help identify strengths and areas for improvement and ensure that governance continued to add value to the leadership of both schools.

Governors expressed their commitment to ongoing development and agreed to prioritise training, collaboration, and reflective practice throughout the year.

107. THE SCHOOL TEACHERS' PAY AND CONDITIONS ORDER 2025 AND MODEL TEACHER PAY POLICY

The governing board received an update on the 2025 School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and the associated Kirklees Model Teacher Pay Policy. The Chair reminded governors that the updated STPCD had come into legal effect on 1 September 2025, and that governing boards were required to approve and record their chosen pay policy by the end of the autumn term.

The Headteacher summarised the key changes introduced in the 2025/26 pay and conditions framework. These included a 4% pay awards for all teachers and leadership roles, which would be backdated to 1 September 2025 and processed in October.

Governors were also informed of new guidance encouraging schools to support flexible working requests where operationally feasible, and changes to Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) payments. From September 2026, TLR 1 and 2 payments must be based on the proportion of responsibility undertaken, rather than a pro-rata principle.

Schools had the option to implement this change from September 2025, and the revised model policies reflected both options.

The board discussed the two available versions of the Kirklees Model Teacher Pay Policy:

- One retaining Performance Related Pay (PRP)
- One reflecting the removal of PRP.

After consideration, the board agreed to adopt the Model Policy with PRP removed. This decision was made in the context of the school's performance management processes, staff feedback, and alignment with the federation's values and priorities.

The Chair confirmed that the adopted policy would be recorded in the minutes and communicated to the Local Authority as required. The Headteacher noted that the Resources Committee would meet before the end of October to finalise any pay progression decisions in line with the agreed policy.

Governors acknowledged the importance of ensuring transparency and fairness in pay decisions and thanked the Headteacher for clearly outlining the implications of the policy options.

RESOLVED: That the Governors agreed to adopt the Kirklees Model Pay Policy with removal of PRP.

RESOLVED: TLR Payments: Governors agreed to apply pro rata principle based on contract hours.

108. POLICIES WHICH REQUIRE AN ANNUAL REVIEW BY THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD

The governing board reviewed the statutory policies scheduled for annual approval. The Chair reminded governors of their responsibility to ensure that all school policies were up to date, fit for purpose, and properly implemented. It was noted that these policies must also be published on the school websites where required by law.

The board began by considering the Complaints Policy, which had been circulated in advance. Governors were informed that the Kirklees model policy had been updated to include new sections, clearly highlighted in the contents page. After a brief discussion, the board agreed that the revised model was comprehensive and appropriate for adoption. The policy was formally approved.

The board reviewed the Whistleblowing Policy. The Headteacher confirmed that there had been no significant changes to the model policy since the previous year. Governors agreed that the policy remained suitable and reaffirmed its adoption.

The Chair emphasised the importance of ensuring that all statutory policies were not only reviewed but also actively monitored for implementation. Governors were reminded that policy oversight was a key element of their strategic role and that link governors should remain alert to how policies were being applied in practice.

RESOLVED: That Governors approved the following policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy.

109. GOVERNOR DBS REQUIREMENTS – GOVERNING BOARD DECISION

The Governing Board reviewed the Local Authority's updated safeguarding requirements for Governor recruitment and reappointments, introduced at the start of the autumn term. These changes aim to ensure robust checks and compliance with statutory guidance.

Mandatory for LA Governors:

- A DBS check must be completed before the appointment is formalised.
- The original DBS certificate must be verified by the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Until verification is complete, governors are treated as "designate" and may not undertake governance duties, attend meetings, or access confidential information.

Other Governor Categories:

- The Local Authority strongly recommends applying the same approach to all governors (parent, staff, foundation, co-opted), although this remains at the discretion of individual boards.

RESOLVED: That the Governors approve:

- Newly appointed governors will not commence duties until DBS verification is complete.
- Reappointed governors will also be paused until DBS checks are completed and verified.
- The Headteacher/DSL will be responsible for verifying certificates.

Governors acknowledged that this decision aligns with Local Authority safeguarding advice and reflects the Board's commitment to maintaining high standards of compliance and child protection.

Q: How often would you plan on doing DBS checks?
A: Only when a Governor's role changes (e.g., from staff to foundation Governor), not annually.

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

The Governing Board discussed the importance of ongoing Governor training and school visits as part of their strategic role. Governors were reminded of the availability of training courses through Kirklees Business Solutions and the GLAD training brochure, which includes a wide range of sessions tailored to both new and experienced governors.

Several governors shared their recent training experiences, including safeguarding training and Diocesan briefings. It was noted that such sessions provide valuable insights into both operational and strategic aspects of governance. Governors were encouraged to continue engaging with training opportunities and to inform the Headteacher if they wish to be booked onto any sessions.

The Chair highlighted the benefits of attending training in pairs, particularly for school visits, to support collaborative reflection and reduce the burden on staff. Governors expressed interest in arranging visits before the Christmas break and agreed that dates would be circulated by the Headteacher for governors to confirm availability.

It was agreed that all completed training and visits should be reported at future meetings to ensure they are properly recorded in the minutes and contribute to the Board's development record.

Q: Who led the safeguarding training?
A: It was led by Michelle (possibly from Kirklees).

Q: Can I contact staff to arrange visits?
A: Yes, but governors were advised to be mindful of staff workload and to arrange visits in pairs where possible.

The Chair thanked governors for their attendance, engagement and commitment throughout the meeting.

All staff and non-governors left the meeting prior to the discussion of Any Other Business at this point.

111. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Deletion – See Minute 114

(b) SEND funding changes

The Headteacher highlighted anticipated reforms to SEND funding and EHCP processes, with a White Paper expected later in the term. Governors noted High levels of need, particularly at Thornhill Lees. Additional SEND funding is expected but will not fully cover increased staffing costs.

The board acknowledged the financial pressure and agreed to continue monitoring SEND-related expenditure and funding streams closely. No immediate action or policy change was required at this meeting.

ACTION: Resources Committee to review SEND budget impact during financial monitoring.

112. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS

The Governing Board reviewed the schedule of future meetings for the academic year. It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Resources Committee would take place on Thursday 16th October 2025 at 1:30pm, to ensure timely approval of teacher pay increments before the October half-term deadline.

Governors agreed that the meeting would be held at Thornhill Lees CE (VC) Infant and Nursery School, and that the Headteacher would circulate a reminder via email to confirm attendance.

The full Governing Board meeting was scheduled for 10th February 2026, with proposed agenda items to include:

- Mid-year review of the School Development Plan
- Updated pupil progress and attainment data
- Safeguarding audit outcomes (if applicable)
- Budget monitoring (Period 9)
- Governor training updates and visit reports.

Governors were invited to suggest any additional items for inclusion in the agenda prior to the next meeting. The Chair emphasised the importance of maintaining strategic oversight and ensuring that all statutory responsibilities are addressed in a timely manner.

RESOLVED: That the next **Resources Committee** to take place on Thursday, 16 October 2025 at 1:30 PM.

RESOLVED: That the next full Governing Board meetings be held at 5.30pm on

Tuesday, 10th February 2026
Tuesday, 28th April 2026.

113. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ITEMS NOTED

- PAN: No changes; remains as reduced in 2024. Next Admission Arrangements Consultation 2027/28
- KCSIE 2025: Governors reminded to review updated guidance.
- Annual Reminders (Equality Duty, SEND Report, Pupil Premium, H&S, Website Compliance.

114. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

RESOLVED: That Minute 111(a) including 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.

ACTION LOG:

No.	Min Ref	Action	By Whom
1.	91 (b)	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Declaration of Business Interest information	o/s one Governor

		Governor reminded to complete/update online forms (one outstanding)	
2	95 (a)	<u>REVIEW OF COMMITTEES AND PANEL ARRANGEMENTS</u> <u>Committee Structure and Membership</u> GCS: The Clerk will update the membership list and circulate the final version to all governors.	GCS
3	97 (b)	<u>DELEGATION OF FINANCIAL POWERS TO THE HEAD TEACHER</u> <u>Thornhill Lees CE (VC) Infant & Nursery School</u> Resources Committee to Review and provide confirmation of the specific financial limits associated with this delegation - such as spending thresholds and virements.	Resources Committee
4	111 (b)	<u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u> <u>SEND funding changes</u> Resources Committee to review SEND budget impact during financial monitoring.	Resources Committee