

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, 20th May 2025.

PRESENT

Miss K Allen (Chair), Mrs K Asquith-Dolan, Mr H Bismillah, Mrs A China, Mrs D Douglas (Headteacher), Mrs F Lee, Mr F Patel and Mrs S Hussain,

In Attendance

Mrs G Hewitt (Minute Clerk)
Miss K Malavia (Shadow Clerk)
Mrs Wilson (SBM at Thornhill Lees)

The meeting opened with a prayer.

71. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Mrs C Baker, Ms K Iqbal and Mrs A Nyhan (all with consent). There were no declarations of interest.

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

The following matters would be discussed under Any Other Business:

- Letter from local residents
- Request for a reduction in working hours.

73. REPRESENTATION

Co-option of a governor

Governors were asked to consider whether they had anybody in mind they could recommend for the vacancy.

74. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 APRIL 2025

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2025 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

75. MATTERS ARISING

Governor Visits – Minute 64(a) refers

The Chair was to arrange a date to visit Savile Town during the Summer 2 term.

Mr Bismillah, Ms China and Mr Patel were also still to arrange a date to visit the schools.

76. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT AND GOVERNOR'S QUESTIONS

The Head Teacher's report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following update was provided:

(a) 2-Year-old Places

The Head Teacher reported that the charge for nursery sessions had been £10 for the past two years. There was still demand for paid places, however, the current fee does not cover staffing costs. The Head Teacher asked governors to consider increasing the cost which includes, toast, fruit, milk and juice. Nappies were not included in the fee.

Q: Do we know what other settings charge?

A: We did initially agree the cost with a local school but believe they have increased their cost. We are unsure what this increase has been.

Governors agreed that the fee was very low considering the costs involved.

Q: What are you thinking of increasing it to?

A: From £50 per week to £75.

Q: Do you think it would affect the update?

A: We only have two or three paying places.

Q: Is it mandatory for the children to attend for the full five days?

A: Yes, we only offer five days a week to ensure numbers are stable.

(b) Breakfast Club

The current charge was £1 a day. The Head Teacher stated that the club had been originally set up for struggling families, however it was now used more by working families. She advised that the school buys the food and pays for staffing, therefore, the £1 a day is not covering the costs.

Governors discussed the cost of breakfast club at other schools.

Q: Is there a plan to make breakfast government funded for all children?

A: It was initially planned; however, the funding isn't covering everything that is involved.

Q: How many children do you have attending?

A: No more than 20 unless in exceptional circumstances.

Governors suggested charging the same price as a school meal which would be £2.85 in September. It was agreed that this may be too big a jump for parents and a cost of £2.50 a day was confirmed as an acceptable increase.

Q: When will the increased fees start?

A: Both nursery and breakfast club prices will increase from September.

(c) Pay increases

Governors were informed that a support staff pay increase of 3% had been rejected. Unions would be balloting to see what the next steps would be, however, there had been no indication that the increases would be funded. All support staff increases would need to be funded by the school budget.

The Head Teacher explained the pay proposals.

Q: Will pay increases be backdated once agreed?

A: It would be dependent on what is agreed with the Unions.

Q: Is there potential for a strike?

A: There has been talk of it, staff members have indicated that that is not what they want and they do not want increases to come from the school budget.

(d) Early Help and Family Support

There were still changes taking place in Kirklees. The Head Teacher stated that although the long-term impact had not yet been seen, there were some definite positives.

(e) Staffing

One SEN ETA at Savile Town was on long term sick. The Head Teacher reiterated that the school does not buy into support staff insurance, therefore, they were having to cover two wages as a result of this.

Governors were advised that there had been several requests for a reduction in working days.

Q: Does a reduction of hours impact on the level of staff?

A: No, however, it does create a lot of consideration into how to cover the staff who will not be there for the full-time roles and some moving round of roles and responsibilities to be able to accommodate the requests.

(f) Monitoring

Monitoring was continuing in school, all learning walks and book scrutinies had been carried out.

(g) Pupil numbers

Savile Town had received three new nursery requests for immediate starts. It was past the date to claim funding for those children in the summer term, however, it would be guaranteed for September. The increased numbers did not mean that there would be any requirement for additional staff.

(h) Attendance

The school had been receiving an increasing number of requests for leave of absence. The number was much higher than previous years and some requests

were very last minute. The Head Teacher stated that some families were currently stuck abroad so had been out of school for longer than planned.

(i) Buildings

The Head Teacher had received a response regarding the fire escape at Thornhill Lees that evening.

It had advised that they were considering a potential capital scheme of works for over the summer holidays, as well as exploring further work on the infrastructure to ensure it met the needs. This would mean work taking place over the holidays to address the capacity issues, although the work that would be done was uncertain as yet.

Fencing was due to be installed at Thornhill Lees over half term and the reception play area was to be separated from the rest of the school play area.

An Engineer had been out to look at an air conditioning unit which was broken in one of the classrooms. The Head Teacher read out the quotes she had received from two different companies and advised that she was still awaiting a third.

Governors confirmed that they were happy to go ahead with the most reasonable quote.

(j) School Development Plan

The main focus this term had been curriculum, linked with wellbeing. The Head Teacher explained how this had been done in lessons with looking at the key knowledge and skills children need to know to enable them to move on with their progress.

The school had been working with a representative from Oxford University on children's wellbeing.

Q: How much legroom do schools have to change the curriculum?

A: Schools have to follow the National Curriculum. There is so much to cover in the foundation subjects and we have to consider how we reappportion time to ensure we cover everything we need to do. We have been looking at where we can take certain parts out to give us time to cover other areas that the children struggle with and are important as foundations to be built on in further learning.

The Head Teacher explained how the Little Wandle scheme had helped with this.

(k) SEN

The Head Teacher reported that she had been looking at children coming into school for September. At Savile Town six high needs children were coming into Reception with two others already in school as opposed to a total of three this academic year.

At Thornhill Lees, all 12 places had been allocated in the Resource Provision from the nursery children. The Head Teacher advised that she would like agreement from governors to cap the numbers in the provision to 12 in both schools.

RESOLVED: That governors agree to cap the numbers in both resource provisions to 12.

Q: Would it get to a point we would have to say we did not have the space to meet needs for any new children coming in?

A: We would have to consider the space and the budget and whether we can meet needs. Some children will also go back into the mainstream classroom if we feel that is suitable for them. This is constantly evaluated.

(l) Safeguarding

One child was on a child protection plan at Thornhill Lees.

(m) Data

End of Spring term data had been added to show the progress of children throughout school.

Phonics testing would be taking place in June.

Governors were informed that Savile Town have the national phonics testing but had also been selected to carry out the NFER phonics testing too.

The Head Teacher was thanked for her report.

ACTION: An annual governor link newsletter was to be drafted by the Chair.

77. PREMISES UPDATE AND PROGRAMME OF ANY SUMMER WORKS

This had been covered in the Head Teacher's report.

78. STAFFING UPDATES/ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/26

There had been some requests to change working hours from some staff members.

24 children were joining Reception at Savile Town. The PAN was 30. Six of these children have very high needs and will be placed in the resource provision. There would be 24 children in Year 1 and 22 children in Year 2.

The numbers at Thornhill Lees would require three classes plus the resource provision. Nursery numbers mean that two sessions would be required.

Numbers for 2-year-olds were lower at both schools however, the three-year-old uptake seemed slightly higher than previous years.

79. PE AND SPORTS PREMIUM FUNDING

The Head Teacher was to circulate the report once completed.

80. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

(a) Thornhill Lees

The carry forward had been confirmed at £61,590. As a result, an extra £10,000 had been allocated to Classroom Support Assistants, £1,500 into ground works, £1,500 into cleaning consumables, £10,000 into learning resources, £5,000 into equipment and furniture and £33,590 into contingency

The three-year budget had been created considering EHCP joiners and leavers, water bill increases and 2.5% added to each service and goods to account for inflation over the next 3 years as well as an estimation based on pupil numbers.

RESOLVED: That the Thornhill Lees budget be approved to be signed by the Chair.

(b) Savile Town

The carry forward had been confirmed at £33,131. The initial budget was nowhere near balancing even once the pupil growth fund had been added. The carry forward had been required to balance. With an additional £8,000 being added to general repairs and maintenance, £8000 to learning resources and £250 into admin leaving a contingency of £2,537

Due to the number of children with an EHCP leaving the school, the 3-year plan did not look positive. The plan also included funding for the SENCO as Cluster Lead and the same increases as Thornhill Lees. It was also not yet clear whether the school would receive the same pupil growth funding in future years.

RESOLVED: That the Savile Town budget be approved to be signed by the Chair.

81. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF POLICIES

The Policies below had been circulated prior to the meeting:

- Assessment Policy for both schools
- Early years policy

RESOLVED: That both Policies be approved.

82. ANNUAL EVALUATION OF A GOVERNING BOARD'S EFFECTIVENESS

The annual overview had been circulated in September, the Head Teacher asked whether governors would like to continue in the same format. She advised that there would only be three governing body meetings a year from September as opposed to five.

Governors agreed that they were happy with the plan and the format of the annual overview was to be tweaked to account for the reduced meetings.

83. DEDICATED HEADSHIP TIME

The Head Teacher reported that this was taken as and when needed

84. OUR SCHOOLS AS CHURCH SCHOOLS

Visits to places of worship had been taking place.

Year 1 at Savile Town and Thornhill Lees had visited Longcauseway Church and Year 2 had visited Dewsbury Minster. Mosque visits were planned for after half term for Year 1.

85. SCHOOL WEBSITE

There was nothing to update. It was confirmed that all statutory items were included on both websites.

86. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS

It was recommended that all new governors carry out governor induction training.

The Chair had enrolled on the Diocese Update Briefing and Chair Network and fed back on what this involves.

87. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Letter from Local Residents

Savile Town had received a letter received regarding residents' concern around the tree on school grounds which back onto a number of addresses around the school. The letter had stated that it is believed that the tree poses numerous hazards due to the size and volume of blossom and requested that the tree be lopped.

Q: Would you need a tree surgeon?

A: Yes, it was £500 last time.

Governors discussed this and it was agreed that the head teacher would obtain a quote to cut the tree back.

Q: Could we build tree maintenance into the current caretaker role?

A: Possibly, although I am unsure what that would mean in terms of health and safety.

Governors suggested the caretaker sweeping blossom etc.

(b) Reduction in working hours

A request had been put in from a teacher at Thornhill Lees to reduce from five days to four days for one year with PPA included in the four days.

The Head Teacher advised that the PPA would be 10% of the working hours and the staffing plan had been created taking this into account showing that it was possible to accommodate the request.

RESOLVED: That governors agree to the request for a temporary reduction in working hours.

88. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS

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

Tuesday, 7th October 2025

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

89. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

RESOLVED: That no part of these agenda, minutes or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the School under the Freedom of Information Act.

ACTION LOG:

No.	Min Ref	Action	By Whom
1.	75 (a)	<u>Governor Visits</u> Visits to be planned in the coming months.	Mr Bismillah/Mr Patel/ Ms China/ Chair
2	76	<u>Governor Link Newsletter</u> An annual governor link newsletter was to be drafted by the Chair.	Chair