

Minutes of Stanwix School Full Trustees Meeting 9 July 2025 5.30pm (held at Stanwix School)

Attendees: Jen Barry Jill Blain Catherine Briggs Darren Glynn Vicky Jenner Michael Johnson	Tom Little Elizabeth Mallinson (Chair) Jon McGuckin Karen Robertson
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1	Welcome/apologies Apologies received from: Paul Nedved
2	Declarations of interest None other than those declared on the trustee register of interests.
3	Approve minutes The minutes of the following meetings were confirmed as a true and accurate record with no matters arising: • Full Trustees Meeting 14 May 2025 Proposed: Michael Johnson (MJJ), Seconded: Jon McGuckin (JM)
4	Chairman briefing and update Liz Mallinson (EM) thanked everyone for the work done this year. She reported that she had received a resignation from Catherine Briggs (CB) who will be stepping down at the end of this academic year. EM has also decided that she will resign as a Trustee at the end of this academic year after 46 years involvement with the school but has agreed to stay on as a Member. As trustees already know, Mike Routledge recently resigned for personal reasons.
5	Vision and values The Core Vision Document and Strategic Plan Document were circulated in advance of the meeting. Darren Glynn (DG) updated that since last trustee meeting, there has been a vision and values session for trustees and a Parent Forum. He then met with Tom (TL), Liz and Jen (JB) and also attended a session with a coach who is an expert on vision and values. The wording has been refined and the document is almost complete. Just need to feed in notes from the parents' survey and then it is almost at the stage to launch with staff in September. Tom is looking at the marketing and communication around that. Next steps: Jen has talked about training, Tom is looking at marketing and DG is looking at embedding and integrating into everything the school does. He has started integrating into job descriptions. There will be a session at the inset day in September which Trustees are invited to. Also, the SLT have planning the assembly cycle for next year which will include the vision, values and behaviours from September. Once get into second half of autumn term, DG intends to revisit the vision and values based on how it has worked in first half of term.

	Tom asked what will determine when it is fully launched. DG said it will start with staff straight away in September. Launch to parents and starting to replace marketing and signage etc will begin after it has been embedded internally to enable tweaks if required. EM asked about how the school will tie in with visits from prospective parents. DG explained that they are already starting to integrate into visits from now and will include in parents evening in October. He had received some lovely feedback that they can see and feel the vision. Jen noted that it needs a communication and launch plan and Tom had done fantastic work on this already. Jon asked who the Vision and Values was for? He noted that it was important to get it out to the people who need to see it. Ultimately, we are trying to attract children into the school so it needs to be communicated to parents and prospective parents. Tom asked Jill Blain what does it mean from a staff perspective? Jill said that staff have been trying to do this for a long time. Vicky (VJ) said it felt more joined up this time. Jen noted that it is important that staff see it embedded with Trustees too. DG: will revisit Strategic Plan at a first meeting in September.
6	Academy compliance – progress A Progress Towards Compliance document was circulated prior to the meeting alongside a RAG rated document showing the progress made on actions from the DfE Review of Governance and Financial Management was circulated in advance of the meeting. Of the 12 mandatory actions, six are rated Green, four amber and two red. The Terms of Reference of the Finance, Staffing, Communications and Audit Committee need to be updated to include the Audit Committee. DG is working with Nathan Jeremiah regularly and DG will provide update at each Trustees meeting until confident that all compliance actions are complete. He noted that the Clerk vacancy is causing delays. DG reported that EM has agreed to become a member and there are others that he has in mind to approach. The aim is to have them in place by October. Michael (MJJ) said it is important to define what Members do. DG has started to work with Nathan on this who will draw up a roles and responsibilities document and will provide training to Members. The Going Concern assessment will take place over the summer. The anti-fraud, bribery and corruption policy will be scrutinised as part of the internal scrutiny work and training will be taking place for staff. The internal scrutiny review will follow up on other recommendations from last year. Getting Information about Schools (GIAS) still needs to be updated to record Trustees as Trustees as opposed to Governors this is due to the fact that the school has two GIAS accounts and is still unable to get access to the academy account. They are continuing to try to get to get support from the DfE to gain access.
7	Safeguarding and attendance update VJ updated on the following:

	Safeguarding: • <<Confidential information>> • Safeguarding team continue to meet weekly to discuss cases and actions. KT will be leaving so the SLT will be addressing how to fill that gap. • Continue to share vulnerable children briefing with staff • The Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) update is out now and there will be a staff update and training at the September inset. Karen Robertson (KR) to attend as Safeguarding Link trustee. • Safeguarding training is a standing item at the staff briefings ACTION: DG to arrange for Karen to come into school for her next Trustee visit in September and will carry out a check of Single Central Record has as will have new staff. Attendance: • VJ updated that attendance continues to feature every week in the newsletter. • New text alert has been set up to notify parents if their child's attendance falls below 90% • YTD attendance is 95.8% • Persistent absence at 13% but are above national average in years 5 and 6. EM asked about the reasons. • The Attendance Officer is coming into school in October. • Delivered two attendance actions plans. Seen improvement but not where want it to be. • Continuing to refer Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences to the Local Authority in line with the guidance. There have been four since trustees last met and another eight due to go in. • DG: next year one of HLTAs will be working alongside Vicky on attendance.
8	Curriculum review A Curriculum Review Summary Report was circulated in advance of the meeting. As part of the review: • Meetings held with all subject leaders • Pupil voice conducted across key stages • Curriculum documentation analysed DG reported the review identified that intent is good and impact is getting there but more work to do on cohesion and progression. Maths and English will be priority areas next year. In summary, the review confirms that the curriculum is broadly well-planned, coherent, and aligned with statutory requirements. Core subjects benefit from strong leadership, effective monitoring, and targeted development. Foundation subject leaders are developing in confidence, though greater consistency and depth are required to fully embed recent improvements. A continued focus on subject leadership, resource investment, and progression planning, alongside enhanced strategies for knowledge retention. Will ensure the curriculum continues to support excellent pupil outcomes. EM asked how is the school going to address work to embed improvements. Discussion around that took place.

	DG: The computing scheme of work has been amended and have invested in new equipment so that can deliver the curriculum. There is risk around losing the subject lead when she leaves at the end of the year but the SLT are addressing that. Jon asked about how the school teaches modern languages in school given the importance of languages being engaging and a fun thing to learn? DG explained how languages was covered within the curriculum. Tom noted that local context running through the curriculum is really positive. DG will be doing more work around this next year. He will be doing more curriculum walk arounds in September. ACTION: EM asked that this is revisited at the Trustees meeting in autumn term and is a regular agenda item. DG's suggestion that go back to Curriculum Committee and that committee looks at this in more depth. EM asked that the committee reports back to Full Trustees. ACTION: EM to thank staff for all their work.
9	Health and safety update A Health and Safety Link Governor report written by Paul Nedved (PN) was circulated in advance of the meeting. DG will use this as a template for all link trustee visits and will meet with each link trustee in order to achieve consistency. DG: there is work to do in September re. risk assessments. Paul is coming into school in September and next Health and Safety audit by Kym Allan in arranged for October. The Accident Analysis report was circulated in advance of the meeting. DG reported that more work is to be done to check that the data is accurate. MJJ asked about the criteria in the report around what qualifies in each category of accident. DG gave examples of the type of accidents that would fall into each. EM asked if the school had enough first aiders. Karen asked if all members of staff had completed a first aid course. DG said he would not expect all staff to have to complete a full day/two day visit. Karen recommended a 2.5 hour paediatric course available locally that could be delivered to all staff.
10	Policy review. - Admissions policy 2026/27: a Curriculum Model Statement was circulated in advance of the meeting setting out the draft wording for a proposed revision to the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) for these year groups reflecting the mixed-age class model: - Year 3: 44 pupils - Year 4: 55 pupils DG reported he had spoken to School Admissions on the policy. If the PAN is 64 for each of the above year groups, the school will struggle to maintain mixed age class model. Proposal: to accept the amendment above but with note to say please continue to contact the school if looking for a place. AGREED BY ALL.

	Emergency plan: DG gave the following verbal update: have reviewed the current plan, are looking at the updated Kym Allan plan and taken advice from other schools. This will be standing agenda item until finalised.
11	Finance matters - The May 2025 management accounts were reviewed at the Finance, Staffing, Communications and Audit Committee on 24 June 2025: The current year budget is based on an in-year deficit of (£17k) and carry forward reserves at 31 August 2025 of £134k. The May management accounts show a projected (£83k) in-year deficit and carry forward reserves of £68k. However, the reasons for this adverse movement relate to additional one off costs relating to VR and the reversal of a £15k year end debtor re. HMRC incentive payments that the school has since been notified it does not qualify for as it is outside the National Insurance limits. - Whilst the current year has been hit by these one-off costs, the measures taken this year mean the three year budget shows an improvement in carry forward reserves in subsequent years. The draft three year budget for submission by 31 August will be presented to Full Trustees on 17 July for review and approval. The latest version shows reserves of at least 3% of income at the end of year 3 and shows the school's budget in a more sustainable place. It doesn't assume a further management of change process. - A huge amount of progress has been made on review and negotiation of contracts for supplies and services. - Nathan Jerimiah from EPI Consulting will be in school on 15 July as part of his internal scrutiny work. Approval was given by the committee for recruitment to the following posts (both of which are budgeted for): - Level 2 Early Years apprentice to be employed on an initial 12-month contract to ensure adequate staffing in Early Years - A governance professional with an increase from the previous post in terms of both hours (from 2 to 3 hours per week) and pay scale (from P6 to P20) to reflect the increasing demands and skills required of the role.
12	Staffing and leadership update by DG: - Level 2 Early Years apprentice: interviewing on Friday - Lunchtime supervisors: interviews are scheduled for tomorrow. - Governance professional: advert is out. - Teacher update: following the resignation of KT to take up a role at another school, the school will go out to recruit a permanent teacher up to M3 to start in January 2026 with autumn term being staffed by a current fixed term M6 teacher. - The school's 0.6 FTE Music Teacher has handed in her notice for an exciting opportunity with the Cumbria Music Service. The SLT are considering options and will bring back a proposal to Trustees in September. The importance of music in the school was noted.
13	Governance Clerk update: covered above Example governance structure 2025/26: an example Governing Body Structure Overview Document was circulated in advance of the meeting setting out a proposed governance structure for 2025/26 including committees, an annual calendar and standing agenda items for each meeting. Link trustee visits strategically scheduled and reports shared with trustees.

	• Governance review: Nathan will be meeting with all Trustees in September. • Risk register: The latest version of the Risk Register was circulated in advance of the meeting. This went to the Finance, Staffing, Communications and Audit Committee on 24 June 2025 and is presented to Full Trustees for review and approval. Jon challenged the wording and RAG rating of risk 4.2 regarding the financial pupil numbers. He asked if trustees think the falling trend will continue and challenged that the current likelihood score of 3 was too low. If the likelihood were more like 4, the overall risk score would be 16 and then that would make it the highest score on the register and drive more work around this. Tom echoed this challenge and outlined data he obtained reception intake of Stanwix compared to its neighbours over recent years. Discussion also took place around birth rates, house building and the catchment area. DG noted that the school had worked really hard to not lose children as a result of the mixed age classes in years 3 and 4 and ensure the offer remained high, as things stand, are not losing any. However, Jon noted that there is still a risk of falling pupil numbers in the future. It was agreed to amend the likelihood score to 4 and in turn the overall risk to 16 and explore the mitigation further. Subject to the above amendment the risk register was APPROVED
14	Any other business • Although not included on the agenda, DG reported that Jen contacted him in advance of the meeting to ask that he include the update on Sports Premium. He reported that this year's funding had been spent in full on top-up swimming lessons, coaching in order to develop staff, transport and staffing for sporting events. They have looked at next year and created a short list for spend. • The Pupil Premium impact report will be a main agenda item in autumn ahead of submission by 31 December. • Have received the SATs results and are pleased. Will be sharing full analysis with Trustees in September. Early Years good level of development and phonics is looking positive. EM asked that all staff are thanked • EM stated that Austin Friars are exploring offering music, sport and outdoor learning facilities to primary schools and the community. DG to arrange a meeting with the headteacher.
	Next meeting in person next Wednesday 16 July at 5.30pm. Single agenda item to review and approve the three year budget ahead of submission by 31 August.

Meeting closed: 7.50pm