Full Governing Body Minutes

Time & Date:	Tuesday 24 March 2026
Venue:	In school
Governors Present:	Michele Brook Nick Cockerill David Hall Mohammed Hans Jonathan Hodgson – Vice Chair (Chair) Ross Oxby Lalit Suryawanshi Mark Tweedle Keith Wilson Peter Roberts – Headteacher
Non-Voting Attendees:	Jody Dunn – Clerk Natalie Loxley – Finance Director Richard Tipler – Deputy Headteacher Nicky Thomas – Deputy Headteacher Simon Taylor – Assistant Headteacher Megan Magure – Assistant Headteacher
Meeting Quorate:	Yes

1. Welcome & Apologies

JH welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Derek Cross and Matthew Pinder.

2. Declarations of interests – none.

3. Safeguarding Update (Executive Summary)

SAT advised that everyone had seen the information ahead of the meeting and that he would give a brief overview of the Attendance, Behaviour and Safeguarding sections.

Attendance: SAT advisted that attendance and punctuality rates are high and HGS has the highest overall attendance, the lowest overall absence in the whole of Kirklees. Nationally, HGS is in the top 10% of schools for attendance. He then explained the data by year group.

The affect of study leave on the data was discussed, with SAT informing that not many other schools have study leave, however it is benefical for HGS and for Y13 students the right to study leave is earned.

Persistent absence, particularly in Years 12 and 13, was discussed. SAT advised that although rates are higher in the sixth form, they remain favourable compared to other schools and colleges. Governors were reassured by the robust systems in place, including first-day contact, home visits, and clear procedures for authorised and medical absence.

SAT informed of the newly implemented system for managing lateness and that early indications suggest this is having a positive impact on punctuality.

Behaviour: The spike in logged incidents of bullying was noted and discussed, as was the high number of detentions and negatives among Indian and Pakistan students.

Safeguarding: The increase in safeguarding referals was noted and discussed, as well as how these are triarged and monitored. The high number of mental health cases were highlighted, prompting a robust discussion Governors asked what impact the increase in caseload/workload is having on the team, to which SAT explained. Governors requested that moving forward SAT provides more of a breakdown of the caseload specifying the numbers coming on and coming off etc.

4. Ofsted Preparation Update

MLM introduced herself and explained the role of the Ofsted nominee. She informed governors of the nominees responsibilities throughout inspection process and the value of the role. She updated governors on what preperations the SLT had done so far in readiness for an inspection. She explained what will be expected of governors during the process, and provided some example questions they would likely be asked. Following a discussion around some of the questions, MLM advised all governors to watch the Ofsted webinar if they had not done so already, and confirmed an updated pre-populated with answers question sheet would be circulated. The board thanked Megan and wished her good luck in the role.

5. Minutes of previous meeting

FGB – PDR picked up on the action to look into whether there is any correlation between the use of AI and those who feel a heavier workload, providing some data gathered from a staff survey, including 5 have never used AI for work and 10 using it at least daily, 20% of those surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that AI tools reduced the time to complete work for routine tasks, and 84% strongly disagreed that AI has increased expectations on volume of work. A discussion was had around AI.

C&S – KW gave a brief overview of the meeting covering the main topics covered and confirming the actions had been addressed.
RGT picked up on a query from MP regarding the AI policy and advised that the school was going to refine the wording to students to clarify. It was suggested it may be worth adding

some good example prompts of what are good example, but being careful not to appear to be promoting itss use.

F&R – NC provided an overview of matters covered in the meeting, advising that the school is in a strong budget position, with financial reporting up to date. He advsised that the meetings discussion focused primarily on reserves and investment strategy, and how these support planned capital expenditure.

NC updated governors on the proposed tennis court development, which had been provisionally approved by the F&R committee. He advised that more accurate costings have now been received, showing the project to be more expensive than initially anticipated, and exceeding delegated authority limits. Governors had been informed of this via email. While additional quotes have been obtained, a full like-for-like comparison has not been completed. He advised that a decision to go ahead with is required ASAP as contractors are seeking a commitment. A detailed discussion followed on design considerations, including layout, airflow, materials, and overall functionality. It was noted that, despite the increase in cost, the school remains financially strong.

NC explained the position in relation to reserves, outlining the wider capital “wish list” and the level of expenditure the school could reasonably sustain. It was noted that spending up to £3m would be considered prudent and affordable. Governors were reminded of the distinction between capital and operational expenditure, and that while both need consideration, reserves cannot be used to balance the revenue budget.

MT queried whether the project should be put out to tender. NC explained the intention to waive tendering on this occasion due to the highly specialist nature of the work and the limited number of suitable providers. NJL advised that some benchmarking has been carried out against comparable projects, such as sports halls. Governors noted the rationale and the need for clear documentation to support this approach.

A discussion was had on the strategic rationale for the development, in relation to meeting the PD departments curriculum need and school’s sporting ambitions.

NC then informed the board of other capital projects, including the Middle Yard development. It was emphasised that governors need full visibility of all planned projects and should consider whether the school wishes to proceed with all of them. Attention was drawn to the risk of cost overruns and the cumulative impact of multiple smaller projects. CIF-funded expenditure has already been committed, and governors will continue to receive oversight through monthly management accounts.

Governors were advised that the current tennis court cost represents a worst-case scenario and that the final figure is likely to be lower, depending on options such as flooring. While the project could be deferred for another year, it was noted that inflation is likely to increase costs. LS stated comfort with a lower figure of £2.2m but requested clearer justification for the higher amount, including evidence of benchmarking and reassurance regarding build materials. Concerns were also raised about wider inflationary pressures, future technology projects within the rolling improvements programme, and the remaining level of reserves following completion.

Further discussion covered project management arrangements, potential savings if multiple projects proceed together, and planning permission considerations. It was recommended that the project be delivered under a JCT contract. Contractors will be asked to undertake test tarmac at their own cost, with prices reviewed and negotiated further where possible.

The Board considered the recommendation from Finance and Resources and agreed to support the tennis court development in principle. This support is subject to receiving more accurate cost information and reassurance regarding materials, procurement, and contractual arrangements. It was noted that contractors are seeking a commitment at this stage. A presentation to the full governing body was suggested. Overall, the development was welcomed as a functional and strategically important investment, with NC emphasising the need for close financial monitoring and careful but confident use of reserves.

6. Executive Summaries

PDR opened the item to questions given the information should have been read in advance of the meeting.
Governors queried whether the Maths College taking 4.5% of students should be a worry, and it was noted positively that the school has retained 67% of students overall.
The Pupil Premium report was commended as very strong . A discussion took place around the disadvantaged bursary, including its potential significance as an Ofsted focus. Questions were raised about reporting on disadvantaged students in Years 12–13; it was clarified that these students are tracked and included in the overview, with detailed work underway, although this is not being strongly promoted publicly due to accountability considerations, with a detailed report available if needed. It was noted that some students and families choose not to access bursary funding, that this funding operates differently from Pupil Premium and can be difficult to spend, and that work is ongoing to develop more effective approaches, including Pupil Premium innovations within the classroom.
On the Sixth Form summay, governors also noted that 557 guidance interviews have been carried out for September 2026 entry, with congratulations given to staff involved.
Governors asked if they could see some of the case studies particularly in 12 & 13, referred to in the Literacy report. NJT suggested this would be a good opportunity for the Literacy Lead to come along to a meeting and bring the case studies for discussion.

7. School Development Plan

Governors wer reminded that this will be a key document in an Ofsted inspection therefore everyone is required to be familiar with its content. It was noted that the current one-year structure may be limiting, and discussion suggested that a three-year plan might better support longer-term development. PDR noted this was something he would reflect on.

Discussion the focused on the Sixth Form, with governors questioning whether there were areas in which the school is making progress. PDR confirmed that progress is being made, although the Sixth Form has been one of the last areas to come fully to fruition. PDR and RGT reported that all possible avenues have been explored to strengthen provision; however, the full impact of these actions is not yet evident. Encouragingly, the most recent Year 13 data was highlighted as showing positive early signs.
Members queried how many students had changed or moved courses since the previous review. RGT advised that approximately 15 students had moved courses. In response to questions about resistance to course changes, RGT acknowledged that some resistance had been encountered. This has been addressed through close work with the careers team and by providing extensive guidance and support to students.
It was further noted that planned increases to Sixth Form entry requirements are expected to influence future patterns and outcomes.

8. Governor Visits Update

As the Sixth Form Link MB informed the board she had recently met with JAL and updated them on what was discussed, including Ofsted, policies, enrichement and the work JAL had been doing with an external Muslim advisor to help wtih some of the behaviours of some Pakistani boys.

LS informed the board he had met with SAT for his induction as the new Safeguarding link

MT advised he had been involved with the appointment of a temporary Assistant Headteacher (materinity cover).

9. Policies for approval

It

- ECT – Approved subject to suggested edits Matt sent via email. All governors agreed these were fair reflections
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report – Approved

10. AOB

JH suggested to the board that the contents of the Risk register be distributed to the relevant committees to monitor moving forward. This was agreed.

JH reminded the board that effective governance relies on respectful conduct and a strong commitment to attending meetings.

11 . Meeting review – All governors were inagremmet it was a productive meeting.

Actions		**Who**
1.	Provides more of a breakdown of the caseload, highlighting the numbers coming on and coming off	SAT
2.	When reviewing risk register, distribute areas to relevant committee	NJL

Governance Requirement: Minutes signed as true and accurate record of the meeting.	
Signature:	Jonathan Hodgson Vice Chair of Governors