



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON TUESDAY, 13TH JANUARY 2026 AT 6PM IN SCHOOL

Attendees: Claire Scott-South (Co Headteacher) David Hardcastle
Sarah Costello Mark Newman
Claire Humphreys Hannah Wilson
Ros Roberts *left at 6:45pm* Luke Zwalf
Natalie Wong

In Attendance: Caroline Rigden (Governance Support Officer, Clerk)

	ALL ITEMS TAKEN AS READ	Quorum: 9 of 10 (15)	ACTION											
1.	<u>Welcome, apologies for absence, consents and declarations of interest</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received with consent from Molly Costello. There were no declarations of interest pertaining to the meeting.													
2.	<u>Minutes of the last meeting</u> <i>Previously distributed: Minutes from 14th October 2025, Detailed Attendance Report.</i> APPROVED: The minutes of the previous meeting of the FGB held on 14th October 2025 were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and were marked as approved. <u>Action points and matters arising</u> Action Plan: <table><tr><th></th><th>Action</th><th>Status</th></tr><tr><td>1.</td><td>Present in-depth attendance report on attendance at next meeting.</td><td>Complete. See below.</td></tr><tr><td>2.</td><td>Send list of link governor roles to all governors.</td><td>Complete.</td></tr><tr><td>3.</td><td>Complete safeguarding link report.</td><td>Carry Forward.</td></tr></table> In regard to action 1, the Headteacher explained that attendance would be covered in the Headteacher’s report, but a separate report had been shared to show a breakdown of attendance and was benchmarked against National and Local Authority data. The Headteacher explained the codes, with SEN K for pupils on the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) register and E for EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) pupils, and that the data was a strength for the school and had high performance overall when compared with the national average, although Vulnerable groups had lower attendance than wanted. The Local Authority had a focus on attendance and was supporting the school, which it had rated green. The Headteacher shared an example of how the Local Authority’s attendance officer were supporting the school and family to improve attendance, although the Local Authority had only one new intervention to suggest to those that the school had already used. The School Business Manager added that SLT (Senior Leadership Team) met regularly to look at attendance. The Headteacher explained that having the breakdown into groupings had identified that FSM (Free School Meals) pupils’ attendance had dropped below national, but staff could talk about each pupil with lower attendance as to how they were supported and what the situation was and how it could be improved during the year. Matters Arising There were no matters arising.		Action	Status	1.	Present in-depth attendance report on attendance at next meeting.	Complete. See below.	2.	Send list of link governor roles to all governors.	Complete.	3.	Complete safeguarding link report.	Carry Forward.	MN
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3. **Headteacher's Report**
Previously distributed: Headteacher's report, SEF Section 1 for review.

The Headteacher highlighted points from her report.

The report had summed up autumn term, which was always a long term.

The School Improvement Priorities had been shared at the Standards and Effectiveness Committee, with not much to add since that meeting. Good progress was being made against the priorities, with a plan for each term. Spring term would drill down into the data as, while pupils were improving there was still a focus on the vulnerable group with interventions and looking at how the teaching and learning was for the group. Data was being flipped on its head by tracking key students. There had been more release time for staff to monitor the key group and to embed practice into the school. There may not be as much time given in the next academic year, so the Headteacher wanted to give subject leads the time now to put in place all that was needed and wanted it to continue being a strength despite the ongoing challenges.

A governor asked if the reduction in FTE (Full Time Equivalent) staffing would mean teachers had to be in the classroom more. The Headteacher explained that it would, but subject leads would still have time next year just not as much. HLTAs (Higher Level Teaching Assistants) could be used to create capacity for staff to work on their responsibilities. Staff meetings could also be used to create capacity.

A governor asked what had changed to reduce staff's time on responsibilities. The Headteacher replied that not much had changed but the decision made on more time for responsibilities had been agreed before staffing changes had happened and it had meant it was a difficult situation this year.

A governor asked if the reduction in release time for staff was due to a lack of cover availability rather than a change in responsibility. The Headteacher explained that all staff above ECT (Early Career Teacher) were expected to have a subject lead responsibility and would just have less release time next year than they had been given this year.

The Headteacher explained that the priority in Oracy was in its second year and had been pushed to the end of year to enable engagement in a research project about the implementation of assessment in Oracy which needed to be considered further as it could be subjective. Once Oracy was going well, had embedded and was making a difference, the Headteacher wanted to keep that plate spinning but it would not be on the School Development Plan next year.

The Chair asked whether there would be some data to show how it was going. The Headteacher explained there was a narrative rather than data and would share it at the end of the year.

A governor asked if the school was down on admissions. The Headteacher explained that two pupils had not shown up in September as expected, but school numbers were stable. There had been a peak of 313 pupils for a short while due to an immigrant family joining then quickly leaving as they moved out of area, which was the nature of refugee placements. Numbers for September 2026 had not yet been received yet, but an indication would be shared at the next meeting. There had been four open sessions and some walk arounds for interested families.

The Headteacher shared that the attendance data on the Headteacher's report was more up to date than the report covered earlier.

Staff safeguarding training had been completed.

A governor asked if the e-safety incidents had been in school. The Headteacher replied that it had been mainly at home but one had come into school and was concerning.

A governor asked if an education piece had been done around e-safety for pupils. The Headteacher confirmed there had been and had arranged for the new Local Authority safeguarding advisor to do an audit on school's processes. The Headteacher was mindful of the new inspection framework and had had issues on safeguarding raised in last the Ofsted so wanted to ensure all was in place and right. It could be difficult when looking at something all the time as you couldn't see gaps or where improvements could be made. There would be a review of the SCR (Single Central Record) which the Headteacher had requested become an annual check, but the adviser would see what was best for the school. The Headteacher wanted to ensure that safeguarding was a strength of the school.

There had been some changes in behaviour data in autumn 1, with updated figures. Behaviour remained good with positive comments on it by visitors.

A governor asked if there was a reason for an increased number of pupils getting a timeout. The Headteacher replied that it was always more difficult at the end of a long term, as pupils were often

tired.

A governor was concerned at the big jump in figures. The Headteacher explained that as there had been more challenging behaviour seen, staff may enforce quicker than at the start of year. There had been a reminder at the training day about the behaviour policy with staff to be clear and consistent with sanctions and thinking what in school could cause these behaviours. Looking at patterns of behaviour, lunchtime had been identified as a higher risk.

A governor asked if the reset of the behaviour policy in September had been to support staff. The Headteacher replied that it had been relaunched so that staff were consistent and not overzealous. It was sometimes necessary for staff to make clear the expectations for pupils.

A governor asked if there were any challenging cohorts. The Headteacher replied that the Assistant Head had drilled down into groups and was monitoring it. There were some individuals in Y3 and in Y4 who were a concern, with the level of behaviour seen from them. It was a very small number of pupils who had the majority of the sanctions for that year group. Staff were looking at what support was in place for an individual as they could rack up sanctions and it showed that something was not working. The SLT (Senior Leadership Team) had looked at trends and patterns, and had added SLT check ins to support, giving identified pupils more movement breaks which could help reset them. Looking at lunchtime there was a 20-20-20 structure that was being used and should be reviewed to ensure it worked for individual pupils. The Headteacher explained that there were some issues that would need support from an ELSA (Emotional Learning Support Assistant) and some support systems continued into spring term as they were successful interventions.

A governor asked if behaviour levels was likely to reduce during spring term. The Headteacher was hopeful that pupils understood the expectations, reporting that she did talk with individual pupils about what was going on. These restorative conversations had a positive impact on the pupil and the wider community.

A governor asked if there were more low-level behaviours seen rather than high. The Headteacher shared that there were a couple of pupils who had big behaviour which needed a higher response and school had put in place things such as Alternative Provision (AP) and part-time timetables, working with families to support the children. It was low level behaviours that staff wanted to reduce.

A governor asked if there was a correlation between timeouts A and B and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). The Headteacher confirmed that there was a correlation of pupils.

A governor noted that for timeout C, there had been three issued but the number of pupils was zero. The Headteacher noted it was a typo and should say three timeouts for two pupils.

A governor was concerned about the potential increase in numbers of pupils and timeouts. The Headteacher explained she had spoken with the Assistant Head about who received sanctions and there would be checks as to whether it is a one-off or if there is a pattern for individual pupils, looking at which classroom and which staff member gave the sanctions, and if there was a blip if it was due to staff or pupils.

The Headteacher explained that the staff survey was in progress, with the results to be shared at the next meeting. Staff turnover had been explained in the report.

A governor asked if staff had opportunities to share issues with SLT. The Headteacher replied that she had an open-door policy and hoped she had good relationships with staff. Collecting staff voice was a good opportunity and the Headteacher had encouraged staff to share as she didn't want them to hold back about improvements and you can't fix something if you don't know there is an issue. Some of the feedback SLT may already know was an issue but it can't be resolved due to other constraints.

A governor asked whether staff were aware that finances may be the reason why additional support was not put in place. The Headteacher replied that she wanted to be as honest as possible about the situation and while some staff may push back, she wanted staff to be mindful about the situation. The School Business Manager added that she had had a good chat with staff about finances and how hard it was to meet needs for EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans) as funding did not cover expectation. The Headteacher noted that all schools were struggling and teaching was getting harder, but she hoped staff knew that the Headteacher was trying to support with staff able to do PPA (Planning, Preparation and Assessment) time at home and trying to reduce workload.

In response to a governor's question, the Headteacher explained that day to day in school felt harder as there was less support now and some aspects of support staff's role may be different than in past. With high staff retention staff may not know that was the same situation elsewhere.

The Headteacher shared how she supported staff, with time given in staff meetings and training days

	rather than outside of these and was mindful of PPA time on training days. A governor asked whether the Headteacher was concerned for specific staff members wellbeing. The Headteacher gave an example of support given to a staff member and noted that often all staff needed was to be listened to. Governors praised the approach that the Headteacher used to create a safe space where staff could be supported and noted that staff seemed happy in school. <i>Ros Roberts left the meeting at 6:45pm</i> The Headteacher shared what school had done to support parental engagement, with lots of opportunities in autumn term and FODS (Friends of Dringhouses School) were continuing to support the school through events. A governor asked whether there had been an increase in the preschool music group numbers. The Headteacher explained that numbers fluctuated. The School Business Manager added that there were 8-10 regular attendees as if the nursery had staffing issues they may not attend. The informal feedback was positive. The Headteacher wanted to run the group for a full year, as it would make a difference to the children, so it would be looked at as to how to keep promoting the group beyond the school to get the wider community in and there was an opportunity as a similar group had recently closed due to retirement. The Headteacher reported that the annual questionnaire out to families in February, with the questions being reviewed before sending and to ensure it could support responses would support an inspection. The Headteacher explained that the SEF (Self-Evaluation) was proving to be difficult as the previous version did not align with the new framework so there had to be more done from scratch and it was taking longer than hoped. Paul Laycock, Headteacher's Mentor, was supportive and was working with the Headteacher through the document. The document was meaty, as the Headteacher was trying to put in as much information as possible as it would be shared with inspectors before an inspection and was top-loading evidence against each area of inspection. The Headteacher stressed that what the school did was for pupils not Ofsted and arranging information in this way would give confidence that the school were doing the right things. A governor asked about how school would grade themselves in each area and how this grade was justified. The Headteacher explained the gradings, noting that most schools inspected so far were at expected standard. The Headteacher wanted to work more on the document before assigning a grade to each area, however it was a working document and feedback from staff and governors could help to choose the right grade. A governor asked if, when including supporting evidence for a grade, how the school could show it was aiming higher and whether it had to grade itself with a single grade. The Headteacher talked about her experiences of Ofsted inspections under the previous framework and explained that there was a Local Authority Ofsted briefing at the end of the month where there should be an opportunity to ask questions of an inspector as to how judgements should be made. A governor asked if there was criteria for each grade. The Headteacher replied there was and noted that evidence to support meeting this could be included, but was concerned that it could make the document more unwieldy if included. A governor noted that the SEF should link to the School Development Plan and acknowledge known weaknesses and plans to overcome these. A governor asked if there would be a summary SEF. The Headteacher agreed to consider whether this was possible. The purpose of the SEF was that it was an evaluation of the school, but it would remain a working document that would reflect what was going on. The Chair thanked the HT for her report.	
4.	<u>Finance Update</u> <i>Previously distributed: Revised Budget Summary 25-26, Revised Budget CFR 25-26, Third Party Transaction Return.</i> The School Business Manager explained that the revised budget had been reviewed in depth at the	

recent Resources Committee meeting. She highlighted that in Year 3 of the budget support staff on fixed term contracts would have ended but there was the need to reassess the leadership structure to be able to work out what was needed for support. There had been an increase in pupil numbers with SEN (Special Educational Needs) but not much increase in funding. There had been £27k of additional funding received this year, which covered the cost of just one teaching assistant. Everything else was tracking as expected although there would be consideration of the catering budget and costs to decide whether this budget should be increased next financial year. A governor asked whether the drop in FTE (Full Time Equivalent) teaching staff related to changes in the leadership structure. The School Business Manager explained that the Executive Headteacher role would no longer be in place with the return of the second Co-Headteacher, which would mean the Head of School role would also no longer be needed. While it dropped on paper it was likely to rebalance staff into their previous roles. The Headteacher explained that there had been a three-tier leadership structure with the Executive Headteacher, Head of School, and Assistant Head, and this would be replaced by a different leadership structure with the Co-Headteacher model in place. This change would not be seen in full until 27-28 financial year. A governor highlighted a concern that there would be one less person in the building if there was the reduction. The School Business Manager and Headteacher confirmed that there were no redundancy plans for 27/28. The Chair asked for more detail on the proposed FTE reduction and leadership model at the next meeting. ACTION: Detail on leadership model and FTE reduction to be shared with governors at the next meeting.	SBM
A governor noted that there was no planned Capital spend in the next five years. The School Business Manager explained that there were no plans as it was often responsive work needed, which the Local Authority could be approached to potentially support. There was a schedule of work for the premises, and it would only be included in the budget when it was known how it would be funded. A governor noted that line E29 - loan interest had a number in it and asked if the school had any loans. The School Business Manager suggested that this was likely due to an item being given the incorrect code as the school had no loans and would double check it. ACTION: Double check whether E29 - loan interest line was coded correctly. APPROVED: Revised budget approved subject to clarification of line E29.	SBM
SFVS <i>Previously distributed: Benchmarking 24-25, SFVS checklist, Third Party Transaction Return.</i> The Chair noted that the benchmarking in the SFVS (School Financial Value Standard) document had been interesting to see and highlighted the costs of IT support, where the school was higher than average within York schools. The School Business Manager explained that the benchmarking was from the previous year's figures and when comparing schools there were differences in context that could mean it was not a direct comparison. A governor asked where decisions were made on services and what could the school do about it. The School Business Manager explained that school could review the contracts in place and would look at the T support package offered. There had been discussions from School Business Managers across the city to look at the services offered from a local business compared to a national company. There were some discussions about the economies of scale that could improve if maintained schools were to work together to get better contracts. The school also had some ICT (Information Communication Technology) support from the Local Authority, with the new finance system in place being more expensive than the previous one. There were some costs that schools were not informed or consulted about although there was now more encouragement to work together across the city. A governor noted that premises costs seemed high. The School Business Manager was hopeful that, following refurbishment work on the heating and windows, that costs would decrease. A governor asked if capital funds could be used to support premises costs. The School Business Manager explained that the capital budget was totally separate from the school's general accounts. There were some capital funds ringfenced to support in-house catering costs that may occur, i.e. replacing the oven, and if there was a serious issue it would likely wipe out the capital budget. A governor noted that the cleaning contract was more than 50% of premises costs. The School	

	Business Manager explained that there had previously been an in-house cleaning team, however it had been hard to retain staff and to recruit so the school had been forced to go out for a contracted service. It had helped with the staffing issues, but companies needed the service to make a profit, and as most schools in York were with the same contractor this could be reviewed in a similar way to the IT contract. A governor asked if the school had the same deal as other schools, as it was benchmarked as being the highest costing in the city. The School Business Manager explained that each school negotiated their own deal with the cleaning contractor, and while paying the same for some services the increased cost may be due to what the school had provided in equipment and consumables. It was hard to compare like for like with other schools, as each school did things slightly differently. A governor commented that there should be assurances that the school had value for money with services. The School Business Manager explained that some choices made may not have been the cheapest option but provided a better service, but there were other options available through Services for Schools. A governor asked if the put of school club contributed to premises costs. The School Business Manager explained that the out of school club paid a flat hiring rate. A governor asked if the hiring rate had gone up when the provision of the out of school club had increased. The School Business Manager replied that it had not but would look to increase it at the start of the next financial year. A governor asked how much had changed on the SFVS from the previous year. The School Business Manager replied that there had been minimal changes from the previous year, and the Skills Audit date would be updated to reflect that this had taken place. APPROVED: Governors approved the SFVS for submission to the Local Authority. The School Business Manager explained that there was a nil return on the Third Party Transaction Return.	
5.	<u>Committee updates</u> <u>Standards and Effectiveness Committee</u> <i>Previously distributed: Minutes from S+E Committee meeting held on 11th November 2025.</i> It was noted that the Headteacher's report had covered items from the committee meeting. <u>Resources Committee</u> <i>Previously distributed: Minutes from Resources Committee meeting held on 10th December 2025.</i> It was noted that the finance update had covered items from the committee meeting. The Headteacher explained that catering was a difficult issue as it was a balance to ensure pupils were fed, affordability, and highlighted the need to keep in mind that catering was a significant cost for the school. The School Business Manager added that the funding received for FSM (Free School Meals) and UFSM (Universal Free School Meals) was under funded by 50p-£1 per meal. The Chair gave an update that York College had indicated they would be able to support the school by providing students to help decorate the school site, which was a positive. Governors agreed that this was positive for the school and for the students from York College.	
6.	<u>Chair's Items</u> Nothing to report.	
7.	<u>Governor Matters</u>	
7.1	<u>Link Governor Visit Reports</u> The Chair reminded governors to submit reports following a visit to the school. The Chair talked about a recent visit to the school where he had had the opportunity to meet with pupils who were brilliant and full of praise for the school.	
7.2	<u>Membership</u> <i>Previously distributed: Membership Jan 2026.</i> Governors discussed the current vacancies on the governing board. The School Business Manager	

	reported that a Parent Governor election was in progress. The Headteacher explained that the Staff Governor election had not resulted in a candidate and suggested that she speak with SLT to consider the role as it was good experience. The Chair noted there had been issues with quoracy for the Resources committee. <i>Claire Scott South stepped out at 7:30pm</i> Governors discussed the current membership of committees and frequency of meetings. The Chair agreed to sit on both committees until more governors were appointed. <i>Claire Scott South returned at 7:35pm</i>	
7.3	<u>Training Update</u> <i>Previously distributed: Training Tracker, Training Offer.</i> Governors noted the training tracker with the Clerk encouraging governors to undertake training as recommended in the skills audit feedback.	
7.4	<u>Skills Audit</u> <i>Previously distributed: School Governance Skills Audit Report.</i> The Clerk talked through the Skills Audit Report, which had showed a balanced board. The Clerk suggested that governors on the Resources committee may need to access training to ensure they could monitor and challenge the school where necessary.	
8.	<u>Policies for approval</u> <i>Previously distributed: Looked After Child Policy, Protection of Biometric Information Policy, Intimate Care Policy, Low Level Concerns Policy, Virtual Meetings Policy, Behaviour Policy.</i> A governor asked if the school collected biometric data. The School Business Manager explained that there was no need to collect this information as it was not used but was in place in case it would be needed. A governor asked where staff concerns were logged. The Headteacher explained that there was a separate space on the school's google drive that SLT (Senior Leadership Team) only could access. A governor asked if there had been changes made to the behaviour policy. The Headteacher explained that the flowchart for time outs had been updated, and there was a poster in each classroom on time outs to ensure consistency and for pupils to see expectations. The Headteacher would add this in to the policy. The Headteacher explained that the policy had clarified Timeout B and Timeout C and exclusions as it had not been as clear on the process and who made the decisions. The policy had not reflected that there may be adaptations made for some pupils with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and SEMH (Social Emotional Mental Health) so it had been made clear about being mindful of the implementation of policy and support for pupils who found it more difficult. A governor asked about including the flexibilities in the policy. The Headteacher explained that adaptations were made on an individual level and on the behaviours seen, so could not be included in the policy. The language used at the beginning of the policy was more explicit about flexibility. A governor noted that complaints could be made about the policy, as there was the risk of others finding out that some pupils were treated differently. The Headteacher highlighted that staff did not share what sanctions an individual pupil had with anyone other than the family, although pupils were aware that some pupils were supported in a different way. A governor noted that parents may share this information with others and suggested that context was included to explain that the same sanctions would be given for the same type of incident. The Headteacher explained that the application of the policy was fair but reflected that it was difficult when individual needs were taken into consideration of how sanctions were perceived to have been given. A governor asked if there was an appeals process for sanctions. The Headteacher explained that suspensions and permanent exclusions had appeals processes, with the rest being dealt with informally or through the complaints process. APPROVED: Governors unanimously approved all policies, with the Behaviour Policy being approved subject to changes as noted.	

9.	<u>Any Other Urgent Business (previously notified)</u> The Headteacher explained that SATs (Standard Assessment Tests) week, would be from the week beginning the 11th of May 2026, and it was good practice to have governor involvement, who were not the parent of a Y6 pupil. The assessments would run Monday to Thursday, starting at 9am, and the Headteacher would email governors about the support request for them to consider. There were more pupils with access arrangements than usual, so any additional support could be useful. The Chair shared his experience from the previous year and encouraged governors to consider helping out if they were available. ACTION: Send further information to governors about supporting the SATs process.	HT
10.	<u>Determination of confidential items</u> The Headteacher explained that the SEF would be deleted from the online meeting platform as it contained active links to the school's google drive.	
11.	<u>Date and time of next meeting</u> <u>FGB</u> Tuesday 5th May 2026, 6pm WEDNESDAY 1st July 2026, 6pm <u>S+E</u> Tuesday 3rd February 2026, 6pm Tuesday 19th May 2026, 6pm <u>Resources</u> Wednesday 11th February 2026, 9am online Wednesday 29th April 2026, 9am online	
The meeting closed at 8:04pm		

Minutes approved at the FGB meeting held on 5th May 2026.

**DRINGHOUSES PRIMARY SCHOOL
ACTION PLAN FOLLOWING THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY HELD ON
13TH JANUARY 2026**

Action	Item	Person(s) Responsible	Timescale
1. Complete safeguarding link report.	2	Mark Newman	05/05/2026
2. Detail on leadership model and FTE reduction to be shared with governors at the next meeting.	4	SBM	05/05/2026
3. Double check whether E29 - loan interest line was coded correctly.	4	SBM	ASAP
4. Send further information to governors about supporting the SATs process.	9	HT	ASAP

Items for the next FGB

Items for Committees

None raised.