DRINGHOUSES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Standards and Effectiveness Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19th May 2026 at 6pm in school

Present	Claire Scott-South (Co-Headteacher) David Bassett Natalie Wong	Molly Costello Mark Newman (Chair)

In Attendance	Sarah Murray (Head of School, SENCO) Caroline Rigden (Governance Support Officer, Clerk)

		Action
1.	**<u>Welcome, Apologies for absence, Consents and declarations of interest</u>** It was agreed that Mark Newman would Chair the meeting. Everyone was welcomed to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Luke Zwalf and Dave Hardcastle. There were no declarations of interest.	
2.	**<u>Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2026, Matters Arising and Action Plan</u>** *Previously distributed.* **APPROVED:** The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2026 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were marked as approved. **Action Plan** [illegible] The Headteacher confirmed that Mark Newman had been in school earlier that day on a safeguarding visit, alongside the local authority's Safeguarding adviser, Sophie Cole, for a safeguarding audit. Mark Newman, safeguarding link governor, reported that the audit had been in depth. The Headteacher explained that the Safeguarding Adviser had been supportive while still questioning the school. The actions identified were small, which was positive, and the adviser had complimented what the school had in place. There had been some discussion on how the job share of the Co-Headteachers and Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) would manage safeguarding issues. It needed to be robust, and there had been a lot learnt from this year when the Head of School had handed over safeguarding information to the Headteacher. There would be another visit from the Safeguarding Adviser who had some systems to share to ensure there was a smooth transition over the week. It would be important to learn how to use the Management Information Software (MIS) Arbour effectively to support the handover. **A governor asked what the MIS was.** The Headteacher explained that the Management Information Software was the main database for operational information of the school. It had been introduced this year and there had not been enough time to consider how it was used.	

	Action	**Update**
1.	Clerk to share link visit template with Mark Newman	Complete.

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	The safeguarding link governor offered to support the Headteacher, as he used it himself and shared that he had been reassured about safeguarding in school, which had been positive and in depth. There was a lot happening and there were some little things on process or recording that could be improved by tagging. There were no concerns raised following the safeguarding link governor's visit. There were no further matters arising.	
3	**<u>Headteacher's report for the committee</u>** *Previously distributed: Headteacher's report May 2026.* The Headteacher explained that the report included the updates from the previous two terms, which had been reported on at previous meetings. The Headteacher gave an update on the School Development Plan (SDP) with priorities on accelerated learning for key pupils to working towards, subject leadership to ensure it was strong and robust, the offer of a broad, balanced and enriched curriculum, and Oracy, which the English lead was driving forward. **A governor noted that whole the statements made about progress on priorities was strong, it was less clear how impact was measured.** The Headteacher explained that the spring data was challenging to show the impact, as while pupils may show elements of working at or moving towards expected standard, staff were erring on the side of caution. The Headteacher was checking with staff on pupil progress and there were still gaps seen for some pupils which meant they would not achieve working towards by the end of the year. The focus for the current half term had been on how to ensure pupils got to the predicted end point, by looking at interventions and additional support needed. Upper KS2 had a general teaching assistant who, post SATs (Standard Assessment Tests), was being used to support Y5 to facilitate reducing gaps and do as much as possible to get pupils where needed. There had been transition meetings between current class teachers and next year's class teachers, to ensure that staff knew as much as possible about incoming pupils. This would ensure that work on gaps would continue into the next year. **A governor asked if the Headteacher was assured that the ongoing work was having an impact if it did not show in the data yet.** The Headteacher noted that teaching and learning reviews were important as it gave information under the data. Staff were well prepared for lessons and knew their pupils well, and there was assurance that staff knew what was needed and whether pupils would reach the target this year. The impact of the subject leads, who would use deep dives into their subjects across all years, gave confidence that they knew their subject well. The Headteacher gave an example of the English lead, focusing on Oracy, who supported staff members with how to deliver and increase their knowledge, and gave staff confidence in what they were doing. This was helping to embed good practice. **A governor asked whether there was understanding of when to worry that pupils were not meeting their targets.** The Headteacher confirmed staff were aware of when to be concerned and gave the example of having all aspects but Writing as strong and that this, for example in EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) would stop a pupil reaching GLD (Good Level of Development). There were staff who had done local authority moderation in Writing, who then shared what they had learnt with the key stage teams. The new Writing Framework focused on handwriting and letter formation, and the EYFS team were being very strict about meeting the expectations, particularly in fine and gross motor skills. The Headteacher had suggested that advice was sought from the local authority on exactly what the expectations were, as having too high expectations could impact on pupils negatively. *Sarah Murray stepped out at 6:20pm* **A governor asked whether Writing had been low at the baseline taken in EYFS.** The Headteacher confirmed that it was low and explained that Writing was challenging to reach age	

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related in EYFS, although this was the picture also seen across the whole school. Reading was taught first before Writing, and when in EYFS it could be seen that gross and fine motor skills could be a struggle. There were pupils with poor speech and language skills and poor memory, which were all part of the larger struggle when looking at Writing, as it was a high cognitive load skill.

Sarah Murray returned at 6:22pm

A governor asked if there was a typical baseline seen in school. The Headteacher explained that in general the EYFS cohort had been in line with previous years, however there were some individual pupils with significant needs that had lower baselines. This may be due to the Writing Framework having been brought in. The baseline was set through staff assessment. There was an increase in pupils with lower baselines seen across the city and it was an increasing barrier. The Head of School added that physical development was also slower than it used to be. The Headteacher reported that there were local authority networks which included local nurseries and there was some collaboration work about the concerns. The local authority emphasised the importance of learning in children aged 0-5 and if it was not right it put pupils on the back foot. These pupils would show up higher in school as working towards and had constant catch up to improve, but staff were trying to close the gaps with less support in the classroom to help.

A governor asked about having areas of EYFS spaces closed due to staffing shortages. The Headteacher explained that there was no general teaching assistant in EYFS, as there were three teaching assistants used for 1:1 support. The role of general teaching assistant across the school had been dropped as the focus was on supporting pupils with needs in a 1:1 basis. The closure of areas was in order to keep pupils safe, and staff may close off one classroom so pupils could have access to indoor and outdoor areas, to ensure that that adult ratio required was in place.

A governor asked if the change in use of teaching assistants would be ongoing. The Headteacher replied it was an issue with education and funding, as there was not enough general funding to employ teaching assistants which was why they were now 1:1 with pupils with additional needs. Two pupils who had 1:1 support would be leaving the school, but it was unknown what needs would be coming in. There was a draft plan for September which had a general teaching assistant in EYFS however the situation was still challenging when there were many unknowns. The Headteacher noted that when pupils had settled into the school, they were happy learners who made progress, as the provision was brilliant and the challenges of staffing did not come across into the classroom.

The Headteacher reported that the Y1 Phonics screening check would be taking place in the second week after half term. Phonics was a valuable skill that supported reading as it helped pupils to decode words. In Reading, 61% of pupils in Y1 were at expected standard or above, and some pupils who were working towards expected standard would still pass their Phonics check. Staff had done practice Phonics assessments and were continuing to do interventions to get as may pupils to pass the check as possible. At the most recent mock test, only five out of 42 pupils had not reached the pass mark. This showed progress from the first mock when 18 pupils had not reached the pass threshold. There had been a lot of targeted intervention and whole class learning, and there had been no additional adult relied on for the targeted interventions. The focus on Reading gave capacity to address gaps with those not on track. Most pupils who were not currently reaching the pass threshold were not far off it. The Head of School added that if five pupils did not pass Phonics, the figure would be an 88% pass rate.

A governor asked if there had been a drop in data from previous years. The Headteacher confirmed there was a downward trend for two reasons. Some pupils could not consistently display meeting the target, which would be reflected in the accuracy of teacher assessment, and more clarity was needed on what the end of Y1 Reading criteria was. It was hard to compare with previous years, as each cohort was different. With the incoming Assistant Headteacher for KS1 in September was the opportunity for CPD (Continuing Professional Development) as they were experienced in KS1 moderation and could help guide and support staff to get the clarity

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needed.

A governor asked about Maths in Y1. The Headteacher confirmed that it was lower than previous years and suggested that CPD on assessment for Y1 was needed in all subjects as staff were cautious about what level they placed pupils if they did not know everything. There were Maths booklets used and consideration of how it was delivered and if it was age-appropriate work was necessary, although testing would show whether standards were being maintained and what pupils actually knew. Across the school there had been reflection on the Maths scheme used, White Rose, which while good in some ways was very worksheet heavy.

Sarah Murray stepped out at 6:36pm

Some pupils who may struggled with Reading may be good at Maths. The Maths scheme was good at showing multiple methods when used from Y1 to Y6, however this may be causing confusion and did not support pupils with additional needs as having too many ways to answer a problem added to cognitive load. Staff were looking how to continue to use it but strip it back to what school knows is high quality teaching. Both new Assistant Headteachers were Maths Lead in their current schools, and this gave an opportunity to use this expertise to focus on Maths next year. Y6 outcomes of Maths were often positive but there had been some confusion about methods used, so if it was embedded from Y1 this would be better.

A governor asked if the dip in autumn term had been expected. The Headteacher explained that it was a normal pattern, as pupils started to work towards the end of that year's expectations following reaching the expectations of the previous year. This was when teaching and learning reviews were used to check that progress was happening.

A governor asked, in regard to lower KS2, why, if data remained strong, the statement and spring term data did not align. The Headteacher suggested that the cautious data did not reflect ongoing work and what she had seen. The Co-Headteachers had met to talk about the disparity of what was seen in class and the data, which had moved to point in time data, with where pupils were at currently rather than predictions for end of the year. The Co-Headteachers had wondered if the broad assessment of data meant that the true data picture was not seen until the end of the year.

Sarah Murray returned at 6:43pm

A governor asked whether in-year assessment was doing what was needed to inform the data. The Headteacher shared that there were the same conversations happening every half term, and it was unclear that assessment was being used to underpin knowledge of where pupils were. There was a focus on narrative rather than data.

A governor asked whether there could be comparison data from previous years to map regular dips. The Headteacher agreed this should be considered, noting that staff used an assessment data tracking platform which could track cohorts up the school and look at their historical data. The current format of reporting termly data had evolved to include the narrative so could be changed to improve oversight of actual data.

A governor noted that there should be evidence of work under the data that the Headteacher could review to identify trends and whether assessment was effective. The Headteacher explained that there had been some changes in assessments, for example in Maths using White Rose Scheme end of unit tests. Objectives for year groups had not changed though, so comparison would work, and consideration would be given as to how data reporting was done by staff.

The Headteacher, in regard to Upper KS2, reported that SATs had taken place the previous week, with pupils rising to the challenge. Pupils always tried their best, which was all staff could ask for. Pupils had been well prepared, as it was known that some may struggle with the pressure of formal testing, so doing a lot of interventions and test preparation meant they knew how it worked and the expectations. There had been moments of fun during the week to take the pressure off. Helen Floyd, UKS2 lead, had created a comprehensive plan for SATs around

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accessibility arrangements of extra time, scribes, and breaks.
A governor asked if the SATs papers ad been okay. The Headteacher thought they had been reasonable on the whole. In the past, the Reading paper had been difficult, with even adults not necessarily getting some of it. The Y6 cohort had been one of the most affected by covid as they had been in EYFS during lockdown, with another term lost in Y1. This meant a lot of key foundation skills had been missed and staff had been playing catch up ever since.
A governor asked if all Y6 pupils had sat the tests. The Headteacher reported that one pupil had been disapplied, although it had been hoped they would attend. However, it was clear the week before the tests that the pupil would likely not be in school, despite support and encouragement to attend. The pupil had high needs and Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) issues.
The Headteacher reported that the school would not be moderated for Writing this year. There was a staff member who was on the local authority's moderation team, which was useful.
A governor asked if there was a pattern to being moderated. The Headteacher explained that there were some things that made moderation more likely, such as a change in Headteacher or new Y6 staff, with both of these happening the previous year. There was an ECT (Early Careers Teacher) in Y6 this year but the stability following changes the previous year and having an experienced moderator on the team, meant the school was less likely to need moderation. Moderation last year had shown marking to be accurate, and staff had been well prepared to show evidence of why they had marked at that level. The system and team, which included the involvement of SLT (Senior Leadership Team) had been praised. The local authority had been satisfied that marking was consistent, and staff were skilled at it.

The Head of School, who was the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) talked about SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) data, which while difficult to track as it was not a stable cohort, had many positives. There had been movement from working towards to expected standard in Writing and Reading, with the support put in place making an impact. There was always room for improvement, so staff would keep scaffolding to ensure pupils could access work at all times and this enabled access to the whole curriculum. Pupils with complex needs were below the standards and had 1:1 teaching assistant support, which then impacted on other pupils with needs that did not have support from a general teaching assistant anymore.
There were 14 EHCP (Education, Health and Care plan) pupils in school. The Nest provision was successful, with five pupils with SEMH (Social, Emotional, and Mental Health) needs who had moved from working towards to expected standard across the board. Provision for KS1 pupils would be added next half term.
A governor asked if pupils from the Nest provision would reintegrate back into the classroom. The Head of School explained that there was a plan for September, with four of the five pupils going back into the classrooms for Maths but would stay in the Nest for Reading. There was a benefit of pupils moving back into their classes and being with their peers. The Head of School explained that parents were supported with the decision to move pupils back into the classroom, while there were others who wanted their child to remain in the Nest. By moving pupils back into the classroom this would help bridge the gap before the transition to secondary school.
In response to a governor's question, the Head of School reported that KS1 had some pupils with high needs who may always be in the Nest provision. The Headteacher added that there was the opportunity for other staff to work in the Nest, so pupils were not tied to one adult, and there would be an umbrella of provision. The Nest served two different purposes, with KS1 provision looking different to KS2.
A governor raised the concern of how pupils would cope at secondary school if they stayed in the Nest for most of their primary school education. The Headteacher replied that the SENCO had evolved the Nest provision to reflect the needs of pupils. At this point, full time provision

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for the KS1 pupils was needed, although this would be reviewed for next year and it was hoped that more time would be spent in the classroom. There were risks with sense of belonging and potentially being isolated from others, however the high levels of need seen meant that pupils were already isolated from the classroom and peers.

A governor asked if these pupils would usually be placed in specialist provision. The Headteacher replied that they would, however there were no spaces available. Parents were still applying for specialist provision, however, with the government's SEND white paper, there was a push to keep these pupils in mainstream provision, and it was not necessarily a fix. There was some funding from the local authority which could potentially help support pupils with high needs, as there was no way to expand existing specialist provisions in the city. The Head of School explained that the Nest provision currently only ran in the mornings until lunchtime, so the afternoons had pupils in their home classrooms, and this would be the same for KS1 pupils as it encouraged peer relationships. The school had applied to be part of an Inclusion Hub with the local authority, and it was hoped a response would be received about it soon.

A governor asked if this would include funding. The Headteacher explained there was funding that would need to be spent by December and was not to be spent on staffing. The local authority briefing had not had enough information shared about funding the funding amount and while the funds could be spent on the provision it still needed staff to support it and to support access to mainstream. There had been some training identified around inclusion but there were concerns as to how one person with a class of 30 pupils could implement adaptive learning while dealing with pupils with complex needs, which could be challenging and destructive. That was not to lay the blame with pupils but was the reality as a teacher to manage pupils alone while trying to keep the rest of the class safe and learning.

In response to a governor's question, the Head of school explained that the Nest had been running for 18 months and was run by teaching assistants but needed a teacher to support.

A governor asked what measures were used to indicate success. The Head of School reported that there had been increased level of attendance, moving fomr 36% to above 80%. Achievement data was also moving from working below, to working towards, and was moving to expected standard. There had been challenges with pupil behaviour, but the overall data showed that the provision was working.

A governor asked if there was a change in intent of use for the Nest provision. The Headteacher explained that when it was first established it had been to support a variety of concerns, however some pupils had improved attendance, and some had moved from feeling anxious and unsafe and had moved back into the classroom. There were case studies for each pupil in the provision.

The Chair suggested that a section be added about the Nest to the report.

Molly Costello stepped out at 7:14pm

The Headteacher highlighted that there was a crossover of SEND and Pupil Premium (PP). There was some positive movement in the PP data due to whole staff high quality first teaching and expectations, using small steps and cold calling with identified pupils from the target children document. These pupils were getting what they needed to move forward on a daily basis and would then be looked at for add interventions in a coordinated approach. Staff knew the target pupils well, knew what progress that were making, and were considering what could be done to support them beyond the classroom.

Molly Costello returned at 7:15pm

Some pupils received support from social services and could have challenging circumstances, so having these pupils in to offer small bits of support was beneficial for all. The data was moving forward but as it was a small group in school it needed the big picture of support.

A governor noted that it would be an area of challenge from Ofsted and asked if there was evidence to show the gaps closing. The Headteacher replied that an advantage of having a small cohort of PP pupils meant case studies could be completed. There was a document that drilled

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	into data during the year and ensured that it looked below the surface at what level a pupil was working at and whether enough progress was being made. **A governor asked how that was being evidenced.** The Headteacher replied that when looking at the new Ofsted framework it was a known area of challenge as PP outcomes were not as good as expected. The cohort was too small to be on the IDSR (Inspection Data Summary Report) so having the documentation that sat behind it was key. **A governor asked if that information could be shared at the next meeting.** The Headteacher agreed that it was something that could be shared, which would take work to anonymise, and having regular updates on it would give governors oversight. **ACTION:** Share data evidence for vulnerable pupils' progress.	
4.	**Inclusion** (including behaviour and attendance) *Previously distributed: HT report to FGB.* This item had recently been reported to the full governing board.	
5.	**Policies** None tabled.	
6.	**Any Other Urgent Business** There was no other business to report.	
7.	**Determination of confidential items** There were no items to be recorded as confidential.	
8.	**Date and time of next meetings** To be arranged.	
	The meeting ended at 7:25pm	

These minutes were approved at the Standards and Effectiveness Committee meeting On 16th September 2026.

Action Plan following the Meeting of the Standards and Effectiveness Committee held on 19th May 2026				
	Action	**Item**	**Person**	**Date**
1.	Share data evidence for vulnerable pupils' progress.	3.	HT	Next meeting

Items for next Committee meeting

Items for next FGB

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