



Education Committee Meeting - Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday 22nd January 2026
Meeting Venue: Teams
Meeting Time: 5:15pm

Governors: Lea Owen, *(LO)*, Committee Chair
Joyce Swann, *(JSw)*, Committee Vice Chair
Eddie Erasmus, *(EE)*
Gabrielle Mace, *(GM)*
Nicoleta Uzorka Ion, *(NUI)*
Katharine Paradas, *(KP)*

Also in attendance: Tom Addems, *(AH-I)*, Assistant Head – Inclusion
Vickie Jenkins, *(HOS)*, Head of Secondary
Rebecca McGuinness, *(AAH-P)* Associate Assistant Head - Primary
Dominic O’Driscoll, *(DH-QE)*, Deputy Head – Quality of Education
Helen Punter-Bruce, *(HOP)*, Head of Primary
Danny Simmonds, *(AH-PD)*, Assistant Head – Personal Development
Sam Lougham, *(AHP-PSEN)*, Assistant Head Primary – Pastoral & SENCo

Clerk to Governors: Rif Aslam (RA)

Apologies: C Bull *(CBu)*, J Graffham *(JGr)*, R Thornhill *(RT)*

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Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair welcomed Governors & SLT to this ‘virtual’ Education Committee via Teams. • Chair accepted apologies for absence from CBu, RT & JGr. • Chair welcomed back JGr & looked forward to seeing her next time. • Chair welcomed SLo as the new AHP- PSEN. 	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interests Jsw declared familial interest with Company mentioned on Page 76.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of previous Education Committee Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair confirmed that previous Committee Minutes were signed off at December FGB. 	
4.	<p>Head Teacher’s Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Summaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Behaviour and Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary - AAH-P advised that overall instances have decreased. There is no discrepancy between vulnerable and non-vulnerable students. Playground skills being embedded. Boys do have slightly higher behaviour issues, specifically Year 5. Working with TASS to improve this. Curriculum being reviewed to address engagement levels. Positive trend overall. • Secondary – AH-I referred to papers and highlighted lowest suspension rate locally. Aspire points being awarded equitably across cohorts. Behaviour calm and generally good but area of focus is Attitude to Learning. Data on transfers allows us to see which subjects are requesting more transfers and which staff are requesting transfers the most so that we can look to provide behaviour management support strategies. HOS advised the data for the term equates to just 7% where transfers are requested. This is a small percentage of students. <p>Governor asked where students are sent when transferred. AH-I advised that they go to a room on a relocation timetable. Either he or Head of Year oversee them, allow them time to regulate their emotions and have that conversation.</p> <p>Governor queried if it is the same few students. AH-I advised that it is generally the same 5 or 6 in a Year Group who often have complex reasons for avoidance.</p> <p>Governor noted that Maths & Music have the most transfers. HOS advised that Music is led by an ECT and we are supporting that teacher.</p> <p>Chair noted spike in behaviour is caused by core group who are boys, PP and SEN. AH-I advised generally the same core students. They do tend to come from those disadvantaged backgrounds. A lot of it is avoidance and can be because they find the work difficult. We are therefore working with them to identify and overcome barriers to learning. HOS added that we do have to ensure that the transfers are done in a timely manner to avoid disrupting learning of others.</p> <p>Governor remarked that she was in school last week and found behaviour impeccable. Positive learning environment in both phases.</p> <p>Governor enquired what the strategies were for SEN students. AH-I advised that we have Support Profiles with the strategies that work for that student. Staff are expected to read these Profiles and understand that every student is different. Inclusion briefings take place with latest updates on each student. For example, they may have had a bereavement. Students need clear boundaries and standards. AAH-P added that Primary also mirrors Secondary with weekly Pastoral meetings and working closely with parents to support students in the classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attendance and Persistent Absentees – AH-PD advised that ESCC have begun working with our lower attendees. National issue with flu and virus affecting figures. Our attendance is still higher than the national average. 	

Chair asked if the illness level has also affected staff. HOS advised that there has been an impact in the last 2 weeks. External cover has had to be used and will impact budget.

Governor questioned rise in number of unauthorised absences for holidays. AH-PD advised that it's an upward trend seen nationally since Covid. HOS added that some of it has been for funerals or weddings overseas.

- Safeguarding – HOS referred to paper and invited questions.

Chair noted increase in figures in November and December. HOS explained that this is likely to be the way incidences have been logged during DSL's absence.

Chair remarked rise in eating disorders. HOS advised that we are taking the lead from medical practitioner and supporting the child and parents as much as we can.

VC thanked the Enterprise Committee for agreeing to fund another day of counselling.

- Inclusion – AH-I referred to papers and highlighted:
 - Primary – KS1 data presents concerns in learning. These are being addressed with targeted phonics, comprehension and maths in small group teaching. EAL support also in place have all led to improvements. KS2 - positive outcomes have been identified.
 - Secondary – focusing on targeted support for PP students. CPD focus on barriers to learning. Introduced a dedicated PP Progress Mentor as well as a neuroscience based coaching programme to strengthen confidence.

Governor noted low numbers of PP students in Reception, Years 1-5 then from Year 6 there is a 20% rise. Is this because parents don't know that they can apply? HOP advised that parent's need to be educated about this and regular communications will be sent out on this subject. DH-QE added that government now say that free school meals will no longer be linked to PP funding.

Chair queried what constitutes PP funding. DH-QE advised that entitlement to free school meals used to be link to school receiving PP funding to support the child. It will now just be based on whether they receive tax credits.

Chair praised amount of support being provided for SEN students and asked how impact is assessed. AH-I advised in Secondary attendance, and engagement is monitored during interventions. At the end of the term, staff will produce an impact report with comments on what worked and what did not. HOP advised that Primary have regular interventions across the board for variety of needs and run more holistic sessions with ELSA and Nurture.

Chair noted that evaluation of impact data seems student specific.

- Personal Development – AH-PD highlighted relaunch of House competitions and assemblies. Proud of student leaders and key priorities. Focus on a value every term and wrap it around a big event. Looking to support more students to attend extra-curricular events. New statutory guidance out on Careers. Looking to get our percentages up with support from a Pilot Project.

Governor enquired how student leadership skills are being developed. AH-PD advised that student leaders have been invited to participate in a community project in Willington and the development of the Fort Fun site on the seafront. Planning visit to Parliament too.

Governor asked if all SEN students are able to take part in trips and extra-curricular clubs. AH-PD advised that there is funding for them to participate. They are funded for trips that are £50 and under. They are given the opportunity to take up places on extra-curricular activities 2 days before the rest of students. HOP advised that in Primary all the children have access to trips and we risk assess what it needed to allow all students them to participate. Clubs are tricky as these don't have funding. They are provided by external agencies. We do make sure that there is a process in place for parents to liaise with the clubs about their child's special needs.

- Progress and Attainment – AAH-P highlighted additional grade on tables. Also added developing section. AP1 presents slightly differently than before. Focus on end of year predictions. We are confident these predictions are much more secure with the additional data we have. For KS3 DH-QE added that there is a system to target support where it is needed. Data is now pulled from multiple sources. Parents have appreciated the information. We have faith in the data being accurate. This was an aspect in the Ofsted report.

	<p>Chair expressed pleasure in the link with what Ofsted said and what we're now doing. AAH-P advised that a positive picture is emerging for Year 6. Whole school initiatives on writing. Introducing targeted interventions using the data. This has had a impact already. Pixel being used for first time for Year 6.</p> <p>DH-QE explained that Year 11 data contains both benchmark and predicted from November. Colleagues report that moving in the right direction and are optimistic about reaching 80% on 4+ grades. Longer term focus will be on 5+. Second Mock exam cycle will begin in the first week of next term.</p> <p>Chair asked whether these mocks will be on all subjects. DH-QE confirmed they were.</p> <p>Governor queried status of English Department. DH-QE advised that the department is more settled this year with a full team. Now have Faculty Head who is making changes. English language results are positive. More confidence with data this year. We do have continued external consultant support with assessments. HOS added that anecdotally students appear equally confident in Maths and English.</p> <p>VC noted emphasis in data on High Prior Attainers (HPAs) and asked if their activities available to other students as well. DH-QE advised that every lesson should have green boxes to stretch the HPAs. These are available to everyone. HOS explained we now have KS3 (Year7) data identifying HPA students not on track so that we can intervene earlier.</p> <p>VC asked if there is an emphasis on HPAs in Primary too. AAH-P said we do look at it. DH-QE added that you will see in the next report that we are combining Inclusion and Quality of Education Teams and identifying barriers to learning for every single student not just SEN.</p> <p>Governor commended work being done by all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Inclusion Newsletter Autumn 2025 <p>Chair commended paper. It demonstrates impressive and caring work being done.</p> <p>Governors echoed praise.</p>	
5.	<p>Admissions Chair of Admissions shared information on applicant numbers and Marketing Strategy.</p>	
6.	<p>Monitoring Chair confirmed governors assigned to each SDP target. Chair encouraged governors to arrange their visits.</p>	
7.	<p>Any other urgent business Chair confirmed there was none.</p>	
8.	<p>Confirmation of future Governor Meeting Dates for 2025/2026</p> <p>FULL GOVERNING BOARD: 26th March 2026 2nd July 2026</p> <p>EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 14th May 2026</p> <p>ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE: 12th February 2026 11th June 2026</p>	
	<p>Meeting Closed Chair thanked governors and SLT and closed the meeting at 18:45 hrs.</p>	