

**Whitby School
GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

Minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2026 at 6.00pm at the Airy Hill site

Governors Present	Richard Fluin (RF) Jane Mortimer (JM) Ian Parkin (IP) Mark Taylor (MT) Dave Rae (DR) Michelle Waters (MW)	Co-opted Governor (Chair) Co-opted Co-op Governor Parent Governor Co-opted Governor Staff Governor Parent Governor
Apologies	Phillip Trumper (PT) Jonathan Britton (JB)	Governor Executive Lead
Absent with no apologies		
In attendance	David Perry (DP) Julie Caddell (JEC) Susan Boyd (SB) Gary Sheen (GS) Amy Clarkson (AC) Esther Quinn (EQ) Luke Sloman (LS) Gareth Davies (GD)	Headteacher Head of School Deputy Headteacher Executive Team Staff member Staff member Executive Team Executive Team
Name of Clerk	Christine Thomas (CT)	
SCHOOL VISION and VALUES	It is important to ensure that all decisions that are made are in line with the schools' vision and strategic direction.	
CORE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined • that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school • the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources. 	
Item		Record Actions

The meeting commenced at 6.08pm		
	Procedural	
1	<u>Welcome</u> The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.	
2	<u>Apologies for absence</u> Phillip Trumper had given his apologies which governors consented to. Jonathan Britton had also sent apologies for the meeting. The meeting was quorate.	

3	<p><u>Declaration of interests and reminder of governor protocol</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest to note.</p>	
4	<p><u>Confidentiality</u></p> <p>Chair reminded governors of confidentiality.</p> <p>There were no confidential items.</p>	
5	<p><u>Chair's Update</u></p> <p>RF informed governors that the Governance Report had not yet been received from Aishling Robinson, Senior Education Adviser, North Yorkshire Council.</p>	
6	<p><u>Confirmation of the Minutes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidential minutes of 1st July 2025 • Minutes of 23rd September 2025 • Confidential Minutes of 23rd September 2025 • Minutes of 25th November 2025 (including Sub Cttees and Link Governor attachment) • Confidential minutes of 25th November 2025 • Minutes of 19th December 2025 <p>The minutes of the above meetings were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. The Clerk to submit the minutes for publication on the school website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Committee of 15th December 2025 <p>Hard copy of these minutes was amended by the Clerk in relation to attendees and absences and then approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. The Clerk to submit the corrected version of the minutes to the school.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
7	<p><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes of 23rd September 2025:</u></p> <p>5.8 Governance Strategic Plan – Chair to Discuss the plan with Wonder Learning Trust in the context of academisation. Clerk to include on the next meeting Agenda.</p> <p>11. Care and Ethos – Governors agreed to set up a schedule of monitoring visits to the school. Chair to organise.</p> <p>16. Governors received a question about the cost of the buses to school. GD to send the school's response to IP via email. This is of value to do and look at the new applicants and take to the next meeting</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>Resolved</p>

	<p>18. Clerk to circulate draft calendar of FGB meetings.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes of 25th November 2025:</u></p> <p>5.3 That Finance Committee take place on 15th December 2025.</p> <p>13.3 Item on Place2be deferred to the meeting of 20.1.26 (GD)</p> <p>7.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. Clerk to submit the minutes for publication on school website.</p> <p>7.2 In relation to the confidential minutes of 1st July 2025 and 23rd September 2025, the Clerk to circulate these to governors for amendment/approval.</p> <p>7.3 The minutes of 23rd September were deferred to the next FGB meeting on 20th January 2026.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes of 19th December 2025:</u></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	<p>Resolved</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>Resolved</p>
School Improvement		
8	<p><u>Introductions</u> Introductions by Wonder Learning Partnership of David Perry, Executive Headteacher, Whitby School and Luke Sloman, new Chief Operating Officer.</p>	
9	<p><u>DfE and Ofsted</u> Spring 1 – DfE Ofsted Update included in the pack and presented by David Perry (DP).</p>	
9.1	<p>Current landscape for education policy In relation to the presentation, DP explained the broader landscape including inspections and the role of leadership and governance of the school including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RISE Framework (Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence), DP explained the government’s five missions highlighting the Break Down Barriers to Opportunity. • Opportunity Mission highlights the need for every child achieving and thriving, which is being driven by the government. • Big picture from the DfE (Department for Education) – variations were significant within regions including in Yorkshire. Most schools achieve between a grade 4 and a grade 5. Looking at children within schools, the spread becomes more vast. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking in more detail, in relation to attainment, those who were disadvantaged were those for instance that were SEND and social care which is indicative within schools around the country. Looking at Whitby School, there is wide variation just like the other school results. Attainment outcomes have gone backwards since Covid and not recovered ie white British boys and white British girls who were the most affected by the pandemic. They are the most vulnerable to the shift in attainment outcomes. This then has an impact on health and wellbeing once they leave school. Issue of enjoyment and belonging in school can be easy to get wrong by a school. Sharp drop in engagement in KS3 – national picture. <p>Question: Governors asked whether this correlates to Whitby School as well.</p> <p>Answer: GD responded that the well-being study was looked at last year particularly in relation to young girls and there is an understanding that these challenges exist in the school and the school is working to improve this.</p> <p>9.2 Revised Ofsted Framework</p> <p>The Framework looks very different to the old system with a toolkit approach and DP explained this in detail. It has a focus on inclusion and there is likely to be an inspector visiting the school and involved in case sampling ie following children through the day. The focus is looking at barriers within schools.</p> <p>Question: In relation to a strengthen focus on inclusion, governors asked whether this included the personal development and well-being of its staff as well as pupils.</p> <p>Answer: DP responded that it would.</p> <p>9.3 Toolkits</p> <p>The DfE will be introducing Toolkits including items to be evaluated by Ofsted. Starting with the expected standard which would be evaluated first, DP explained how the new system would work.</p> <p>No overall judgement – instead schools will get a report card, DP showed an example of this.</p> <p>Inspections – now happening and reports are being published on the Ofsted website every day.</p> <p>Whitby School Senior Leadership Team is going through the process of self-evaluation against the new framework.</p> <p>Question: Governors asked whether the governance set up needed to be adjusted to link in with these, for instance whether there needed to be an Inclusion Link Governor.</p> <p>Answer: Governors felt that inclusion was within JM’s remit and agreed that she act as Inclusion Link Governor.</p>	
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<p>9.4</p>	<p>Governor Comment: Our framework is under review with a view to becoming a more value driven framework.</p> <p>GD stated that positivity came through in the SEF (School Evaluation Form) but it was important to emphasise leadership due to the work that the governors have put in.</p> <p>GD thanked the Parent Framework for their wonderful work which they run themselves.</p> <p>Overview of Current Support Julie Cadell (JC) stated that there has been external support from Aishling Robinson, LA Senior Advisor who has been visiting the school to offer support and conducting monitoring visits. Support has also been offered by the Attendance and Behaviour Hub which to date has been collaborative working with another local school which is positive. DP felt it would be beneficial to focus support and align it to what we are seeking for the school to manage pressures on senior leadership and staff.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>Teaching JC focussed on the department led CPD (Continuing Professional Development) circle in relation to the Teaching and Learning Toolkit. Teams have been working to learn from each other in relation to good practice and she has been working on a Teaching and Learning Bulletin. She has also been looking at literacy and staff training, the instructional framework and how we use the language of the 6P's .</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>Ethos</p> <p>In relation to the culture of praise and enrichment at the school, JC and David Rae (DR) spoke about this issue including rewarding students across the five year groups. Looking at attendance, some students have improved their attendance by 50%.</p> <p>Item 11.1 to 11.3 taken under item 13.</p>	
<p>12</p>	<p>Achievement Year 11 -13 outcomes to be tabled with relevant at Education Outcomes Sub-Committee on 26th January 2026. The Sub-Committee would look at the curriculum learning journeys and these would be in the Parent Newsletter so that parents could become familiar with what their children are learning.</p> <p>Susan Boyd (SB) reported that Science will be the next Learning Journey shared with parents. This Friday will be the next deadline.</p> <p>Governor Comment: RF stated that the extra outreach provided by the school has been noted and appreciated.</p>	

13	<p>Care Information in relation to suspensions and attendance were included in the pack.</p>	
13.1	<p>Attendance (Deferred from item 11.3) In relation to attendance, JC reported that this has not significantly changed since four weeks ago but has dropped slightly. The attendance data showed 89.2% and now is 88.8%</p> <p>The number of persistently absent is still too high. Severely absent – 50 students, majority of absence is due to illness. Headline figures have not moved very much and the intervention is the same from members of staff. JC will come back to look at the impact of procedures at the next meeting.</p> <p>Question: Governors asked whether these children categorised and is this measured. Answer: JC replied that we know who the children are and there is a team with knowledge related to each individual child.</p> <p>Question: Governors asked whether the school aligns with educational outcomes in relation to attendance ie is there a clear correlation between a child’s lack of attendance and exam results when they finish school. Answer: JC responded that this was the case but perhaps there should be more displays in school to emphasise this.</p> <p>Question: Governors asked whether the bad weather had had a negative impact on attendance. Answer: JC responded that the recent snow/ice and particularly the ice on the footpath had had a significant impact.</p>	<p>FGB 24.3.26</p>
13.2	<p>Suspensions (deferred from Item 11.1) JC has been working with young people to address behaviours and their feeling of belonging.</p> <p>In relation to the figures provided in the documentation, the highest figure related to persistent disruptive behaviour, however, although this is still concerning, there has been a reduction to this number.</p> <p>Question: Governors commented on the physical assault figure being quite high. Answer: JC responded that there was a decrease on last year but the school is working with pupils to decrease further.</p> <p>Question: The governors noted that the pupil against pupil figure had gone down but enquired as to why the figure had increased against adults. Answer: JC responded that verbal abuse against adults has increased. DP stated that they are working with pupils to ensure that they understood the consequences of their actions.</p>	

<p>13.3</p>	<p>Question: Governors questioned whether staff had seen a general improvement in behaviour overall. Answer: DP felt there had been a massive improvement due in part to the new fencing and also the implementation of a one-way system in corridors.</p> <p>Exclusions (deferred from item 11.2) In relation to permanent exclusions, one permanent exclusion student was upheld by governors on 10th December 2025. There were no recommendations for the Governing Board in relation to this matter.</p>	
<p>14</p>	<p>Holistic Deferred to next Full Governing Board meeting on 24th March 2026.</p>	
<p>15</p>	<p>Finance and Operations Budget Monitoring Report to December 2025 included in the pack.</p> <p>GS explained that the start budget for the year assumed an in-year deficit of £88.7k. The autumn term revised budget projects an in-year surplus of £66.8k - an improvement of £155.5k.</p> <p>The forecast year end reserve is £579.7k which is 6.9% of income, which is above the 5% reserve expected for a well managed school.</p> <p>LS stated that pupil numbers are projected to fall in the coming years and that the school were working on a strategy with Wonder Learning which they will present to governors at a later meeting.</p> <p>GS updated that the budget showed that in three years there would be a positive reserve but he would work to come back with more specific proposals.</p> <p>JC reported that in relation to the budget for Place2be Council service in school, the Council has given us a reduction in that the same amount is in the start budget as last year so will cost an additional £7988 for the next financial year. There is a breakdown in the November pack. JC emphasised that in relation to pastoral care, there are issues with children who self-harm and very little outside help for them. The school has made enquiries of the NHS Wellbeing in Mind Team but this Team is not operating in this area yet.</p> <p>JC expressed her concerns about reducing this service.</p> <p>MT proposed that the school maintain this as the cost to pupils will be greater than to cut it.</p> <p>Resolved: Vote carried unanimously to retain this service by allocating £7988 in the next financial year.</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p>

<p>16</p>	<p><u>Safeguarding</u> Safeguarding Incident Reports (after 3.9.25 and before 9.1.25) included in the pack.</p> <p>JC stated that the Safeguarding Action Plan and Monitoring Monthly documents that support the Action Plan were regularly checked and that the signing in of visitors was checked on a weekly basis.</p> <p>In relation to security, the back gate on site is checked at least three times a week to ensure it is locked.</p> <p>There were still ongoing concerns about the upper site security including a recent incident where a delivery driver got lost. Action was taken very quickly by the school. A risk assessment was undertaken and a drop box is to be secured on site for delivery drivers to use. Although there is CCTV and fencing, additional signage has been erected and all delivery drivers will be met by the site team. In relation to the upper school site, visitors including parents will be met by staff at the gate and brought into reception until at least Easter but parents will be kept informed.</p> <p>In relation to CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System), Year 7 to Year 11 and protected characteristics (which assists with trends for the action plan – there is no record of significant increases.</p> <p>Question: Governors expressed concern about the speed of traffic on the main road particular on the bend leading to the school. Answer: DP responded that these concerns were considered weekly (every Monday) and would continue to be monitored.</p>	
<p>17</p>	<p><u>Health and Safety</u> Update on extreme weather closure/response by JC in relation to the week commencing Monday, 5th January 2025.</p> <p>Monday was a staff training day and as such this was conducted online instead of site based. In relation to Tuesday, following liaison with local primary school Headteachers, it was decided not to open. Following consideration in relation to staffing and bus availability, the School opened on Wednesday. Staff members managed to get into school. The on-site staff worked hard to grit school footpaths.</p> <p>The MPs office was contacted in relation to gritting of pavements/pathways in the locality.</p> <p>Comment: Governors commented that the biggest complaint during this time was about buses.. Answer: SD responded that all bus companies had her telephone number in case of emergencies and that this particular bus company had apologised for not getting in touch.</p> <p>8.15pm - Staff left the meeting at this point (AC, EQ and DR) also DP, LS and GS left.</p> <p>The meeting was still quorate.</p>	

<u>Other Matters</u>		
18	<p><u>Policies for Approval</u> Governors received the following documents which were included in the pack:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Code of Conduct 2. Policy Change Summary Sheet (Code of Conduct) 3. Sixth Form Admissions Policy 4. P16 Behaviour Code 5. Managing Allegations and Low Level Concerns Policy – December 2025 6. KS5 Student Retention 7. Internet Policy 8. Equality Information and Objectives Policy 9. Data Protection Policy 10. Education Visits Policy <p>All policies have been approved.</p>	
19	<p><u>Report from the Finance and Resources Committee</u></p>	
19.1	Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee included in the pack – there were no further comments.	
19.2	Wonder Learning to investigate whether any funding for the school would be available from Woodsmith Mine.	ASAP
20	<p><u>Update following Parent Forum (IP)</u></p> <p>Ian provided an update on the meeting of the Parent Forum.</p> <p>9 parents attended, 3 apologies. 3 SLT attended.</p> <p>We carried out a SWOT analysis which lead to a helpful discussion.</p>	
21	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>The governors agreed to give delegated authority to RF and MT to authorise the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with Wonder Learning.</p>	
22	<p><u>Confidential Items</u></p> <p>There were no confidential items.</p>	
22	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u> Monday, 23rd March 2026 at 6.00pm</p>	

Signed:.....
Chair of Governor

Dated:.....