

Whitby School GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2025, 6pm at the Airy Hill site

Governors Present	Brian Crosby (BC) Gareth Davies (GD) Jane Mortimer (JM) Ian Parkin (IP) Mark Taylor (MT) Richard Fluin (RF) Phillip Trumper (PT) Dave Rae (DR)	Co-opted Governor & Chair Headteacher Co-opted Governor Parent Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor LA Governor Staff Governor
Apologies from Governors	Michelle Waters (MW)	
Absent with no apologies		
In attendance	Jonathan Britton (JB) Gary Sheen (GS) Adele Pinder (AP) Susan Boyd (SB) Julie Caddell (JC) Esther Quinn (EQ) Amy Clarkson (AC) Christine Thomas (CT)	Executive Lead Executive Team Executive Team Deputy Headteacher Deputy Headteacher Staff member Staff member Guest
Name of Clerk	Dominika Jureczko (DJ)	
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
Procedural		

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1	<p><u>Welcome</u> Chair welcomed everyone and clerk introduced CT.</p>	
2	<p><u>Apologies for absence</u> Apologies were received from MW and these were consented to. The meeting was quorate.</p>	
3	<p><u>Declaration of interests and reminder of governor protocol</u> There were no declarations made.</p>	
4	<p><u>Confidentiality</u> The Chair reminded governors of the need to maintain confidentiality.</p>	

Governance and Chair's report

5.1 Chair's report

BC informed the governors that this was his last meeting as Chair of Governors as he was planning to step down at the end of the academic year.

The following dates for meetings were agreed:

- 21st September 2025 at 6:00 pm,
- 25th November 2025 at 6:00 pm.

Further dates will be established once new Chair is elected.

Governors agreed to offer a standing invite to Governing Body meetings to Esther Quinn and Amy Clarkson over the next academic year.

Succession planning and potential candidates to take over as Chair were discussed.

Headteacher appointment

AP gave a report of the Headteacher appointment campaign. 10 applications were received, and 4 candidates shortlisted.

2-day process for interviews was proposed.

BC stressed that the Headteacher will be employed by WLP, not NYC. This is because if WS joins WLP, the Headteacher will be assigned to the school. The selection would not be ratified by the governing body of Whitby School, but WLP.

BC invited JB to discuss an alternative plan, should the recruitment be not successful. JB stressed that exceptional progress has been made since the school was created in September. From September, the next phase is an intensive school improvement. JB was keen to retain GD to steer school improvement and appoint a Head of School to take care of the school on the ground.

Governors agreed to appoint a Head of School from September should Headteacher recruitment be not successful.

Question: Governors enquired whether any governors' presence was required on the first day of interviews.

Answer: DG would confirm this, governors can meet the candidates over lunch on Monday.

JC declared interest as she was one of candidates.

	<p>Governors discussed the hours GD has put into leading the school and thanked him for his work and impact on the school.</p> <p>GD thanked the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) for their hard work.</p> <p>5.2 DR left the room for this item.</p> <p>Report from Pupil Discipline Committee meeting on 14th June 2025</p> <p>Governors received a report from the meeting of the Pupil Discipline Committee meetings to consider two cases of suspensions over 15 days in a term and one permanent exclusion.</p> <p><i>Confidential report.</i></p> <p>5.3 Review progress against Strategic Plan for Governance.</p> <p>Governors reviewed progress against strategic plan, including securing a Headteacher for the school after Christmas, and progress towards academisation.</p> <p>5.4 Review format of Headteacher's report.</p> <p>Governors were happy with the Headteacher report format.</p>	
6	<p><u>Confirmation of Minutes</u></p> <p>The minutes of meeting held on 20th May were agreed as accurate record, to be signed by the Chair.</p>	
7	<p><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes:</u> to consider matters arising from the minutes and for which there is no separate agenda item</p> <p>GD added the cinder track to his morning rotation. Duties have been assigned to cover that area.</p>	

8	<p><u>Academy status</u></p> <p>JB reported that WLP is in the process of completing the application form to convert to an academy, to be submitted by the end of academic year. In September WLP will conduct due diligence exercise. The results will be presented to the trustees who will make the final vote.</p> <p>Question: Governors enquired about the bridge at the end of the footpath.</p> <p>Answer: The bridge will not belong to the school. AP will have a meeting with Jon Holden about this. WLP will need more clarity around the bridge, this will be further investigated during the due diligence process.</p> <p>GD - The bridge came out as a result of an Information request, where the school discovered half the bridge belonged to the school. LA offered a free survey on the bridge.</p>	
	<p>Governors were concerned that money for children’s education could have to be spent on the upkeep of the bridge.</p> <p><u>Fencing</u></p> <p>The project has been approved, school to organise and then invoice NYC.</p> <p>Question: Governors enquired what the fence will do.</p> <p>Answer: The fencing is important to students’ safeguarding and road safety.</p> <p><u>Bus Layby</u></p> <p>WLP - this will be investigated by Jon Holden and WLP are hopeful that this will be funded by NYC.</p> <p>Possible alterations to reception area were discussed.</p>	
9	<p><u>Headteacher’s appointment</u></p> <p>This was discussed in previous item.</p>	

<p>10</p>	<p><u>Finance and operations</u></p> <p>10.1 Management accounts GS drew governors’ attention to Monthly accounts.</p> <p>10.2 School transport Change to transport policy made by the LA meant that students from some villages would have more difficulty accessing Whitby School. Governors made commitment to set up a fund to support this transport. GD got in touch with the LA. Several options were considered. GD recommended that a fund is created which will cover 60% of the bus cost for eligible families.</p> <p>Governors discussed the NYC policy, which was expecting a review in early 2026. Governors discussed train links and how they could be utilised by parents.</p> <p>"Whitby School Board 1st July 2025 Future Savings Options" document was presented. Governors discussed options for savings that might be needed if pupil numbers decline. General reserve forecast was presented, including assumptions for pupil numbers.</p>	
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	<p>Question: Governors enquired whether it was possible to reverse a trend of students going to other areas, like Scarborough UTC, instead of Whitby 6th Form.</p> <p>Answer: GD gave an overview of initiatives that could attract students, including enrichment events.</p> <p>Governors discussed the budget prediction position and possible future opportunities. <i>WLP staff left the meeting. The meeting was quorate.</i></p>	
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<p>11</p>	<p><u>Health and Safety</u></p> <p><u>11.1 Safeguarding, Estates & Compliance</u></p> <p>11.1 Governors received the report and noted that actions were being followed.</p>	
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12	<p><u>Big Conversation - Wonder Headteachers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture, Health and Wellbeing. • Technology, AI and the Metaverse. • Education beyond the formal curriculum 	
13	<p><u>Attendance</u></p> <p>JC highlighted action plan for attendance which was circulated with agenda papers.</p> <p>Question: Governors enquired whether the data presented was about this year 11 cohort, or historically year 11.</p> <p>Answer: It's historical, and possibly ties to stress around exams.</p> <p>It was noticed that nationally there was a declining trend, and Whitby is flatlining.</p> <p>JC presented how staff were tracking actions to improve individual students' attendance.</p> <p>Question: Governors enquired why attendance was so poor.</p> <p>Answer: Staff investigated why parents keep students at home. Main reasons were ill health and anxiety. Staff engage with families to improve students' attendance.</p> <p>" We're so glad you're here" campaign was running.</p> <p>Governor highlighted the importance of educating the parents around the importance of attendance.</p> <p>Question: Governors enquired why so many students were being anxious.</p> <p>Answer: JC explained that anxiety has become a much bigger part of our society. Resilience has become more important.</p>	
	Governors recognised that the attendance figures are not good.	
14	<p><u>Teaching</u></p> <p>SB updated governors that the new lesson observation form has been received positively by staff.</p> <p>Governors received an update on three department reviews and their results.</p>	

15	<p><u>Achievement</u></p> <p>Achievement</p> <p>GD prepared a booklet on pupil data for governors. It was noted that high achieving students, girls and Pupil Premium students were focus groups.</p> <p>Governors requested a copy of the wellbeing survey.</p> <p>GD highlighted the school will be measured purely on attainment, due to the pandemic and pupils not taking national tests in the past.</p>	GD
16	<p><u>Policies for approval</u></p> <p>16.1 Health and Safety</p> <p>16.2 Complaints</p> <p>All above policies were approved.</p>	
18	<p><u>Any other business</u></p> <p><u>Questions from the community</u></p> <p>A governor alerted governors to a request from the community for an emotional support dog at the school.</p> <p>Response: If someone could submit a formal proposal, governors will consider it.</p> <p>Proposal: Parents’ Day where they come into school to watch their children.</p> <p>Response: GD will consider this for the next year.</p> <p>Further questions from the community to be responded to by GD via email.</p> <p>Question about the capacity of the school (discrepancy in numbers) - GD will clarify which numbers refer to which data PAN (Published Admissions Number), currently on roll, or the maximum site capacity.</p>	
19	<p><u>Confidential items</u></p> <p>Item 5.2 was taken as a confidential minute.</p>	
20	<p><u>Calendar of meetings 2025/2026</u> To be decided.</p>	

The meeting was closed at 8:27 pm.