



OAKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL MINUTES of the GOVERNING BODY MEETING

HELD AT OAKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

2nd February 2026, 6:00-8:00pm

Name	Post	Attending	Apologies accepted	Apologies not received / not accepted
Governors				
Maria Whitmarsh (HT)	Headteacher	✓		
Rachel Gander (RG)	Trust Gov / Chair	✓		
Gemma Fawcitt (GF)	Staff Governor	✓		
Joe Crook (JC)	Co-opted Governor	✓		
Ben Hammond (BH)	Co-opted Governor	✓ (from 6:40)		
Jayanand Kumarguru (JK)	LA Governor			✓
Laurence Harding (LH)	Trust Governor	✓		
Amy Ryan (AR)	Parent Gov / ViceChair			✓
<i>Vacancy</i>	<i>Parent Governor</i>			
Other attendees				
Raylene Poppleton (RP)	Clerk	✓		
Quoracy - 50% of Governors (4)				

Actions arising from this meeting

Item		Action
2	Clerk to share training information for GF, JC and LH to complete by end of this term (23/03/26)	Clerk, GF, JC, LH
7/a	School to implement volunteers signing to say they understood the volunteer policy relating to IT.	HT
7/b	Safeguarding governor to arrange monitoring visit	BH
7/c	Clerk to contact the LA if JK induction training not completed before the end of half-term	Clerk
7/d	H&S monitoring visit required before Easter	GF, JC
8/a	HT and JC to work on using the current Monitoring Form Template to create a Google Form for governors to easily report into. To be ready for Governors in School week (02/03/2026)	HT, JC
8/b	IT Governor to review the website termly	AR
8/c	New SEF written in line with the new Ofsted framework to be presented at the next meeting.	HT

10.1/a	All governors to ask questions on the Headteacher's report for their link area in advance by at latest Thursday evening before the Monday meeting.	All
10.1/b	Arrange monitoring visit to look at application of wellbeing and disadvantaged pupils policies.	JC
10.1/c	Chair to send letter thanking the OSA for their fundraising	RG
10.1/d	Curriculum governor to arrange to meet with Phonics Lead	LH
10.1/e	All governors to look at Phonics during their visits in Governor In Schools Week.	All
11/a	Governors to meet during GIS week to agree responses in Safeguarding SEF	All
11/b	DSL information to be added to newsletters and feature more prominently on the website.	HT
13.3	Safeguarding governor to meet with Deputy HT on next visit to discuss the policy.	BH
15.2	H&S Governor to look at evacuation assembly points as part of their next visit.	GF/JC
18	Governors needed to set a date for a Pay Committee meeting	RG, HT, BH, AR

Minutes

Item		Action
1.	Welcome, apologies and absences.	
	<p>The Chair opened the meeting at 6:10pm and welcomed everyone. BH advised they would be late.</p> <p>In response to a question posed by governors as to the difference between apologies accepted or not, Governors discussed that the Governor Code of Conduct required governors to send apologies in advance of the meeting. It was agreed that governors who did not send apologies in advance of the start of the meeting, from this meeting going forwards, would be marked as not attending without apologies being accepted.</p> <p>Addendum: The Governance Regulations (2012) set out that any governors not attending for 6 months without apologies being accepted can be removed from office.</p>	
2.	Governor Appointments	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair confirmed the resignation of Abbie Foss as parent governor effective as of 07/01/2026 A parent governor election was taking place with 3 candidates. The closing date was 10th February. Governors had received information relating to the application of Laurence Harding to be appointed as a Trust Governor. LH left the room for governor discussions. <p>DECISION: Governors voted unanimously to APPOINT LH as Trust Governor for a term of 4 years starting 02/02/2026.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abbie Foss (AF) had agreed to be appointed as an associate governor on the Finance & Resources committee for their HR expertise. <p>DECISION: Governors voted unanimously to APPOINT AF as an Associate Governor to the F&R committee, with no voting rights, for a term of 4 years starting 02/02/2026</p> <p>Governors reviewed the current governor roles to take account of these appointment changes and other needs of the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LH appointed as link governor for Curriculum GF and JC to share the role of Estate Management/Health & Safety Governor RG to take over Board Development <p>Governors discussed the Role Specifications shared on the Governor Drive and were encouraged to use them in planning their monitoring. GF and JC were advised of the requirement to undertake H&S training. LH was advised to undertake governor induction training.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to share training information for GF, JC and LH to complete by end of this term (23/03/26)</p> <p>The Pay Committee was appointed at the last meeting and confirmed as RG, AR and BH for the record.</p>	Clerk, LH, GF, JC
3.	Declaration of Pecuniary/Business Interests	
	<p>Declarations had been received and added for LH.</p> <p>Governors confirmed the current declarations of interest were up to date. No governors had pecuniary/business interests to declare in this agenda.</p>	
4.	Items of Urgent Business	
	No items has been received.	
5.	Reflection	
	<p>The Headteacher asked governors to reflect on the question: <i>“How do we know every child truly belongs here—not just on paper, but in daily experience?”</i></p> <p>Governors responses included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors knew if children felt they had a key adult in school from asking about this on monitoring visits. Governors asked children who they would go to if struggling or wanted to talk to someone and they would normally say a teacher or TA. Governors felt the school offered a variety of opportunities for children to have something they felt they could achieve or show success in, including Forest School. 	
6.	Minutes of previous meetings	
	<p>The draft minutes of the FGB on 24/11/2025 were reviewed.</p> <p>DECISION: The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record by those present.</p>	

	The Chair's electronic signature was used to sign the minutes after the meeting and the final version filed in the meeting folder on the governor drive.	
7.	Matters Arising & Actions	
	Item 13.3 - Governors asked if the school had already implemented volunteers signing to say they understood the volunteer policy relating to IT.	
a	Action: HT to arrange for this to be implemented A safeguarding visit was due	HT
b	Action: BH to arrange safeguarding monitoring visit	BH
	The Action Log was reviewed. The following was noted:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JK had not replied to the Chair following an email about induction training. 	
c	Action: Clerk to contact the LA if induction training not completed before the end of half-term	Clerk
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full site walk and H&S monitoring was required and should be carried out termly. Governors appointed to this role at this meeting agreed to complete one before Easter. 	
d	Action: JC/GF to complete H&S monitoring visit before Easter	GF, JC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors were asked to arrange their own link governor visits by contacting the HT. 	
	GF left the room to let BH into the school. BH and GF rejoined the meeting at 6:40pm.	
8.	Ofsted Readiness Meeting 26/01/2026	
	Governors had attended a meeting with LA Governance and Leadership Advisor, Hannah Cragg. The slides had been shared with the meeting pack.	
	Governors felt a lot was covered and there was a lot to take in. Governors discussed the tools and documents available relating to roles and responsibilities, as well as questions for use in monitoring visits as challenge and for triangulation.	
	Governors discussed how to make most use of the information gathered from visits and how to consolidate information in a way that governors could report useful information and the impact made.	
a	Action: HT and JC to work on using the current Monitoring Form Template to create a Google Form for governors to easily report into. To be ready for Governors in School week (02/03/2026)	HT, JC
	The LA had also raised the issue of the website being up to date and regularly monitored.	
b	Action: IT Governor to review the website termly	AR

c	<p>The HT advised they were reviewing the SEF to be inline with the new Ofsted framework</p> <p>Action: New SEF written in line with the new Ofsted framework to be presented at the next meeting.</p>	HT
9.	Bridge Education Trust	
	<p>The Trust meeting took place on 26/11/2026.</p> <p>The Chair explained that Trust data was presented at the last meeting and discussions took place about how the boards can benefit from working together co-operatively in the Trust as was happening for some roles within the schools. To this end, Chairs were meeting ahead of the next meeting and were to bring 2 strengths and 1 weakness from their board to share.</p> <p>The board discussed and agreed strengths were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The culture of governors visits - good relationships with children and staff 2. Openness and transparency between governors and the SLT <p>The governors felt they would like advice on :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to record the impact of governance? 	
10.	Headteacher's Report	
10.1	<p>The Leadership Report to Governors was provided ahead of the meeting. and the contents discussed. Written questions submitted in advance were discussed at the meeting.</p> <p>Governors were asked in future to read the report particularly reflecting on the sections relating to their link roles and to all ask written questions in advance relating to them. The HT requested that all questions be a little in advance to allow time to look into them and respond. Governors were advised that most schools that did this asked for 48 hours notice.</p> <p>Action: All governors to ask questions on the Headteacher's report for their link area in advance, by at latest the Thursday evening before the Monday meeting.</p> <p><i>NB: Questions submitted in advance that were discussed in the meeting were included in these minutes. Written answers provided before the meeting but not discussed further were included in the Appendix at the end of these minutes.</i></p> <p>The HT reviewed the report highlighting key points.</p>	All
a		
	<p>Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 419 pupils on roll, against PAN of 420 • Attendance was high in comparison with the Trust <p>Question: How are you distinguishing between non-attendance due to disengagement and absence due to medical needs, particularly for EHCP?</p> <p>Response: The school used different codes. For example, for children EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) the school had to make decisions</p>	

	<p>based on each individual case as to whether absence was coded as I for Illness or O for unauthorised. For children with particularly poor attendance where the ESO and/or a social worker were involved with the family, and, unless there was medical evidence to the contrary, their absence was coded as unauthorised.</p> <p>Question: What specific individualised strategies or interventions are in place to improve attendance for those with SEN? How do these figures compare to local and national data, particularly for pupil premium and SEN?</p> <p>Response: The school had some children, including with an EHCP, where their geographical position combined with financial pressures and other factors, combined to make school attendance a struggle. A 'one size fits all' approach was not helpful in improving attendance, as the reasons behind persistent absence were often complex and particular to individual families. Positive relationships between the Attendance Officer/SLT and the families, alongside any multiagency working, was key. Further information on comparisons was not available but reporting responsibilities were discussed.</p> <p>Question: Do children on part-time tables have work sent home?</p> <p>Response: This was a difficult situation. Providing remote education would further enable children to stay off rather than encourage them into school, however being off affected their education for when they returned. There were a range of tools available to support pupils who could not attend school due to medical needs.</p> <p>Question: Do you have a family liaison officer?</p> <p>Response: Sometimes the ELSA or Assistant Head would do a home visit. When the school didn't hear from parents relating to absences then the response may be more punitive</p>	
	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Numbers on plans or referrals were currently low. It was explained that the school was conscious of being aware of anything 'flying under the radar'. The threshold was high to get referrals.</p> <p>Question: Can you explain what the number of children on a Child Protection Plan, Child in Need Plan, children at Children and Families First means in practice for the school?</p> <p>Response: The more children there were on these sorts of plans, the greater the pull on DSL time. There were statutory timelines around the support provided at different levels, so for example, a child who ended up on the highest level of support (child protection plan) often began with an emergency strategy meeting (which a DSL has to attend on that day) to decide level of involvement. This was followed by an ICPC (Initial Child Protection Conference) where we had to attend but also provide written reports a week before. There were RCPCs (Review Child Protection Conference), with the same expectation. Alongside this, there were likely to be more regular calls, emails and visits from and with social workers, possibly encompassing home visits too.</p>	

	<p>Some of the information being received by DSL's did create an emotional load and as a result they were offered support/supervision.</p> <p>Question: Had there been no referrals since the last meeting?</p> <p>Response: Things had been picked up and the school was in touch with families, but nothing that required a referral.</p> <p>See Confidential Part 2 Minutes A</p> <p>Following further discussions Governors agreed that they felt the HT had approached all the multi-agency support options and was doing what they could in the circumstances. Governors again expressed their concerns for staff safety and the impact on their wellbeing.</p> <p>Governors asked to arrange a monitoring visit to look at staff wellbeing and disadvantaged pupils to see how policies were being applied and their impact.</p> <p>b Action: Arrange monitoring visit to look at application of wellbeing and disadvantaged pupils policies.</p> <p>Governors further discussed the process of information sharing with other agencies</p>	JC
	<p>Pupil Premium</p> <p>At the previous meeting governors had asked for comparison information. Governors were advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2024-25, 27.1% (112) of pupils were classified as disadvantaged/Pupil Premium whereas the national average was 33%. • 26.8% (55) of female pupils were disadvantaged 6.2% lower than national 33%. • 27.3% (57) of our male pupils were disadvantaged, 5.6% lower than the national of 32.9% <p>Context information for the cohort was shared relating specifically to IDACI and geographical deprivation. The results showed a spiky profile.</p> <p>It was recommended that governors meet with the Deputy Head who was taking the lead on disadvantaged pupils and the school was exploring in detail the vulnerable group within the school.</p>	
	<p>Staffing & HR</p> <p>A staffing update was shared.</p> <p>Governors were advised there had been expressions of interest in the writing lead post and discussions had taken place about whether the role</p>	

	<p>should be split over the Key Stages. There would be little financial difference with this change.</p> <p>A governor was requested to join the recruitment process and LH offered their support.</p> <p>Question: Transitions between Key Stages had been discussed at governor meetings in the past - would splitting the role by key stage cause issues with transition?</p> <p>Response: The phase leader overseas transition and it was believed that this model would be appropriate.</p> <p>Question: For TA recruitment was the issue getting applicants or getting applicants with the necessary skills/background?</p> <p>Response: The roles needed skills and experience. Posts were advertised on city and education websites.</p> <p>Governors discussed the use of social media and other job platforms.</p> <p>A summary of staff CPD was shared.</p> <p>Question: How is the impact of CPD on teaching quality and student outcomes being measured?</p> <p>Response: This was difficult to measure - however, what we do know is that a wider range of pedagogical approaches were being used in classrooms to assess pupils' learning in the moment, which resulted in groups of children having opportunity for pre-teaching and follow up teaching.</p> <p>Question: Do we have evidence of impact on children from Soton Inclusion Partnership and Educational Psychologists?</p> <p>Response: The Deputy Head had witnessed a staff member put into practise the advice given by a SIP colleague when dealing with a pupils behaviour - the impact was positive, the pupil responded.</p> <p>In addition, many staff in school have had access to SIP training and were putting into place strategies earlier, rather than as a reaction to behaviour. Governors were referred to a letter, shared in the report, regarding success with a new pupil in Year 1.</p> <p>Governors commented on this success in advance and passed on their thanks and congratulations to the team working with that child.</p> <p>Question: Are impact stories available to show the impact of CPD?</p> <p>Response: Yes those could be done - like a case story.</p> <p>Question: Do you collect feedback from staff after training or Inset's on what they think of the CPD and its impact?</p> <p>Response: No. This could be done to collect data. Questions had been included on CPD in the staff survey.</p>	
c	<p>Parental Engagement</p> <p>OSA were congratulated on fundraising activities over Christmas that raised £5544.99. Going forwards there were plans to only have 1 summer school fayre and that may be more event based.</p> <p>Action: Send letter thanking the OSA for their fundraising</p>	RG

	<p>RG had attended the SEN Coffee Morning and spoken to parents (included in visit report - item 15.2)</p>	
	<p>Site & Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays to heating project due to electrics requiring an upgrade that was planned for the Easter holidays. Question: Would that impact Testlands income to the school? Response: Yes, because there will be no power to the site. The car park lighting issue raised by a governor had been investigated and work would take place to resolve this over February half-term. 	
	<p>School Improvement Plan An update was shared in the report.</p> <p>A Maths Peer Review would take place that week, involving HT from other Trust schools who would look at a particular focus. It offered collaborative external scrutiny. Question: Would governors receive that report? Response: Yes</p> <p>The HT and Phonics Lead at Redbridge had been invited to look at progress (Redbridge had achieved 100% in Phonics last year). It had been agreed that teaching was good but they looked at creative ways to fill the gaps and they would be asked to document it. Question: How do you intend to reduce the gaps identified in reading tests mentioned in the SIP? Is it particular cohorts of children (i.e. with SEN/pupil premium and what strategies will be in place to address this?? Response: Interventions ran across the school and were assessed half termly. These were monitored by the Reading Leads with support from the SENCo. Pupil Progress meetings with Y6 and Y5 were starting this week to discuss pupils with SEN and pupils who were disadvantaged, and their progress and barriers. Question: Were there any initiatives the school was involved in/planned to be involved in with regards to the National Year of Reading to support reading for pleasure? Response: This would be a great question to ask the Reading Leads on governor visits. Question: Do you have 1:1 Phonics interventions? Response: The school used the Little Wandle phonics scheme and schemes advise having fidelity to the scheme. The school had found they had hit a ceiling and the outcome from the external review was that there were issues with groups who were struggling to apply the phonics for reading. The review recommended to not to do group reading with those groups, but more phonics - slowing down to ensure more phonological awareness.</p> <p>Governors discussed the investment costs for phonics schemes, how they were used and whether there were alternatives if this scheme wasn't</p>	

<p>d e</p>	<p>working. The HT advised there was a need to focus on mastery and some children needed to catch up but that if strategies being put in place, such as additional sessions, didn't work then they may need to look at other options.</p> <p>Question: Does the scheme provider have additional ideas? Response: They agreed with what the school was doing in adding more sessions.</p> <p>Governors asked that this be brought back to the next meeting and governors were asked to look at this during their visits into school.</p> <p>Action: Curriculum governor to arrange to meet with Phonics Lead Action: All governors to look at Phonics during their visits in Governor In Schools Week.</p> <p>Question: Are the lower ability groups getting reading material sent home? Response: Yes. They get a book each week that they've been working on in school the week before so they are familiar with it. They can also select books from the library.</p> <p>Governors discussed how some pupils may not be as well supported at home as others and the barriers that some families experienced.</p> <p>Question: Are parents aware if their children were in the bottom 20%, intervention groups or needed additional support? Response: Parents were given information about this at parents evenings and the school was promoting how important reading at home was.</p> <p>Question: Can Reading Plans be used to let parents know that pupils were behind? Response: Yes. However it was felt that for parents in KS1 there was a barrier as the current teaching methods were not how they were taught so they have less understanding of the methods and can't use them at home. This was easier in KS2 where we report words per minute and parents could engage with that.</p> <p>Question: Does the school include reading age information on school reports? Response: No, the school was hesitant to do this but it had been discussed internally.</p> <p>Governors discussed other options for sharing information with parents including sharing lists of sounds they'd learned.</p>	<p>LH All</p>
<p>10.2</p>	<p>Staff Survey</p> <p>Governors were advised that the LA Safeguarding SEF training session on 12/01/2026 had raised questions that the school would try to answer using questions in the staff survey.</p> <p>The survey questions were shared with governors and included questions on workload, wellbeing, understanding and role of the vision, professional development, behaviour, safeguarding and child protection. The survey would be issued as a google form with time to complete it on the Inset day.</p>	

	<p>Question: What are the usual completion rates for staff surveys?</p> <p>Response: Usually quite good. The survey would be sent to 54 staff and when last done, 2 years ago, there was an approximately 70% response rate. There was some similarity with the last questionnaire so those areas could be compared.</p> <p>DECISION: The staff survey was APPROVED by governors</p>	
10.3	<p>Parent Survey</p> <p>The survey would take place around Parent's Evening (March 2026) and would be given out by teachers.</p>	
11.	Safeguarding	
	<p>Safeguarding had been covered under the Headteacher's Report (item 10.1)</p> <p>Safeguarding SEF</p> <p>The Governor section had to be returned by March 27th 2026. Governors agreed to meet during Governors in School week to discuss this.</p> <p>a Action: Governors to meet to agree responses in Safeguarding SEF</p> <p>Governors discussed the outcome from asking safeguarding questions to parents and discovering they did not know who the DSL's were. Although this was displayed widely within school it was felt that adding this information to the newsletter and being more prominent on the website would help parents.</p> <p>b Action: DSL information to be added to newsletters and feature more prominently on the website.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>HT</p>
12.	Pupil Premium Report	
	<p>The report had been shared with governors ahead of the meeting and covered under the Headteacher's Report (item 10.1)</p>	
13.	Policies	
13.1	<p>Admissions</p> <p>This was an LA policy.</p> <p>DECISION: Policy APPROVED by governors</p>	
13.2	<p>SEN</p> <p>This policy would be presented at the next meeting as it was pending the results of a parent consultation</p>	
13.3	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>This policy was based on guidance from the LA and the Deputy HT/DSL's completed the school specific information. It had been updated to reflect KCSIE25.</p> <p>DECISION: Policy APPROVED by governors</p> <p>Action: Safeguarding governor to meet with Deputy HT on next visit to discuss the policy.</p>	BH
13.4	<p>Data Protection</p> <p>This policy was postponed to the next meeting</p>	
13.5	<p>Complaints</p> <p>This was a Trust policy. There had been no changes.</p>	

	DECISION: Policy APPROVED by governors	
13.6	Health & Safety This policy was postponed as the school was reviewing the lockdown procedures.	
13.7	Vexatious & Serial Complaints This was a non-statutory, Trust policy shared for information. It had not changed since last reviewed.	
14.	Staffing & HR	
	This item had been covered under the Headteacher's Report (item 10.1)	
15.	Governor Visits	
15.1	Governors reviewed the visit log	GF/JC
15.2	Visit reports were shared ahead of the meeting and governors reflected on the learning points that had been identified. Action: H&S Governor to look at evacuation assembly points as part of their next visit.	
15.3	This had been discussed under item 8	
15.4	Governors discussed plans for Governors In School Week (starting 02/03/2026). Visits planned included looking at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pupil Premium ● Safeguarding ● Inclusion ● Phonics ● H&S Site Visit Governors were asked to log visits on the log and share dates so that governors could join visits with other governors.	
16.	Governor Training & Skills	
	This had been covered under item 7	
17.	Governor Correspondence & Clerking Matters	
	No items to raise.	
18.	AOB	
	Action: Governors needed to set a date for a Pay Committee meeting Governors discussed options for the FGB meeting time and agreed that meetings in person were more effective and 6-8pm was the time most governors could make. Therefore the next meeting would be in person (rather than virtual) and Monday 16th March, 2026 at 6pm. There being no other business the meeting closed at 7:45pm.	RG, HT, BH, AR

Dates of Remaining Meetings 2025 - 2026

Full Governing Body 5:30-7:30pm	Finance Committee 12:30-1:30pm [Hybrid]	Governors In School Days (visit during the week)
16/03/2026	06/03/2026	w/c 02/03/2026
18/05/2026	08/05/2026	w/c 11/05/2026
06/07/2026		

Appendix

Questions asked and answered in advance of the meeting		
Topic	Question	Response
Admissions	Any concerns that governors need to be aware of?	No
SEN/LAC/Pupil Premium	What are the biggest challenges you anticipate in relation to 26.1% of children in decile 0.2 - 0.3?	High levels of disadvantage to include potential financial hardship. As with attendance, there was no 'one size fits all' but typically pupils' opportunities were not as great as those from more affluent areas. This then potentially impacted learning progress, engagement and mental health, to name a few.
Behaviour	What strategies, interventions and support have been put in place for the pupils? Any pastoral support or external agency involvement in the exclusions? What was the impact of the exclusion on the pupil's subsequent education?	Those children had a package of support around them, which is tailored to their very individual needs, to include, ELSA support, individual timetabling and resources, planned sensory breaks, breaktime and lunchtime provision. Support to put these into place had come from EP meetings, SIP support and expertise amongst staff. The provision in place for the children in school was in small steps and met their needs to allow for time out, due to a suspension, following an event.
Site and Building	Has the extra fencing in KS2 playground helped reduce access to the car park?	Potentially. However, 2 pupils had accessed the car park in recent weeks, with one climbing the 6 foot fence to leave the site (year 1 pupil). Both pupils accessed the carpark through alternative means.
Success & Challenges	Staffing challenges - are there any opportunities within the trust to share TA support - or maybe is a	No, as a Trust we don't share staff in that way, and other trust school also

	TA looking to increase their hours at Oakwood or another school within the trust?	report challenges around recruitment. We only have a small number of TAs who work less than a full day, and although they are willing to help out as a very rare one off, most of them have commitments beyond these hours that mean they don't wish to increase their time.
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