

York High School
Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Board held on
Tuesday 18th March 2025 at 6pm held at the school

Present:

Gavin Kumar (Principal)	Richard Lavell
Andy Pope (Chair)	Andrew Waller
Sally Gordon	Val Roddis
Clare Besant	

In Attendance Jess Jackson (SENCO), Sophie Triffitt (Clerk)

Action

1. Welcome, Apologies for absence, Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted for Ian Savage and Sarah Hammond.

Action: Chair to request fobs for governors.

Chair

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 6th February 2025 (previously circulated)

Resolution: The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and approved.

Matters Arising and Action Plan

Action 1: Action to be addressed at the May meeting.

3. SLT Feedback

SENCO – SEND (Tabled)

The SENCO presented an update on SEND.

The SENCO reported that the number of students with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) was up to 28 and there were four Requests for Statutory Assessment (RSA).

154 pupils were on the SEN Register and this year there had been work to ensure parents had the opportunity to speak to a member of the SEND team or a key person for their child. The SENCO had reviewed the SEN Register and allocated interventions and confirmed that all pupils with a diagnosis were included on the register. Some pupils were moved off the register who had met their Age-Related Expectation (ARE) and a SEND monitoring document created so if there was a drop at a data point there could be intervention.

The SENCO highlighted that the greatest area of need was Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) and they were preparing for additional needs for 2025-26 academic year including pupils with physical disabilities.

Performance and interventions for SEN pupils were tracked and there were fortnightly inclusion meetings with the Vice Principal to review the students.

Two learning walks had taken place with a focus on cognition and learning and SEMH. The learning walk next term would focus on communication and interaction.

The SENCO noted the highlights for this academic year included achieving the ADHD Friendly Award and ensuring that students had movement breaks.

Challenge: A governor asked how movement breaks were integrated. The SENCO explained that they were ensuring they were built in for everyone and could include standing up and moving in class and introducing adaptive teaching techniques and this would be a focus of the next CPD session.

The Principal explained that the national direction of travel was inclusion and SEN funding was reducing so the strategies being implemented by the SENCO were integral to the success of York High. The SENCO was new to post and working hard and had support from the Director of SEND and Safeguarding. The Principal reported that SEND was becoming a real strength of the school.

The SENCO added that alongside the inclusion rooms there was a need to ensure quality adaptive teaching in every lesson and informed governors that her decision to take on the role was driven by wanting to make the biggest difference to the pupils who need it most and to have inclusion feed through everything across school.

The SENCO reported that work was being done to look at an enhanced transition for those who need extra days and implementing a buddy system so the new starter had a key member of staff and a Year 8 or Year 9 student buddy.

The Principal informed governors that inclusion was a thread through all nine strands of the new Ofsted framework being consulted on and moving the adaptive teaching model forward puts the school in a proactive position and caters for needs of the children which were changing nationally.

Challenge: A governor asked if the student population at large had a good understanding of SEND. The SENCO explained that there could be some flippant comments made and reported that there had been assembly focus on neuro diversity but there was a need to keep feeding that through with school values.

The Principal highlighted work with the community and SEN coffee mornings to giving SEN parents a voice and that school were acting on feedback.

Challenge: A governor suggested that there could be opportunities to work with partner primary schools. The SENCO agreed and informed governors that she had met with the Westfield SENCO and wanted to build a longer-term transition and collaborative working. The Principal emphasised the importance of growing links with Westfield as a majority feeder school.

Challenge: A governor asked how the school supports young people and their families who were in the process of applying for an EHCP when the support offer may not be in line with their expectations. The SENCO explained that there were early transition meetings, and any offer would always be child led within the graduated response starting with classroom-based interventions and use of CYC and the Learning Support Hub.

Challenge: A governor asked if the external partner provisions such as educational psychologist service were delivering what they should. The SENCO explained that she had met with the educational psychologist service twice in the autumn term, but it had been difficult to get contact this term with the level of cases they were working through.

Challenge: A governor noted the use of the monitoring document as a safety net in the journey to get young people to be independent and asked if there had been any parent challenge. The SENCO reported that five parents had wanted to speak about the move from the SEND register to the monitoring document and two had been put back onto the SEND Register and explained that there was a fluid approach as it should be that a student was moved off the register once an intervention had impact.

Challenge: A governor suggested that it would be helpful to obtain parent feedback from those not able to attend the SEND coffee mornings. The Principal informed governors that stakeholder voice surveys would be issued at the end of the spring term.

Governors recorded thanks to the SENCO for the update and her hard work.

The SENCO left the meeting at 6.28pm.

4. **Principal Feedback**

The Principal reported that:

- Year 11 outcomes were reporting positively, and he was optimistic of achieving the targets of 60% 4+ and 40% 5+ which would be a significant uplift on the previous year outcomes.
- Attendance was reporting 0.8% better than the same period last academic year. SEN attendance remained an area of focus.
- Suspensions were 12% better than the same period last academic year. There had been a rise in suspensions over the last four weeks following a review of the Behaviour Policy / system.

The Principal provided an update on the enrichment offer emphasising the plan to proactively encourage students to attend at least one club per week. Triple Science, Statistics and Further Maths GCSE qualifications would be offered through the enrichment offer. The Principal felt there was a healthy mix of opportunities within the offer that should capture a lot of interest and hoped it would be a way to engage some hard-to-reach students back into school. The enrichment offer would also be mapped against Year 11 intervention.

Challenge: A governor recorded thanks to the Principal for responding to governor challenge and including Triple Science within the offer and asked how selection would be managed within the cohort. The Principal explained that if a student had the academic ability they would be able to attend and the session would be led by the Head of Department.

The Principal explained that he wanted the enrichment offer to feel like period 6 and develop a culture that students attend for that period.

Challenge: A governor asked how attendance would be managed when some sessions would be more popular than others. The Principal explained that there would be a sign-up process and if there were more than capacity it would run over more sessions.

Challenge: A governor asked for an update on The Place. The Principal confirmed that they were growing links with The Place who were attending residential and educational visits. They would also be running clubs on Wednesday evening. They were eager to work with the school and looking to grow the resource including support for curriculum enhancement days.

Challenge: A governor asked how the Principal would ensure the enrichment offer was fair across all staff. The Principal explained that it was built into directed time to offer one enrichment club per week, it would be complex to map, and he would have a greater understanding once sign-ups were submitted.

The Principal informed governors that attendance would be tracked including data on Pupil Premium and SEND engagement / access. Sessions and locations would be committed to, and communication would be a priority. It was important that Year 6 moving into Year 7 were signed up and start their time at York High with the culture that it was part of school life and some taster sessions would be offered.

Challenge: A governor asked if the plans include integration for SEND students. The Principal confirmed that SEND and Pupil Premium inclusion were part of the plans.

The Principal informed governors that once GCSE exams were finished the Year 11 teachers would go out and visit Westfield to build links.

The Principal informed governors that the Head of English would be using Reading Plus as part of the enrichment through six week interventions and hoped that would positively impact access to the curriculum across school.

Challenge: A governor asked if there was the opportunity for parents to support the enrichment offer. The Principal confirmed that he would be open to that subject to relevant checks and risk assessments.

In response to a governor the Principal confirmed the leadership programme would be involved in the enrichment.

Challenge: A governor asked if there would be a way for parents to track club attendance. The Principal explained that Class Charts would be utilised more next academic year and if a student signed up to a club and didn't attend a letter would be sent to parents. The Principal added that he would like to communicate the percentage of students who attended enrichment.

Challenge: A governor asked if the same behaviour rules would apply in enrichment clubs. The Principal confirmed they would and hoped that clubs would be a hook for those that were more disengaged and confirmed that they would not refuse attendance as a sanction.

Pulse Update (previously circulated)

Challenge: A governor questioned why the behaviour and exclusions for Year 7 and Year 8 were high. The Principal explained that there were significant issues in Year 8, who were also the largest year group in school. There was no alternative provision budget as that was fed into Inspire and KS3 spaces were full so there was a need to be creative with what could be offered in house. There was now a timetabled room for students who were struggling with the classroom and have mapped out trigger / hot spots for when they could go to the room to do reading intervention. The Principal emphasised that he did not want removal from lessons to become a habit and there was a need to address the behaviour issues in these year groups as they could not continue on that trajectory through to Year 11. The Principal also thought there was more that could be done with transition.

The Principal reported that at the peer visit on 18th March 2025 leaders commented positively on behaviour, but they had taken the decision to suspend six students on the same day for defiance and running round school. This supports the message that it was a small cohort being defiant and there was a need to see how they could be supported. The Principal was confident that reading was a barrier. There was a healthy pastoral system and feedback from the sector was that students were becoming more challenging locally and nationally.

The Principal reported that there had been 146 first choice places for the September 2025 intake. 13 students on the waiting were appealing. The Principal explained that the curriculum model was set to 150 to ensure a financially viable offer and the school could not afford to break that model and he did not want class sizes above 30. The Principal explained that there was a working party currently looking

at catchment areas. **A governor suggested making parents aware of the first-choice application numbers at upcoming open evenings.**

Challenge: A governor asked if the 60 / 40 GCSE outcomes target was realistic. The Principal explained that English was the main block to being on track for the targets, but the students had adapted well to the move to Eduqas exam board and the English and Maths mocks reported strong data. The English department was in a stable position and strong teachers were delivering interventions. The mock data would be ready WC 24th March 2025, and the Principal was confident the 60 / 40 targets were achievable.

Challenge: A governor asked how many parents had reported that the change of day would be a problem. The Principal reported that feedback was generally neutral. The Principal had met with Cllr Webb and the Millthorpe Principal and responded to questions raised. **A governor emphasised the importance of getting the launch and communication right.**

Challenge: A governor noted the commentary that the school was still trying to recruit an Attendance Officer. The Principal informed governors that they had interviewed four candidates but had been unable to make an appointment and had readvertised the post. There was also a need to appoint reception staff.

The Chair noted that if a governor wanted sight of the most recent Pulse reports between meetings, they could contact the Chair or Principal's PA.

School Improvement Plan

The Principal reported that SLT had RAG rated the plan and it was progressing well. The School Evaluation had been submitted to the central team and would be brought to the May 2025 meeting. The Principal informed governors that he planned to launch the 'big four' (four priorities to drive the school forward) in September 2025.

5. Chair Feedback

School Improvement Plan

The Chair had no update to report.

Attendance

The Chair reported that the attendance data was included in the Pulse Report and had no further update.

BRAG Pulse Trends (previously circulated)

The Chair presented the Behaviour Suspensions Graph.

The Chair noted that the school were selected for Ofsted launch filming and the video was live on the government website. Sir Martyn Oliver, HM Chief Inspector of Education, was engaged and interested in the school and engaged positively with the children who represented the school excellently.

Challenge: A governor asked if he gave a view of how Ofsted would take account of value added. The Chair reported that he had said that inspectors look at a wide range of schools and come with a broad range of what a good school would look like for a school of their context.

The Principal informed governors that it was expected that EBacc, Attainment 8 and Progress 8 may not continue.

The Chair had met with a potential governor from an application through the Local Authority. Governors agreed for the Chair to invite the potential governor to the May 2025 meeting as a prospective governor.

6. Governing Feedback Deep Learning

Teaching and Learning

Reading and Literacy

There was no update to report.

7. Governor Feedback – Deep Experience

Assessment and Destinations

Careers and Education

There was no update to report.

8. Governor Feedback Deep Support

Child Protection and Safeguarding

The link governor had undertaken a link visit and would submit a report. The link governor noted that there were additional pressures placed on staff when covering absence and there was a need to be conscious of wellbeing and support. The Principal noted that staffing had been difficult over the last half term.

The Chair added that Child Protection and Safeguarding was across all areas and aspects of school life and feeds into everything the school does.

Challenge: A governor asked why there were staffing issues. The Principal informed governors that two colleagues had moved on to promotions and one to a different role, with it being a small school it could be difficult to cover but the Principal wanted to ensure the right recruitments so in the meantime there were staff picking up aspects of school they wouldn't normally.

Challenge: A governor asked if there was an impact to staff teaching and learning time. The Principal confirmed not, the school does have more admin capacity than other schools but has stretched that capacity across the school.

The Principal noted that an unfunded teacher pay rise next academic year would be a pressure on the budget and there would be a need to consider how that could be financed.

SEND

Community

Pupil Premium and Disadvantaged

Behaviour

There was no update to report.

9. **Finance Report** (link governor report previously circulated)
There were no questions on the governor report.

P5 Financial Summary (previously circulated)

There were no questions on the summary report.

P5 Consolidated Management Accounts (previously circulated)

There were no questions on the management accounts report.

10. **School Policies**

Assessment and Feedback Policy (previously circulated)

Resolution: Governors approved the Assessment and Feedback Policy.

Curriculum Policy (previously circulated)

Challenge: A governor noted that the policy highlighted the importance of democracy and noted the need for practice to align with policy. The Principal explained that it was delivered as part of the national curriculum. **A governor suggested that democracy could play a large part in the leadership programme.**

Resolution: Governors approved the Curriculum Policy.

FOI Guide to Information (previously circulated)

Challenge: A governor asked if there was clear communication to all staff that if they received a request for information there was a certain process to follow. The Principal confirmed there was, and the process was to go through the School Business Manager.

Resolution: Governors approved the FOI Guide to Information.

Parent and Visitor Behaviour Policy (previously circulated)

The Principal reported that parent behaviour was worsening locally and had been reported through the NAHT (National Association for Head Teacher).

Challenge: A governor suggested that it would be useful to share information with feeder primary schools.

Challenge: A governor asked if staff at York High had ever felt threatened. The Principal explained that he had spoken to two parents about the way they had communicated with staff and use of threatening language. Parents had tended to reflect and apologise but fundamentally it was not acceptable.

Challenge: A governor asked if there was any way governors could support and how the school provides the message that certain behaviour was not appropriate. The Principal explained that it would tend to be addressed through a conversation with the parent / carer. The Senior Pastoral Leader had picked up higher need families and there was some flexibility to support staff.

A governor noted that expectations had increased, and behaviour had escalated. The Principal added that services had been cut and schools were being expected to pick up more.

Challenge: A governor questioned if the message in the policy was robust enough and asked if there should be wording to make it clear that action would be fast tracked if the behaviour warranted it.

The Principal noted that there had been conversations with the central team, and they were supportive of not accepting poor behaviour on the school site.

Challenge: Governors requested that it be made clear that the severity of the incident would be taken into account and the school reserve the right to progress to step 3 immediately if warranted. Governors requested that the policy be brought back to the May 2025 meeting.

11. Governor CPD

Sexual Harassment Prevention Duty Briefing Notes for LGB(previously circulated)

The Principal reported that the updates in legislation had been discussed with staff.

Governors noted the update.

12. Any Other Business

Challenge: A governor asked for an update on the wood pellet silos. The Principal confirmed that that the silos had been checked and confirmed safe. The long term plan was to look at energy for the school. Governors supported investigating a long-term energy policy.

Challenge: A governor noted that it was a loud explosion and asked what the action would have been if it had happened during school hours. The Principal explained that he would have had to take guidance. The Principal confirmed it would not have impacted power for the school.

13. Future Meeting Dates

~~Tuesday 6th May 2025~~ – 6pm **date changed to 15th May 2025**

Thursday 10th July 2025 – 6pm

The meeting closed at 8pm.

Approved by governors at LGB on 15th May 2025.

Approval

<u>ACTION POINTS</u> <u>From the meeting of the Local Governing Board held on 18th March 2025</u>				
	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>WHO</u>	<u>WHEN</u>
1.	Confirm impact to the budget of the National Insurance contribution.	9 (02.12.24)	Ian Savage	Feb 2025
2.	Chair to request fobs for governors.	1	Andy Pope	April 2025

May meeting:

Ian Parnaby – Finance Update
Parent and Visitor Behaviour Policy
School Evaluation