

MINUTES OF MEETING



School: John Blow Primary School
Meeting title: 1st Spring Term Full Governing Body meeting
Date and time: Wednesday, 21st January 2026 at 6pm
Location: At the school

Membership

'A' denotes absence

Adrienne Allcock (vice chair)
Emma Briggs-Price
Ben Carver (Headteacher)
A Marion Collins – associate
Claire Fawcett (vice chair)
Mary Hartshorne
Sue Laplanche (chair)
A Cameron Lord
Paul Nolan
Kerry Round
Pete Smith
A Thomas Straw
Clare Stokes

In attendance Mrs Alex Raynor (Clerk to the Governors)

The chair opened the meeting with welcome and introductions.

GB/01/26 Apologies of absence Action

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Lord and Mr Straw with reasons given, governors resolved to accept the absence.

GB/02/26 Declaration of interest and reminder of confidentiality

There were no declarations of interest for items of business on the agenda.

GB/03/26 Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months

As previously discussed, S Laplanche, A Allcock and P Smith's term of office were due to expire in the Autumn Term 2026. Consideration would need to be given in the Summer Term and parent election held in the autumn term 1.

T Straw's term of office as staff governor would expire later this month, a staff election would be progressed. HT to arrange. HT

- **Meeting attendance**

The Chair led a discussion on meeting attendance to canvas thoughts regarding hybrid meetings.

Governors agreed that meetings should ordinarily be held in person, with hybrid attendance permitted in exceptional circumstances, provided sufficient notice was given. They also agreed that whereby a hybrid format was used, a designated governor should support the operation of the technology to ensure meetings remain inclusive and effective. K Round offered to manage this aspect.

It was also resolved that arrangements for hybrid meetings are clearly communicated in advance and reflected in diaries, so members can plan accordingly. A Teams invite for each meeting, would be placed in the school calendar, whether used or not, to ensure a more seamless operation.

HT

GB/04/26 Approval of minutes of autumn term 2 meeting

Minutes of the last meeting held, 11th November 2025 were approved and be signed electronically.

GB/75/25 Confirm: Declarations:

Noted there were still some gaps in completion, the clerk would send an email to those governors still to complete.

GB/77/25 GB/56/25 *Governors to ensure all declarations are completed via the Hub. Hard copies of Business Interest forms will continue to be retained in school for audit purpose. HT/All gov.*

GB/78/25 *The national link to governmental training was Home Office – “Prevent duty training” <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-duty-training>. GOV.UK*

This is the official source for the standard Prevent-awareness e-learning courses suitable for education settings (staff, governors, etc.). All gov.

Covering above. The clerk had sent a reminder email ahead of the meeting. All gov were reminded to complete declarations via the Hub. Those governors yet to complete Prevent Training would progress the online training <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-duty-training>.

The chair drew governors’ attention to the Effectiveness Toolkit available via the Hub, which was a useful resource to show strength and inform future training.

C/forward action covering above , Confirm completion / compliance of governor declarations.

All gov.

GB/79/25 *Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) 2025/2026 (arrangement for completion)- This would be completed by C Fawcett ahead of the Spring Term deadline.*

To be discussed Spring Term 2.

GB/79/25 *CS and CF and PN would form a working group alongside the HT regarding future Income generation. This was in place and the group would meet as needed. Date likely to be progressed for the Summer Term in preparation for planning strategically for the next academic year. **Complete.***

GB/81/25 *Safeguarding Children in Education: self-audit tool 2025/2026 - The new Safeguarding Children in Education self-audit tool for 2025/26 had now been released. Due for completion the following week with the link governor and ahead of the January deadline for submission.*

*Overview of actions arising deferred Spring Term 1. **On agenda below.***

GB/82/25 *Audit/risk register updates: (Data protection and Cyber Security arrangements etc.)*

*The current external provider was still a cost effective and robust provider for managing GDPR policies, compliance and filling the DPO role. An annual audit is also provided which highlights updates and further actions. This was due to be received this term and would be shared with governors when available. **Covered by agenda below.***

GB/84/25 SEF - (G) Can we suggesting an impact column?

*This was agreed as a helpful idea. An impact column could be added to strengthen clarity. Confirmed this is included in the SIP. **Action complete.***

GB/85/25 SEND – In progress, MH to arrange a visit with the staff lead. Report deferred Spring Term.

PP – In progress. Link governor to arrange to meet the DHT to review and complete the PP strategy document ahead of publication Dec 2025. Report Deferred Spring Term.

Covered by agenda below.

A Governor training session on SEND, pre the Summer Term meeting. Agenda Summer Term.

GB/79/25 Confidential minute - G) Support staff going down? Yes, the costs for support staff have not been included in the 5 year budget projection, but we need to look at the scenario with this built back in. Also discussed above. C Fawcett would discuss this scenario and budgetary implications in more details on her Finance link visit. **Agenda Spring 2.**

There were no other actions not complete or included on agenda content across the year.

GB/05/26

Holding executive leaders to account: Summary of Headteacher's report.

Governors considered the Headteacher's report which had previously been circulated and available to view on the Hub. The following areas were questioned and challenged specifically.

- **Attendance**

Confidential content, minuted separately.

(G) Generally, lots of younger children with higher absence, what is happening here? Contextually this can be explained as largely due to seasonal illness, including a sickness bug in the autumn term and the lateness of the flu vaccination programme in December, which had happened too late to reduce flu illness across the school.

(G) Is this a usual pattern year on year? Yes, this is historically the case, particularly when younger children start school, due to increased exposure to illness and some parental anxiety in wanting to keep younger children at home if unwell.

(G) Is there a 48 hour rule i.e. to keep a child who has been sick off for 48 hours? There is a 48-hour expectation; however, this is a balance and can be tricky between managing absence and promoting good attendance. Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) had since added this as a caveated requirement.

Unauthorised absence data remains mainly reflective of term-time holidays. Fines are issued if there are multiple holidays taken across the year; it was acknowledged that some parents will still take holidays regardless of fining. The school prefer to approach this through building positive relationships with parents than overly punitive processes that risk marginalising parental support.

(G) Are there things that can be done to support, e.g. learning packs on holidays? This could support but would add to teacher workload. The Headteacher noted that parents are generally honest with the school about absences, which was cited as evidence of a good relationship with families and a foundation to build on dialogue relating to good attendance, supportively.

(G) What is the difference between FSM and PP?

FSM refers to children who are currently eligible, whereas Pupil Premium includes children who are currently eligible or who have been eligible for FSM at any point in the last six years (Ever 6), as funding continues to follow this eligibility over time.

Governors reflected on the changing and increasingly diverse profile of the school population and noted that, where cohort sizes are small, even minor changes in numbers or characteristics can have a disproportionate impact on headline data. Acknowledging that whilst current attendance data is strong, the importance of understanding threshold effects was emphasised. and how small percentage shifts in roll can rapidly influence reported outcomes.

setting out both the context for the data and the actions being taken. The Headteacher confirmed that the school undertakes call-ups and proactive follow-up with children absent, in larger schools this roll is often fulfilled by dedicated attendance staff, whereas for John Blow this is undertaken by office staff alongside their other responsibilities. The Headteacher agreed that future attendance reports would include narrative for context against data and explanation of the next steps in supporting good attendance for all children.

Governors also discussed the value of demographic data and forward projections, against predicted pupil numbers, to help anticipate emerging challenges. A governor offered support with modelling future scenarios to enable the school to pre-empt potential risks and plan strategies in advance.

Action: HT to include narrative explanation on actions and next steps against attendance data. E Briggs-Price would support this modelling work.

HT/ EBP

The Clerk drew governors' attention to the Director's report, explaining the ABIE framework and how this underpins the school's attendance improvement priorities and targets. ABIE is a Department for Education approach designed to support schools in analysing attendance data, establishing a clear baseline, and implementing targeted actions to support a return to pre-Covid attendance levels. The framework enables leaders and governors to monitor progress and the impact of interventions over time. It also provides guidance to the questions governors should be asking in order to fully interrogate and support their role in improving attendance across schools.

Data

In relation to data analysis, Governors asked that the Headteacher include cohort-level data across subject withing the next report to enable effective scrutiny for governors.

Action: HT to provide further information on cohort data to enable further governor oversight and scrutiny. HT

Noted the subject leadership Governor Café scheduled for 12th January 2026 would be rescheduled for later in the year. This would give governors opportunity to meet with individual subject leaders for oversight of impact and delivery.

Lastly governors commended the Headteacher on his management of the recent leak, whereby the school had needed to close for one day. The swiftness of reopening the provision was commended.

(G) When the school closes how does this impact attendance data? It is an exceptional closure so all children are marked as present for the coding, in exceptional circumstances this should not impact individual attendance data.

- **SIP**

Discussion supported by document available to view via the Hub.

The Headteacher confirmed that the School Improvement Plan (SIP) is a working document, reviewed and updated as priorities evolve. It was noted that changes take time to embed and to demonstrate impact; however, it was reported that all staff are fully engaged with the improvement work and that significant changes are being implemented across the school.

In summary, securing phonics was highlighted as a key priority, with the introduction of Little Wandle identified as a strength. Engagement with the English Hub had supported curriculum improvement in this area, and the full impact of the implementation would be reviewed in the summer term. The headteacher confirmed that a phonics audit had been completed and that, while improvements were already evident, further work was required to ensure consistent delivery. Training and targeted support are ongoing and are already having a positive impact.

It was also reported that the work of the curriculum team, including a full review and re-modelling of subject leadership, was having a positive impact. This approach to middle leadership was noted as effective in supporting consistency, ownership, and improvement across the school, alongside a clear investment in developing staff to be effective middle leaders and progression.

(G) So, you are seeing more consistency in middle leadership? Yes, teachers taking on subject leadership has added a layer of accountability and delegation. Increased consistency is being seen as a result of clearer subject leadership roles, with additional accountability and appropriate delegation now embedded.

By example, the Headteacher confirmed that this model is working effectively. Despite the challenges associated with the building works, staff had responded positively, with strong engagement across the team. The leadership model had supported effective delegation, through a challenging time. Subject leaders are taking responsibility for different aspects of teaching and learning and are supporting one another, sharing good practice and contributing to strong buy-in and a positive impact on practice.

(G) So, in terms of the new build, if we are talking about this as supporting a better transition from nursery to school through developing closer relationships with the nursery, is this working? Baseline data indicates improved transition into school. Whilst some outcomes remain cohort specific compared to historical trends, the current Reception cohort entered school more settled and “hitting the ground running,” with stronger progress seen in the first half term, particularly in fundamental areas such as listening and attention.

The planned move of Early Years into the school building was expected to further strengthen this impact, as teachers would be able to model practice and provide more direct support. It was reported that early data was indicative of this improvement and expected to be reflected more clearly in future data drops

(G) Point 1.1 – *Pupils demonstrating greater inference: where is this happening?* This is most evident in Lower Key Stage 2. The fluency model introduced through the English Hub has supported this improvement and should be applied consistently across all reading.

Governors checked whether teachers are reinforcing the expectation that all texts are read using the same approach, underpinned by the fluency model. The headteacher confirmed that this expectation is being communicated and reinforced to support consistency in practice.

(G) Parent phonics workshop was this well attended. Yes, very well attended, the sessions were targeted a slightly different approach with parents being taught aspects of phonics 'pure' sounds directly by class teachers.

Tapestry had been used to share and communicate phonics sounds alongside, which had enabled targeted support for parents who may have found aspects challenging. It was noted that Little Wandle also provided a dedicated section to support parents, and that the Phonics Lead was able to guide and signpost families appropriately.

(G) Does Little Wandle extend to the current Year 2 cohort?

The Headteacher explained that while the English Hub recommends continued phonics into Year 2, including where pupils had already passed the phonics screening check, the school has taken a considered approach. For children who have already met the phonics threshold, the school's focus would be towards developing inference, comprehension, and wider reading skills. Children who did not achieve the expected standard would continue to receive targeted phonics teaching. This approach reflects a balance between phonics consolidation and progression in reading, and that the English Hub visit scheduled for the following day will provide further opportunity to review and refine this approach.

GB/06/26

Pupil Premium Strategy

The Chair explained the Pupil Premium strategy (available to view on the Hub) in the context of the school, which includes the rationale for how funding is allocated and impact expected. It was noted that a significant proportion of funding is directed towards supporting the emotional wellbeing of individual children, evidencing the impact in this area can sometimes be challenging, as progress is often reflected in softer outcomes i.e. children being happier, more settled, and able to return to learning, rather than through easily quantifiable data. Where approaches had not been as effective as expected, these were reviewed and alternative interventions implemented. Other interventions are used strategically to support wider groups of children through PP supported funding.

Overall funding had increased. Although not significantly for this year it was noted that the numbers of PP children have steadily increased overtime (41 from 11 over past years), reflecting the school changing demographic, as discussed above.

Given the discussions relating to absence, governors noted the considerations given to attendance within the strategy specifically.

(G) The money that the school gets is dependent on parents applying, do parents apply, and how do you get all children to apply? Information about FSM and Pupil Premium eligibility is included within the welcome and induction pack when children start at the school. This approach has been effective and has helped ensure families are informed and supported to apply. There is a confidence that few eligible families are missed. The message being that all families should complete paperwork to ensure no families potentially on the cusp or not being sure of eligibility are missed.

Governors agreed that routinely sharing information with all families provides a useful safeguard and supports identification of eligible children.

GB/07/26

Preschool Update

The Headteacher reported that the preschool grand opening was planned for 6th February 2026 at 9.30am, all governors were invited to attend. It was noted that formal invitations would be circulated and that the event would be promoted locally and all key stakeholders invited.

Progress on the project was reported as positive, with the works completed to the planned timescale. Furniture delivery was confirmed for 29–30 January 2026, and the completed environment was expected to more than meet aspiration.

The Headteacher also reported on a visit to another local school that had undertaken a similar project, to share good practice, inform thinking around operational arrangements and longer-term sustainability and governance.

The setting would be operating a two-year curriculum plan, rather than three to reflect the rapid and different pace of development for children of this age. Governors welcomed the ambition for the preschool and again noted the positive opportunities this development presents.

(G) Have we set the rent? Yes, agreed and will form a clear income line.

GB/08/26

Premises Update

- **Health and Safety**
- **Buildings updates**
- **Risk Assessments**

It was agreed that premises matters, including health and safety, building updates, and risk assessments, would remain a standing agenda item once per term.

The Headteacher reported that asbestos had been identified within the tiling in the corridor leading to the staff room, which had resulted in works being paused as a precautionary measure. The school was currently awaiting the relevant reports before work can recommence.

The Headteacher noted that a temporary mobile staff room was in place and following the flooding alternative arrangements for some children had been supported by the local football club, whose assistance was acknowledged positively. The Headteacher also confirmed that the school's insurance arrangements were covering the full costs for a minimal cost effective excess (£250).

Governors questioned the safeguarding arrangements, including travel between the interim provision and the school site. The Headteacher provided assurance that appropriate safeguarding measures were in place and that arrangements were being monitored and are progressing as planned

(G) What about the rest of the school for asbestos? The Headteacher confirmed that asbestos can be safely managed when it is not disturbed and that this is in line with advice.

(G) Why is the plastic covering the area not in place as it was previously? The survey had confirmed the material had not being disturbed and therefore additional covering was not required at this time.

Governors were assured that the school is operating rigorous health and safety procedures and maintaining strong compliance in this area.

The Headteacher confirmed that throughout the disruption the priority has remained focussed on teaching and learning, and that this has not been compromised.

(G) In the longer term, have the insurance company suggested checking the rest of the building? The Headteacher confirmed that no such recommendation has been made by the insurance company at this stage.

Governors noted that the hall floor remains out of use following the flooding incident and that this continues to be subject to insurance processes. It was noted that, when replacement is considered, the school should be mindful of acoustic requirements, given their importance to the effective operation of the school.

Governors minuted thanks to the Headteacher for his effective project management despite challenging circumstances.

GB/09/26 Overseeing Financial Performance - Financial reporting

- **Arrangements for Review of Financial position inc. SFVS.**

As above, items covering financial reporting would be deferred to link governance and through the full governor budget setting meeting to be held following the LA Finance visit later this term.

GB/10/26 Safeguarding inc. Confirm arrangements to review Child Protection and Safeguarding recording and reporting systems (CP confidential file audit)

Autumn Term Audit had been completed, safeguarding was considered robust with no significant concerns. This had been submitted ahead of the deadline.

The Spring Term confidential file audit would be progressed this term. Meeting with HT and link governor to be arranged outside of the meeting.

CPOMS update

CPOMS is now fully embedded within the school. Consistency of use has improved, actions are followed up appropriately, tracking is robust, and notifications ensure effective oversight by key staff. The Headteacher confirmed that concerns are logged across relevant systems and categories to ensure appropriate monitoring and can appear high without context. It was noted that this data reflects overlapping needs rather than individual children or incidents. One incident can be recorded across multiple categories.

During discussion, a governor noted that where incidents are not categorised by severity (low, medium, high), there is a risk that all logged concerns could be perceived as equally serious. The Headteacher explained that individual incidents can generate multiple CPOMS entries across different categories and that figures therefore need contextual explanation. Governors agreed that providing clearer context, such as indicating how many children are involved and how entries relate to single incidents or ongoing cases, would support more accurate interpretation and scrutiny.

(G) Any updates on the sexualised behaviour aspects, has this been resolved? Yes, this matter has been resolved.

Confidential context, minuted separately.

(G) Can incidents be added by year group? Is the Headteacher aware of which year groups are experiencing greater levels of difficulty? The Headteacher confirmed awareness of patterns through CPOMS monitoring and agreed that presenting incidents by year group would support clearer scrutiny.

Action: (covering above points) HT to provide additional breakdown of CPOMS data, by child, category and cohort to support governors scrutiny of safeguarding and behaviour data.

HT

(G) Are there any groups of particular concern? Concerns are generally low-level and that no significant patterns are currently emerging.

(G) What is happening at lunchtime to support dysregulated pupils? Appropriate support arrangements are in place and that staff are aware of pupils requiring additional support during unstructured times

GB/11/26

Corporate Director's reports

The attendance baseline improvement expectation (ABIE) will be based on schools' circumstances, including location, pupil needs and deprivation. There is no intention to publish the targets, or share the information with Ofsted, but the ABIE will be used to help target support through the Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence (RISE) behaviour and attendance hubs. There are plans to have 90 hubs across the country, with 57 currently in operation.

Actions for Governors.

Governors familiarise themselves with the Attendance Baseline Improvement Expectations (ABIE) for their school and what actions are being taken to achieve the target

Governors to check that their schools have access the Targeting Support meeting with a member of the Education and Attendance Team within the local authority.

Consider with Senior leaders whether your school would benefit from the support available through the RISE Attendance and Behaviour Hubs programme.

Also discussed as part of attendance discussions above **GB/05/26**.

GB/12/26

Correspondence

Governors' Newsletter – Spring term (1) 2026

Also available to view via the Hub. Key articles of note included,

- Admissions Updates - Community and voluntary controlled schools will receive notification in the spring term confirming that NCC has determined the admission arrangements for 2027-2028 and governors must ensure this is noted and the school website update.
- HR Updates – Information on how to support a headteacher who is absent. Key actions for Chairs include notifying HR and Payroll promptly, enabling access to support services including Occupational Health, and holding regular welfare meetings. See article for further details.

- Nottinghamshire Governor Conference – Shaping Inclusive Education Together, Friday 6th March 2026 at Eastwood Hall.

Noted K Round would be attending.

- NCC's Education Improvement Service · New Governors – what is needed and induction guidance
- School Complaints – new toolkit available

A Thank you was given to governors for reinforcing key messages that if parents contact them directly with issues regarding the school, they continue to signpost back to the school and Complaint's Policy.

- East Midlands Education Support Service (Em-Ed) – training updates
- Understanding Equality Duties ·
- Governor Monitoring Visits – recording on GovernorHub ·

GB/13/26 Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training audit and training requirements for 2026/2027

Training is available through EmEd which is included as part of the school's Services for Schools buyback.

There is also training available through The Knowledge, accessed via the Hub.

As discussed above, completion of the Effectiveness Tool on the Hub was a good way to highlight future training needs across the governing body.

GB/14/26 Review of all recent governor monitoring visit reports in line with the 2025 Ofsted inspection framework (Safeguarding, SEND, PP and LAC plus link governors to School Improvement Priorities).

- **Link governor visits schedule for Spring Term.**

The headteacher would send possible dates for link governance visits, once the disruption from the flooding and building project had stabilised.

HT

GB/15/26 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account.

Governors challenged attendance trends for key groups, including Pupil Premium , and questioned the impact of outliers and the actions in place to support improvement.

Scrutiny of CPOMS data, questions related to patterns and categorisation, and identified reduced timetables as an area requiring further assurance and follow-up.

Governors tested the robustness of school data by questioning anomalies, cohort size impact, and headline figures.

Use of shadow data sets, Governors required clear narrative explanation of shadow data to support accurate interpretation of trends across year groups and subjects.

GB/16/26 Confirmation of dates for 2026/2027

Spring term 4 March 2026 at 6pm

Summer term – 7 May 2026 & 1 July 2026 at 6pm

GB/17/26 Determination of confidentiality of business

Governors resolved that other than items deemed confidential at **GB/05/26** and **GB/10/26** and any supporting papers whereby children or staff can be identified, all other papers be made public as needed.

Meeting end 19.41pm.

Signed  (Chair) Date .18th March, 2026

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