Willingham County Primary School

Meeting of the Full Governing Body on

Thursday 15th January 2026 at 7pm (WPS)

MINUTES

Present: Chris Shaw (CS) (Chair), Mona Paalanen (MP) (Headteacher), Angela Walker (AW) (Deputy Head) (left at 7.43pm), Matt Unwin-Riches (MUR) (Vice Chair), Jo Aldhouse (JA), Cherie Davies (CD), Louise Johnston (LS), Sophie Cunningham (SC) Lucy Poskitt (LP) Sean McCann (SM) Annabel Targett (AT) and Emily Lloyd (EL).

Also attending: Charlene Monk (CM), CamClerk.

The minutes are recorded in the order in which items were discussed during the meeting, which may differ from the published agenda.

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Minutes</th><th>Actions</th></tr>
<tr><td>1.</td><td>Welcome from the Chair
The Chair (CS) welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies
Apologies were received and accepted from Yvona Duncan (YD) and Helen McCarthy (HM).

Lara Feather (LF) did not send apologies and was not in attendance.

The meeting was quorate.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>2.</td><td>Declarations of Interest. *
(AW) Deputy Head, formally declared an interest and therefore will withdraw from the meeting for the Confidential Item concerning the Proposed Business Case.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>3.</td><td>Minutes*
i. The minutes of the FGB meeting, held on 6th November 2025, were submitted, and signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.
ii. Actions outstanding and Matters arising (not included elsewhere on the agenda)
<table>
<tr><th>No</th><th>Action</th><th>Owner</th><th>Deadline</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Actions from meeting held on 6 November 2025:</td></tr>
<tr><td>01</td><td>Clerk to undertake paperwork for LP and SM Co-opted Governor roles. Action - closed</td><td>Clerk</td><td>FGB03</td></tr>
<tr><td>02</td><td>SMT, with Pupil voice and the School Council will be involved in raising awareness of safer streets, with a pupil voice article to be submitted for publication in Willingham News. Action – ongoing.</td><td>SMT/School Council</td><td>FGB03</td></tr>
<tr><td>03</td><td>Chair reminded all Governors to update their training completed/records into their profile in GovernorHub by 15th December 2025. Action - closed</td><td>All</td><td>15/12/25</td></tr>
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	04	Chair to send the Annual Skills audit form to all Governors for completion by 15th December 2025. **Action - closed**	All	15/12/25	
	05	Safeguarding Link Governor CS to conduct safeguarding visit this term – autumn 2. **Action - closed**	Chair	End of Autumn 2	
	06	Chair to invite KS2 Phase Lead to FGB03 meeting. **Action – ongoing – Invite to FGB04.**	Chair	FGB03	
4.	**Head Teacher's report ***				

The written Headteacher's report—including updates on Honeypot and the WPS/HP School Development Plan—was circulated in advance of the meeting. The Headteacher confirmed that a Governor had requested additional school context data prior to the meeting, and SMT reports were provided in response.
The Headteacher (MP) presented a summary covering key areas: current context, successes and challenges, attendance, safeguarding and child protection, staffing, standards and achievement, parental engagement, curriculum and teaching and learning, SEND and disadvantaged pupils, premises, health and safety, finance, and other relevant matters.
A key item highlighted was the additional SEND funding of approximately £78,000, which however, does not appear in the January budget statement.

Governor questions/challenges/support followed:
Challenge: Governors raised concerns regarding the limited availability of child psychologists for EHCP assessments?
The Headteacher confirmed that the matter has been escalated to the Local Authority, including the Director of Children's Services, and that the school will participate in a trial offering local support.
Following recent suspensions, the LA Local Inclusion Team provided details of an available child psychologist, with a meeting scheduled for Monday.
The Director of Children's Services reiterated the Local Authority's commitment to inclusion and referenced forthcoming reforms expected in the White Paper due at the end of January, noting ongoing staffing pressures.
The school is awaiting further confirmation from the LA Assistant Director regarding potential additional funding and access to Educational Psychologist support, with an update expected after half term.

Challenge: Have any more EHCPs been approved?
One new EHCP has been granted, and the provision can be fully met with the accompanying funding. This was completed within the 16-week timeframe.
Several older EHCPs already in progress have exceeded 20 weeks.
The school will be participating in a pilot for submitting EHCNAs using a different platform.

	Challenge: HT discretion on keeps school places available for those pupils during extended/persistent absence? Ongoing persistent absence issues, including cases within the travelling community. LA expectations on HT discretion are causing difficult conversations and some strain with parents. Multiple families request extended leave, raising safeguarding concerns and affecting attendance data. **Challenge:** Can the pupil be removed from roll, or can a holding pattern be used? No — this must be managed through the LA Admissions team. Governors are aware of the impact on school data. Admissions update: There are 60 pupils across Years 1 and 2, with a capacity of 30 per year group, and KS1 cannot over-admit. Numbers will need to increase for September. **Challenge:** Are safeguarding concerns increasing? Any incidents or trends? A small number of individual pupils are involved, but current concerns are not indicative of any wider trend or specific recurring behaviour.	
5.	**Honeypots Report** Covered as part of Head Teacher's Report agenda item 4.	
6.	**Brief Finance Budget Update** The Chair of Finance & Premises (LJ) reported that the school is currently forecasting an end-of-year surplus, with SEND funding higher than at the start of the year and in line with expectations. The full budget will be presented at the May FGB meeting. The funding statement is due on 29 January 2026, followed by the budget build and review with the LA before being taken to F&P in April, and then to the May FGB for approval.	
8.	**Planning** The Chair reminded all Governors to review the School Development Plan (SDP) and identify the key areas they wish to focus on, both collectively and individually, in alignment with their Link Governor roles and termly monitoring plans.	
10.	**Committee Updates *** <u>i. Personnel</u> • The Chair of Governors (CS), summarised key points from the last meeting that took place on 12th January 2026. • Head and MUR had resubmitted questions to TAs. No new information came with that. • Staff wellbeing remains positive, with valuable feedback and reflection on changes completed (Office moves/rooms) • The Wellbeing Working Group will schedule a meeting; wellbeing initiatives are ongoing. • A wellbeing survey will be issued in the coming weeks, with results to be shared at FGB04. • All staff have completed safeguarding training. • A transport-related safeguarding concern has been escalated to the LA Transport Team.	

- Staffing update: one maternity return confirmed, TA remaining, no other changes.
- After-school club recruitment successful.
- Teaching staff sickness has decreased year-on-year.
- One flexible working extension has been approved.
- Smartlog in now operational
- Governor (HM) met with Inclusion Lead
- Chair of Governors (CS) provided safeguarding and business-case updates.
- Staff CPD continues positively, including Steplab.
- Sounds-Write training for KS2 staff complete.

ii. Curriculum

The Co-Chair (AT) of Curriculum, summarised key points from the meeting that took place 7th January 2026.

- Subject Lead Progress Reports - Reports were positive, helpful, and informative.. Writing Subject Lead to attend the next meeting.
- AT conducted a Data Visit in December with SMT. Concerns identified Year 2 reading and writing, with considerable number not meeting expected standards. Increasing numbers of EAL and SEND outcomes not improving.
- Fewer pupils achieving greater depth overall.
- Ark is an ambitious scheme that supports greater depth, but inconsistent adaptations risk pupils falling behind.
- Policies were ratified.
- School Website – Governors to review the curriculum section, which is currently out of date.

Governor questions/challenges/support followed:

Challenge: Are you confident that plans are in place to address the data concerns, and can you explain how and why the changes have been identified?
Yes. SMT confirmed that continuous and regular discussions are taking place, leading to early identification of concerns. Targeted interventions are already in place and monitored to address the issues identified.

Challenge: In relation to Maths and the Ark scheme, has the Subject Summary Report been reviewed?
Concerns were noted regarding the balance between following the scheme and meeting pupils' needs. Teachers need to feel confident in making appropriate adjustments, with an emphasis on empowering them to adapt the curriculum where necessary rather than relying solely on the scheme.

Challenge: With changing demographics, are Subject Leads factoring this into their planning and reviews?
Class Teachers are expected to identify individual pupils and the barriers they face. It was noted that this is a good year for the Maths Lead to conduct a review,

	focusing on demographic shifts, barriers to learning, pupils not attaining expected standards, and emerging trends—supported by evidence and analysis**.** **Challenge:** At the last meeting, the use of a TA in class was highlighted as a positive. Has this continued to have an impact for the cohort? There has been a noticeable improvement, particularly for pupils who were previously behind, although progress is steady rather than rapid. The arrangement is now more meaningful and stable across the entire year group. Teachers are routinely dropping in, and TAs are actively monitoring pupils. A potential risk was noted: when a TA becomes a consistent point of support, certain pupils may spend increased time out of class, which will need continued oversight. Action01: SMT to review and agree best practice for TA deployment and consistency, ensuring monitoring of pupil progress is effective across the whole school and not limited to a single cohort. <u>iii. Finance & Premises</u> The Chair (LJ) of Finance & Premises summarised key points from the meeting that took place on 21st November 2025. • Honeypot section of website is out of date – Improvements to visibility, promotion, and overall website design are required; budget has been allocated for updates. • New building 106. Project delayed until Easter 2026 due to a highways query. The SBM and the Chair of F&P have met with the Site Manager to review the situation. • Budget: Overall position remains positive. SEND funding continues to be monitored; spending has been held back, and no new orders will be placed before February half term. • Business Case discussions • Subject access requests reviewed alongside DPO responsibilities. • Catering complaint has been followed up	**SMT**
9.	**Safeguarding*** • The Chair of Governors (CS) conducted a safeguarding walk. One missing signage issue was noted; pupils were well supported and all procedures were followed. • A follow-up update will be provided at the next meeting. No specific themes identified. • This item was also covered under the Headteacher's Report (Agenda Item 5).	
7.	**Proposed Business Case*Confidential Item*** Deputy Head (AW) due to formally declaring an interest withdrew from the meeting at 7.43pm, for the *Confidential Item* concerning the Proposed Business Case **Confidential Minutes**	

11.	**Governor Business** i. Governor training and Board Development The Chair thanked all Governors for completing the termly training record and the annual skills audit, noting that support is available for new Governors undertaking training. The Spring Term 2026 Training Overview has been uploaded to GovernorHub; Governors are asked to review this and align training to their Link Governor roles. ii. School Visits – key dates and planning (Key dates and planning noted.) iii. Feedback from Governor Monitoring Visits It was previously noted that CS conducted a safeguarding visit. The Chair encouraged continued engagement and asked Governors to book further monitoring visits with school staff. iv. Recruitment Needs The terms of HM (Parent Governor) and MUR (Co-opted Governor) conclude in January 2026. The Chair confirmed both have agreed to continue until the end of the 2025/26 academic year. The Governing Body will review recruitment needs for the next academic year. v. Consider LA Cyber Security advise and Link Governor This will be considered as part of the ICT/IT Link Governor role and ongoing discussions. vi. Policy review- No policies for review at this meeting. The Anti-Bullying Policy is scheduled for the next FGB; Clerk to confirm.	
12.	**Summary of Actions*** See table at end of minutes.	
13.	**Date of Next Meeting*** *FGB03 Thursday 19th March* *Note change of FGB04 from Thursday 7th to Thursday 14th May 2026, 7pm at the school*	
13.	**Review the Impact of this Meeting*** The Chair of Governors (CS) noted the value of the detailed business case and thanked the Head for leading challenging but necessary discussions in the best interests of the school. Governors acknowledged the thorough preparation undertaken and expressed appreciation for the collaborative approach. The Board looks forward to receiving further updates as actions progress.	

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.52pm

Table of Outstanding Actions

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02	SMT, with Pupil voice and the School Council will be involved in raising awareness of safer streets, with a pupil voice article to be submitted for publication in *Willingham News*.	SMT/School Council	FGB03
06	Chair to invite KS2 Phase Lead to FGB04 meeting.	Chair	FGB04
Actions from meeting held on 15 January 2026:			
01	SMT to review and agree best practice for TA deployment and consistency, ensuring monitoring of pupil progress is effective across the whole school and not limited to a single cohort.	SMT	FGB04

Future agenda items – FGB04

- Anti-bullying Policy