



Be kind, work hard, love learning

Agenda Number	Beechfield Local Governing Committee - Action Table Meeting Date: 3rd February 2026	Person Responsible
5	Sign approved minutes via Governor Hub	Chair
7	Advertise the parent governor vacancy following Ruth Dufton's resignation	HT
7	Attend governor meeting on Thursday 16th April 2026 at 9.30am to 12pm at the school (governor day brought forward for Ofsted preparation)	All governors
7	Attend Ofsted inspection training at Cherry Tree School on Wednesday 25th February at approximately 3.45pm, delivered by Lawrence Haynes, Chief Executive Officer of the Spiral Trust. Access Ofsted training resources via YouTube and the National College platform for those unable to attend in-person training	All governors
13	Complete outstanding training and sections via Governor Hub	Meredith Correyo
14	Complete a governor visit on vulnerable children's curriculum	Emma Malone
14	Complete a 'day in the life of a child' visit as soon as possible	Meredith Correyo
18	Provide feedback to the trust regarding possible reductions in the length of the parent survey	Clerk

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Minutes of Beechfield Local Governing Committee Meeting held on 3rd February 2026 at 7pm via Teams

Governor	Governor Type	16th September 2025	20 th November 2025	3 rd February 2026	
Lesly Adams (chair)	Co-opted governor	Present	Present	Present	
Jennifer Batanga	Co-opted governor	Present (online)	Absent	Present	
James Brown	Co-opted governor	Present (online)	Present	Present	
Meredith Correyo	Parent governor	Present (online)	Absent	Present	
Swati Diwan (Year 4 Teacher)	Staff governor (teacher)	Present (online)	Present	Present	
Ruth Dufton	Parent governor	Apologies	Present	Resigned	Resigned
Emma Malone	Co-opted governor	Apologies	Present	Present	
Gillian Jackson (HT)	Headteacher	Present	Present	Present	
Emma Lad (Clerk)	Clerk	Present	Present	Present	
Emily Fuller (Assistant Head)	Observing	Present	Present	Present	
Kelly Rogers	Staff governor (support)	Apologies	Present	Present	
Ellen Shaw	Staff governor (teacher)	Present	Present	Present	
Midhat Talibi	Co-opted governor	Present	Present	Present	
In attendance					
Lara Carvelho	Pastoral lead (until 7.22pm)		Present	Present	
Rachel Morgan	EYFS lead		Present	Present	
Melissa Cahill				Present	



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Please see Appendix A: Discussion from Governor Hub ahead of the meeting

Meeting started 7pm

Governor (G) challenge is highlighted in yellow Governor actions are highlighted in italics

KEY:	Approval	Information	For feedback/questions	Action
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No	ITEM	Person responsible
1.	Welcome, apologies and consent The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting was quorate.	
2.	Notification of any other business (Chair, HT and Clerk to be informed 48 hours before the meeting) None requested.	
3.	Conflict of interest with agenda items to be declared None declared further to those identified on Governor Hub.	
4.	Early Years update from Rachael Morgan The lead updated on the changes which have taken place: Implementation of Strong Foundations pilot actions Updated behaviour expectations Changes to the timetable Implementation of half termly end points Training for staff Improvements in the environment. Additional external reviews to ensure all best practice is implemented for interactions with children. GLD predictor reviews with an external advisor and actions to be implemented in the setting. Early identification of additional needs. G: Strong foundations in the Early Years is important for the school. Its good to hear the investment in staff and the environment to support children. HT: The actions have come from the School Improvement Partner review. These are the final improvements to the area. The SIP was very complementary about the environment and improvements in teaching. Chair: Having read the Strong Foundations report I have seen evidence of the advice being implemented in the Early Years. The school is very good at responding positively and quickly to any additional advice. The seedlings provision has also been updated. There has now been a change to the environment to improve the children's ability to complete free flow play and	



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engage in activities as a class. The routine has been implemented and become embedded quickly. The children are making faster progress because of the changes. The provision is working well as a whole.

G: The Strong Foundations pilot is clearly being implemented effectively. It is positive to see the investment in both staff training and the learning environment to support children's development.

Chair: Having read the Strong Foundations report, there is clear evidence of the advice being implemented across Early Years. The school responds positively and quickly to external advice and recommendations.

The linked governors report is available via Governor Hub and reflects the presentation from the staff. There are also pictures in the presentation

7.15pm Rachael Morgan left the meeting

SEND update – Melissa Cahill

There are now 24 children with EHCP's. Two children have left to go to a specialist provision. There are two more children who will be moving to Colnbrook in September which is fantastic news for the children and their families.

A child who joined in September is being supported and an EHCP has been applied for to support a specialist provision for next year. There are also referrals being completed for children.

The TA's are now not assigned to one child, and this is better for the children and ensures there isn't an over reliance. The teacher could be working with the SEND child, or the class TA or the specialist TA. They are now called the familiar adults. This has helped with regulation. If children move to a specialist provision, they will not have one adult working with them all day.

G: Is there a handover session for staff?

MC: There is either a handover in person, or they can message each other with any relevant information.

G: There is a national issue with support for children with SEND which is impacting the children, families and school staff whilst a plan is put in place.

7.21pm Melissa Cahill left the meeting.

Pastoral update – Lara Carvalho

There were 83 children given substantial support last term and 63 families.

One family who was struggling with attendance has been supported with holistic support. This has included support with accessing furniture etc. As a result of this support there has been an improvement in attendance and an improvement in the working relationship with the family.

Staff have an increasing responsibility to challenge other professionals and ensure the needs of the child are being met. Safeguarding for the school is paramount.

The school calls consultation hub regularly but this is changing and a call time will have to be booked which will be challenging.

Feedback from parents is regularly collected. External agencies are spoken to, and funding is accessed from a variety of sources.



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	New books have been sourced around emotional literacy. The school is speaking to Arbor about whether the register system could be updated to also ask how children are feeling through colour identification. This would help with identifying patterns. G: The report across the trust is impersonal so it is helpful to have an update from you on how the school is progressing. G: The trust-wide pastoral report provides useful data for comparing across schools; however it is helpful to receive school-specific updates which provide context about how pastoral provision is progressing at Beechfield. LC: The trust-wide report facilitates professional collaboration between pastoral leads across all three schools, but each school also maintains detailed school-specific context documents. All schools share the same ethos of restoring dignity to families and working holistically to support both children and their families when help is needed. G: It is clear at the school that the staff know the children as individuals. LC: It is important to give the families dignity. A child thanked me at Christmas for helping his family and it is important to the school to help when help is needed for families. All the schools in the trust have the same ethos and we all have the same goal. G: It is important that there is clear communication with parents and this is an area of strength for our school. 7.32pm Lara Carvalho left the meeting.																
5.	Minutes of the last meeting for approval and matters arising <i>The minutes were approved and will be signed by the Chair via Governor Hub.</i> Matters arising from 20.11.25: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>Action Table - Meeting held on 20th November 2025</th><th>Person Responsible</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5</td><td>Sign approved minutes via Governor Hub</td><td>Chair – completed</td></tr> <tr> <td>7</td><td>Complete governor effectiveness survey and confirmations on Governor Hub</td><td>Jennifer Batanga / Meredith Correyo – item 7</td></tr> <tr> <td>7</td><td>Book and complete school visit before Christmas</td><td>Emma Malone / Ruth Dufton – item 14</td></tr> <tr> <td>11</td><td>Implement lockdown practice on staff inset day in January</td><td>Headteacher – completed</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Action Table - Meeting held on 20th November 2025	Person Responsible	5	Sign approved minutes via Governor Hub	Chair – completed	7	Complete governor effectiveness survey and confirmations on Governor Hub	Jennifer Batanga / Meredith Correyo – item 7	7	Book and complete school visit before Christmas	Emma Malone / Ruth Dufton – item 14	11	Implement lockdown practice on staff inset day in January	Headteacher – completed	Chair
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6.	Communication from the Trust Trustees' minutes																
7.	Chairs update - The school has received a letter from the Secretary of State for Education, Bridget Phillipson congratulating the school on its strong results for disadvantaged children. The letter also asked if the school would be prepared to share best practice with other schools in the area to help them achieve similar standards - Governors' recruitment and induction Ruth has resigned as a governor and was thanked for her time as a governor. <i>The HT will advertise the parent governor vacancy.</i> - Ofsted inspection The SLT would like to bring the governor day forward to allow for an update on the expectations of the new Ofsted Inspection Framework. Curriculum and teaching – Midhat Safeguarding/ Attendance – Lesly SEND – Jennifer Curriculum – Emma Malone Leadership and governance – all governors EYFS – Lesly Personal development and wellbeing – link governor to be allocated. The school is in a strong position for the next inspection and governors need to be clear on their answers and the monitoring which is taking place.	HT Chair															



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	<i>Thursday 16th April 2026 – 9.30am to 12pm at the school - new date for governor meeting.</i> Ofsted inspection training <i>Ofsted training for all governors will be held at Cherry Tree School on Wednesday 25th February at approximately 15:45. The training will be delivered by Lawrence Haynes, Chief Executive Officer of the Spiral Trust who is also an Ofsted inspector. All governors are invited to attend. For those unable to attend in person, governors can access Ofsted training resources via YouTube and the National College platform which provide guidance on inspection processes and governor expectations.</i>	All governors All governors.
8.	Finance report – sent via Governor Hub Overview of the approved budget The schools finances are in a good place at present and there are no further concerns to be raised.	
9.	Headteacher report IDSR review The progress is good in school over time. There are two areas that will be a line of enquiry – attendance overall and for vulnerable groups and persistent absence. This is now being monitored weekly instead of every two weeks. G: Has there been any consideration given to children who are late, but it becomes absence? HT: There is a cut off time for lateness which becomes unauthorised absence which starts from five minutes after the register closes. The school needs to ensure children are in school and are punctual. There are not too many children who are late. The vast majority are on time. There is support offered when the children are late. G: Are you confident in the support being offered and the work being completed by the school? HT: I am confident in what is being offered but the improvement has only been evident in the data recently. In the inspection this coupled with the higher suspension rates could affect the outcome for behaviour and attendance. This could be frustrating when the suspensions are for a particular group in school. Linked Governor visits have taken place on this area. The school has received notification of the new personalised attendance target (ABIE) from the DfE. This compares the school's attendance to 20 similar schools nationally and sets personalised improvement targets. This is in addition to existing attendance monitoring and improvement strategies. School context and vulnerable children identification The school context has been updated in the SEF and reflects the uniqueness of the school and its community.	



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Safeguarding

A lock down drill was completed by staff within their phases which worked well and allowed for greater staff confidence should they need to complete a lock down procedure.

Pupil numbers. Actual v budget

There are 51 children who have the school as first choice for September 2026.

Children's attendance

The attendance is 97.1% today.

Suspension/ exclusions

There have been suspensions for two children. There is external support being sought and alternative provision where appropriate. Reviews of provision and support plans have been carried out and there have been improvements since the last suspension.

G: How are suspended children recorded in attendance data?

HT: Suspended children are counted as absent in attendance data. External suspension at this school is only used as a last resort when children display very violent behaviour.

The school currently has five children on reduced timetables with full parental and local authority agreement. These are reviewed weekly in SLT meetings to ensure the school is working to increase the time children spend in school. One child's reduced timetable ended this week. The school never uses reduced timetables for behaviour management - they are only implemented for children's social, emotional and mental health difficulties and their overall wellbeing. This is a legal requirement.

G: The school is working within a challenging national context for SEND provision whilst continuing to provide extensive support for children and families.

HT: The school seeks external support including DSPL 9 tier 4 behaviour support and alternative provision where appropriate. Support plans are reviewed regularly, and improvements have been evident since the last suspensions.

HIP visit feedback and progress against actions.

The Seedlings provision has been reviewed and any recommendations actioned. Maths is utilising the mastery approach. There is a review of provision maps and ensuring staff are clear on why they are doing what they are doing.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Strong foundations are being reviewed by staff to ensure all children can be involved and supported to close any gaps in their learning. Reception and year one have been supporting children with gaining skills and ensuring there are clear systematic approaches for all lessons.

G: It is clear in the documentation that you need to be ensuring children's learning is secure before moving on. Is that happening?

The SLT has empowered teachers to slow down or adapt the curriculum where



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	needed to ensure children's learning is secure before moving forward. Teachers have permission to strip back non-statutory curriculum materials (such as Talk for Writing and White Rose) as long as they continue teaching the statutory National Curriculum. Staff G: The Key Stage 1 staff are implementing this approach where required. The leadership from SLT empowers teachers to support classes at their own pace, focusing on securing foundational skills. Staff attendance There has been a sickness bug. Staff are aware we are supportive but also aware when there needs to be a reduction.															
10.	Stakeholder engagement Staff survey results G: There were concerns raised by TA's have you managed with them? HT: There has been a minimal increase across the school for results. There are areas the school has limited control over which includes pay. We are always looking at additional ways to support staff and their wellbeing, but we have limited resources. G: The immediate responses for staff, has that been shared? HT: Yes, it was sent out with staff briefing with responses to any major issues raised. G: That is fantastic practice. G: When will the parent survey be completed? The parent survey is currently open with 90 responses received compared to 130 in the previous cycle. The survey closes before parents' evening which limits opportunities to gather responses in person. G: Governors discussed the accessibility and length of the parent survey. The survey questions are lengthy and use complex language which may not be accessible to all parents. This feedback will be shared with the trust. G: When is the pupil survey? HT: It is taking place in the next term.															
11.	Policy tracker review and policies due a) Trust policies approved – refer to Every b) School policies – refer to Every - none <table><tr><td>Business Continuity Plan</td><td>November 2026</td></tr><tr><td>Behaviour Policy</td><td>July 2026</td></tr><tr><td>Collective Act of Worship</td><td>February 2027</td></tr><tr><td>Equality Statement including accessibility plan</td><td>September 2028</td></tr><tr><td>Health and Safety (Local) Policy</td><td>November 2026</td></tr><tr><td>Home Learning Policy</td><td>July 2026</td></tr><tr><td>Home School agreement</td><td>November 2026</td></tr></table>	Business Continuity Plan	November 2026	Behaviour Policy	July 2026	Collective Act of Worship	February 2027	Equality Statement including accessibility plan	September 2028	Health and Safety (Local) Policy	November 2026	Home Learning Policy	July 2026	Home School agreement	November 2026	
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	Marking, Feedback and Presentation Policy	February 2027												
12.	Risk register Monitoring social media was an issue for the school recently. The trust was able to remove the post. G: What is the school's policy on mobile phones? HT: Children in Years 5 and 6 may bring phones to school for their journey. Phones must be handed to the class teacher upon arrival and are locked in the teacher's drawer for the school day. They are returned at the end of the day. Children are not permitted to use phones on school grounds at any time during the school day.													
13.	Training <i>Governor training booked /to be booked/ completed with National College</i> <i>Meredith Correyo was reminded to complete her training and sections via Governor Hub.</i>	Meredith Correyo												
14.	Governor monitoring reports <i>Midhat and Jennifers reports were uploaded to Governor Hub</i> <i>Emma Malone will complete a visit on vulnerable children’s curriculum.</i> <i>All governors were asked to complete a 'day in the life of a child' visit, particularly focusing on disadvantaged pupils to observe how they access the curriculum and what provision is in place to support them. Meredith Correyo was asked to complete as soon as possible.</i>	All governors/ Meredith Correyo												
15.	Clerks update – available via Governor Hub.													
16.	Any other business – none requested at the beginning of the meeting.													
17.	Future Dates <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Date</th><th>Start</th><th>End</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Ofsted training – Wednesday 25th February 2026 at Cherry Tree School</td><td>3.45pm</td><td>5pm</td></tr><tr><td>Thursday 16th April 2026 at the school</td><td>9.30am</td><td>12pm</td></tr><tr><td>Tue 30 Jun 2026 at the school</td><td>09:00</td><td>15:30</td></tr></tbody></table> <i>Governors were reminded there is training via YouTube and on the National College which all governors can access.</i>	Date	Start	End	Ofsted training – Wednesday 25th February 2026 at Cherry Tree School	3.45pm	5pm	Thursday 16 th April 2026 at the school	9.30am	12pm	Tue 30 Jun 2026 at the school	09:00	15:30	All governors All governors
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18.	Items to be sent to CEO, Chair of Trustees and Trust Governance professional by the clerk													



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	<i>Governors discussed the length of the survey and the questions involved. The clerk was asked to take feedback to the trust regarding possible reductions in the length of the survey.</i>	Clerk
	Governors were asked by the Chair if they felt they had the opportunity to ask questions and they all agreed they had the opportunity to ask questions and agreed the meeting was well run. Meeting ended: 8.30pm	



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4. Discussion via Governor Hub ahead of the meeting

Emma Lad about 1 hour ago

Information on the new ABIE rate for attendance for schools

Information for schools and local authorities: Updated similar schools attendance comparison reports available

Updated attendance reports are now available on [View your education data](#) (VYED), showing named top-performing similar schools and your indicative attendance baseline improvement expectation (ABIE).

Mainstream schools with sufficient data will receive reports each half and full term. You can find out how to [access and use your similar schools comparison report](#).

For practical support, schools are encouraged to [join attendance and behaviour hubs and can express interest online](#).

Everyone

Emma Lad about 2 hours ago

New governor meeting date: Thursday 16th April 2026 – 9.30am to 12pm at the school

Thank you

Emma

Everyone

Emma Lad about 2 hours ago



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Hello! This is just a friendly nudge to (re)confirm the following on GovernorHub: "I have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025" (via the following link). It is now overdue. Note: this message has only been emailed to those needing to (re)confirm so if you are viewing this on the noticeboard and haven't got the email you are all good to go. Thanks!

[Link to your Profile Page](#)

Emma Penfold

+4 more

Emma Lad about 2 hours ago

Hello! This is just a friendly nudge to (re)confirm the following on GovernorHub: "Confirm your declaration of interests" (via the following link). It is now overdue. Note: this message has only been emailed to those needing to (re)confirm so if you are viewing this on the noticeboard and haven't got the email you are all good to go. Thanks!

[Link to your Profile Page](#)

Emma Penfold

+4 more

Emma Lad about 2 hours ago

Having an issue getting into Teams. Give me a minute

Everyone

Emma Lad 1 day ago

Hello all,

A reminder of the meeting, tomorrow, on the 3rd February 2026 at 7pm [via Teams](#)

You can access documentation here: [3. 03.02.26](#)



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Matters arising from the last meeting to be reviewed:

Date	Start	End	Committee	Location
Tue 30 Jun 2026	09:00	15:30	Beechfield School	school

Thank you
Emma

Everyone

James Brown 2 days ago

I have been attempting to review the documents: An enormous amount of work to create. And some comments and questions have come to mind:

PST Report: Congratulations to all the schools that have obtained the Hertfordshire's Emotional Mental Health Wellbeing in Schools Mark.

Health & Safety Report: How is the child with the broken arm now ?

Staff Survey: I assume that the 73% to In the past three months, how often have you considered resigning ... Means that only 27% have ?

Safeguarding Report: Is there and answer the question :Are there any outstanding training needs that have been identified?

Heads Power Point:

IDSR Review: It is good to see the all the green writing.

HIP Actions Feedback:



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EYFS – Individual Pupil Engagement. How is the action on these yellow marked area going?

Best Wishes, James

Everyone

- Gillian Jackson

Hi James

Thank you very much for reading all of the information.

The child with the broken arm has recovered. We had a risk assessment in place until the cast was removed.

Yes to the staff survey comment.

We will have the EYFS lead at the meeting tonight to talk about the actions.

See you later

Gillian
about 9 hours ago

Gillian Jackson 5 days ago
Dear All,

Things to consider as governors following the Ofsted training Stevenage today.

Your role is to provide:

- strategic leadership - how well do you know the school?
- accountability and assurance - what action has been taken and what is the impact?



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- strategic engagement

Key takeaways

- Context is key - knowing the school
- Ofsted want to know that all decisions have the best interests of the child at the heart of them
- There will be a contextual learning walk with the Head, an Inclusion learning walk and one focused on curriculum, teaching and achievement.
- The framework is a set of standards - all these need to be met to be expected. If they aren't all met then it will be requires attention.
- Safeguarding is met or not met
- Foundational skills and knowledge is paramount - we can talk more about this at the meeting if you would like to
- Disadvantaged/vulnerable pupil support and PPG strategy will be explored in significant depth

Questions to consider...

1. What are the key priorities for improvement?
2. How do you ensure that the school's vision is being realisted in practice?
3. How do you monitor progress against the school development plan?
4. What do you see as the school's main strengths and areas for development?
5. How is Pupil Premium funding used and evaluated?
6. How do you know that pupils are making good progress?
7. How do you evaluated the quality of education provided?
8. How do you assure yourselves that safeguarding is effective?
9. How do you ensure that resources are deployed effectively to support all pupils including those with SEND?

There will be some further training about Ofsted at Cherry Tree on Wednesday 25th Febrary 3:30-5 if you would like to attend.

See you all on Tuesday

Gillian

Everyone

Gillian Jackson 6 days ago

Dear All,



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Please find below:

Health and Safety Report

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/6979dd4501ae85b6e4cca535/view>

Trust Pastoral Report

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/6979dd953704344813b6d53d/view>

Thanks

Everyone

Lesly Adams 7 days ago

Hi All,

In advance of our meeting next Tuesday I just wanted to mention a few things

-Governor visits- I wonder if the parent governors could consider "A day in the Life of..."style of visit where a pupil is shadowed for a day (or a morning) to see what school is like through their eyes. What support is in place for them to access the full range of what the school offers..academic - social - wellbeing ? For example- how does a pupil who is new to the school/new to English cope ?

Midhat and Jennifer , could you both give a short verbal account of your visits and Emma our clerk can capture them as evidence that we are indeed monitoring and challenging. (we are beginning to get our Ofsted hats on !)

Emma. for your visit could you please plan to look at Curriculum through an Inclusive lens

Gillian - could you please summarise for us what you learned at the recent Ofsted Training you attended - you said it was very useful?

Thanks



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Lesly

Everyone

- Jennifer Batanga

Good Afternoon Lesly,
I will finalise my report and upload it.
I am Also happy to give a verbal account.
Thanks
Jennifer
7 days ago

- Gillian Jackson

Hi Lesly,

We had a little bit of Ofsted training with the CEO from the Spiral Multi Academy Trust last week and tomorrow (Thursday) I am going to Stevenage with the three other Headteachers for a day of Ofsted training. I'll update you after that!

6 days ago

Lesly Adams 7 days ago

Thank you Gillian , you have preempted my question about a breakdown of the IDSR information which is very detailed and time consuming to read.

- If I have understood correctly we have been above average in all areas for the past 2 years? Is "average" the same as National?

-As safeguarding governor I can attest to having studied the safeguarding report's accuracy. Also I spent a very interesting and rewarding session with Emily Fuller looking at the way the school monitors and reacts to ABSENCES- the rigour with which absences are chased up by phone calls, emails, home visits . The way all the information is cross referenced and logged is impressive. Children with challenging home circumstances are sometimes collected from home to ensure that they can attend school.

Children and their families are well known, understood and supported.

-Staff survey is positive with staff feeling valued,supported and listened to. I see some support staff registered areas they were unhappy with and a meeting was held to discuss...were the issues resolved?



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-Finances are positive - which is reassuring - I didn't understand the phrase
"Nursery income £2.000 "?

I haven't yet had a chance to look at the School Plan review..

Everyone

Gillian Jackson 8 days ago
Dear All,

Looking forward to seeing you all next week.

Please find below:

The Headteacher Report to Governors

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/69778dfde2b52010686d5feb/view>

Autumn Term 2025 Safeguarding report (I will do a Spring one for you at Easter)

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/69778e364e0b3290c2ace558/view>

School Plan and review

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/69778f5adfd4afa58c9f3d4d/view>

Staff survey information

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/69778fd8c35abfe519c8eee2/view>

<https://app.governorhub.com/document/697790429c0d16a957317c06/view>

Gillian



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Everyone

Emma Lad 8 days ago
Hello all,

A reminder you are invited the Inclusive MAT Annual General Meeting, this Thursday, 29th January at 6pm [via Teams](#)

You can access the agenda and other documentation here: [2025](#)

Please let me know if you will be able to attend

Thank you
Emma

Everyone

Emma Lad 11 days ago

Weekly news round-up

Education Secretary speech at BETT UK conference

This [speech](#) at BETT sets out the Education Secretary's priorities for the role of technology in education, focusing on how digital tools – including AI – can be used safely and effectively to improve outcomes, reduce workload and support teachers and leaders.

DfE: Attendance data

Latest [attendance data](#) up to 09 January 2026 shows the attendance rate (proportion of possible sessions attended) was 93.10% across all schools in the week commencing 05 January 2026.

Absence was 0.04 percentage points higher across all schools in the week commencing 05 January 2026 than in the equivalent week of the previous academic year. This reflects a decrease in authorised absence and an increase in unauthorised absence.

By school type, the absence rates across the week commencing 05 January 2026 were:

- 5.60% in state-funded primary schools (3.36% authorised and 2.24% unauthorised)
- 8.10% in state-funded secondary schools (4.51% authorised and 3.58% unauthorised)



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- 13.35% in state-funded special schools (9.25% authorised and 4.11% unauthorised)
The attendance rate across the 2025/26 academic year to date was 93.36%.

Youth Sports Trust: Inclusion Live Week

Since 2022, the Youth Sports Trust has hosted [Inclusion Live Week](#) – a series of virtual webinars to help schools deliver meaningful and inclusive experiences for young people with SEND.

Inclusion Live 2026 will take place from 26–30 January 2026, featuring six webinars throughout the week.

1. Inspiring inclusion through major sporting events: Monday 26 January 2026, 15:30-16:30
2. Unlocking the power of school swimming for young people with SEND: Tuesday 27 January 2026, 15:30-16:30
3. Creating inclusive environments for neurodivergent young people: Wednesday 28 January 2026, 15:30-16:30
4. Embedding strength and balance in the daily lives of young people: Thursday 29 January 2026, 12:15-13:15
5. Designing an inclusive PE curriculum for every young person: Thursday 29 January 2026, 15:30-16:30
6. Creating sustainable enrichment opportunities for young people with SEND: Friday 30 January 2026, 12:15-13:15

You can sign up for the sessions [here](#).

The DfE has announced a £200 million investment to boost the expertise of teachers in supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The programme aims to provide all teachers with specialist training, focusing on early identification and evidence-based interventions. This move is a central pillar of the government's wider strategy to ensure more children with additional needs can thrive within mainstream settings [\[DfE\]](#).

Read Governor Hub's [article](#) to get to grips with how Ofsted will inspect the new evaluation area of inclusion in your school under the 2025 framework.

Join the national campaign for better school funding

This week, f40, the cross-party local authority campaign group, met to discuss how fairer funding could be secured for schools and trusts amidst the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) crisis.

Ahead of the forthcoming Schools White Paper, the group is urging the government to ensure SEND reforms are backed by sufficient funding to enable implementation on the ground.

NGA has partnered with f40 to develop a model letter that governors and trustees can send to their local MP. If you would like to join the call to action, you can download the model letter [here](#).



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For more information on the current state of the SEND system, read [NGA's recently published paper.](#)

[Write to your MP](#)

New DfE guidance on mobile phone policies

The Department for Education (DfE) has announced new [non-statutory guidance for schools on the use of mobile phones](#). This comes amid growing concerns about the impact of mobile phones on children's wellbeing, alongside increasing calls to raise the minimum age for accessing social media platforms.

As part of this shift, Ofsted inspections will place greater emphasis on mobile phone use, with schools expected to demonstrate how effectively their mobile phone policies are implemented as part of their wider behavior management strategies.

The DfE has also launched a consultation on restricting children's use of social media, which could ultimately lead to a ban for children under the age of 16.

Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson stated: "We have been clear that mobile phones have no place in our schools but now we're going further through tougher guidance and stronger enforcement. Mobile phones have no place in schools. No ifs, no buts."

New parental complaints guidance published

New [guidance](#) has been published to address a sharp rise in parental complaints, with a focus on rebuilding trust and encouraging calmer, more constructive dialogue between parents and schools. Published by Parentkind, the guidance was developed in collaboration with the DfE, Ofsted and 13 education bodies, including NGA, in response to growing concerns about escalating disputes and abuse directed at school staff.

The guidance sets out a five-step process to help parents raise concerns respectfully and at the appropriate level, from classroom issues to whole-school matters. It urges families to reflect on whether an issue is feedback, a concern or a formal complaint, and discourages aggressive behaviour, personal accusations, unnecessary escalation and the use of AI to generate complaints.

The guidance aims to help "reset the relationship" between parents and schools ahead of the upcoming Schools White Paper which will set out planned



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improvements to the complaints system.

Updated AI safety standards for schools

Speaking at the UK AI for Education Summit and Bett UK Conference, the Secretary of State for Education, Bridget Phillipson, announced [strengthened safety standards](#) for generative artificial intelligence (AI) products used in schools. The updates are aimed at developers and suppliers and cover critical areas including mental health and cognitive development.

The government also announced a £23 million investment to expand the use of AI and edtech in education. The four-year pilot will see more than 1,000 schools and colleges involved and will begin in September.