Willingham County Primary School

Meeting of the Full Governing Body on

Thursday 24th September 2026 at 7pm (WPS)

MINUTES

Present: Chris Shaw (CS) (Chair), Mona Paalanen (MP) (Headteacher), Jo Aldhouse (JA), Elysia Allen (EA), Sophie Cunningham (SC), Cherie Davies (CD), Yvona Duncan (YD), Emily Lloyd (EL) and Lucy Poskitt (LP).

Also attending: Charlene Monk (CM), CamClerk.

	Minutes	Actions
1.	**Welcome from the Chair** The Chair (CS) welcomed all to the meeting. **Apologies** Apologies were received and accepted from Lara Feather (LF), Louise Johnston (LS), Annabel Targett (AT), and Sean McCann (SM) The meeting was quorate.	
2.	**Annual Pecuniary Interest/Code of Conduct/Annual Declarations** Governors were reminded to review and update their annual declarations of interest via their GovernorHub profiles and to complete and re-sign the Annual Pecuniary Interest Form and Code of Conduct. Governors confirmed that declarations would be kept up to date throughout the year.	
3.	**Declarations of Interest. *** There were no declarations of interest concerning items on the agenda.	
4.	**Annual Elections, Appointments and Committee Membership** **i. Election of Chair for 2026/27** The current Chair (CS) outlined the responsibilities and expectations of the role. Governors held a lengthy and detailed discussion regarding the election of a Chair for the 2026/27 academic year. Whilst all Governors recognised the importance of the position, no Governor present felt able to commit to the significant time and responsibility required and, consequently, no nominations were initially forthcoming. During the discussion, Governors considered a range of options, including the appointment of a Chair, Co-Chairs or Vice-Chairs, as well as the possibility of seeking support from outside the Governing Board, including through Local Authority networks. It was acknowledged that a number of Governors were relatively new to the Board and that four Governors had submitted apologies, leading some Governors to express concerns that such an important decision was being made without the full Board being present. The Clerk advised that the Governing Board could not continue its business without the election of both a Chair and Vice-Chair. Chris Shaw (CS) confirmed that, whilst he remained committed to supporting the Board, he had intended for 2025/26 to be his final year as Chair and made clear that, if re-elected, 2026/27 would be his final year in the role. He emphasised the need for robust succession planning during the year.	

Following extensive discussion and in recognition of the need to ensure continuity of leadership and effective governance, Chris Shaw (CS) agreed to put himself forward for election. Governors unanimously **elected** Chris Shaw (CS) as Chair of the Governing Board for the 2026/27 academic year and noted the expectation that succession planning would be a key priority during the year.

ii. Election of Vice-Chair for 2026/27

Yvona Duncan (YD), was unanimously **elected** Vice-Chair of the governing body for the 2026-27 academic year.

iii. Appointment of Statutory and Additional Link Governors

Governors **agreed** the appointment of Chris Shaw (CS) as Safeguarding Link Governor and Elysia Allen (EA) as SEND Link Governor. Governors further agreed that no additional Link Governor appointments were required for 2026/27 and that all other existing Link Governor roles and responsibilities would remain unchanged.

iv. Appointment of Committee Chairs and agree Sub-Committee Membership

Governors agreed the following committee chairs and memberships for 2026/27:

Personnel Committee: Chris Shaw (CS) was appointed Chair. Membership: CS, SC, MP (Headteacher), and JA (Staff Governor).

Finance & Premises Committee: Louise Johnston (LJ) was appointed Chair. Membership: LJ, YD, MP (Headteacher), and JA (Staff Governor).

Curriculum Committee: Annabel Targett (AT) and Lara Feather (LF) were appointed Co-Chairs. Membership: LF, LP, AT, CD, EL, EA and MP (Headteacher).

v. Agreement of membership for the HTPM (Headteacher's Performance Management) Committee

Governors **agreed** that Chris Shaw (CS) would serve on the HTPM Committee for 2026/27, with one further Governor to be confirmed following the meeting scheduled for 12 October.

vi. Agreement of membership for the Pay Body Committee

Governors **agreed** that Sophie Cunningham (SC) and Chris Shaw (CS) would serve on the Pay Body Committee for 2026/27. Additional committee members would be appointed if required.

5. Minutes*

i. The minutes of the FGB meeting, held on 9th July 2026, 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)

No	Action	Owner	Deadline
Actions from meeting held on 9 July 2026:			
01	Clerk to undertake paperwork for New Co-opted Governor **Action - closed**	Clerk	FGB01
02	Chair to write to new parents in September to promote current Governing Body vacancies. **Action – ongoing –**	Chair	September 2026

	03	At FGB02 Headteacher to provide feedback on staff responses to increased classroom ownership and accountability, including the impact on teaching standards. **Action – ongoing –**	Headteacher	FGB02	
	04	Headteacher to review the format of SDP reporting and consider how achievements and completed objectives can be clearly highlighted. **Action - closed**	Headteacher	FGB01	
6.	**Annual Governance Documents and Policies Approval** Governors to review, approve and/or adopt the following documents for the 2026/27 academic year: **i. Standing Orders 2026/27 - approved.** **ii. Terms of Reference 2026/27** – Committees to approve ToR in first meeting and send to FGB02 for approval. **iii. Instrument of Government - approved.** **iv. Governing Board Code of Conduct 2026/27- approved.** **v. Staff Code of Conduct - approved.** **vi. Local Authority Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2026/27 (Governors to read and sign via GovernorHub) - approved.** **vii. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026/27** (Governors to confirm they have read and understood the statutory guidance via GovernorHub) **- approved.** **viii. Whistleblowing Policy- approved.** **ix. Complaints policy (Updated 2026) - approved.** With reference to point 5.8 in the policy Governors considered the proposed approaches for Stage 2 complaint panels and **agreed** to adopt the option allowing in-person representation at the Chair's discretion. Governors further **agreed** that the policy should be amended to clarify that a second member of staff may attend, where appropriate, and that any face-to-face meeting should be supported by written evidence to ensure a clear and robust evidence base. **x. Self-Regulation and behaviour management Policy** Governors received the updated Self-Regulation and Behaviour Management Policy, which promotes a consistent whole-school approach centred on positive behaviour, self-regulation, restorative practices, and clear behavioural expectations. The policy outlines a graduated behaviour support framework, proportionate consequences for behaviour that does not meet expectations, support for pupils' emotional wellbeing, and procedures for managing serious incidents, including the use of reasonable force where necessary. Governors discussed the policy in detail and **agreed** that further consideration was required.			

	They noted the therapeutic thinking approach and the Local Authority's approach to behaviour management. The Headteacher advised that a therapeutic thinking approach was not currently deliverable within the school's context and explained that the proposed policy aimed to promote a calmer learning environment, whilst remaining adaptable to meet the needs of pupils with additional SEND. Governors acknowledged the increasing complexity of pupil needs and the associated challenges for staff. The Headteacher highlighted the importance of ensuring appropriate support for both pupils and staff, including access to specialist advice where required, and emphasised the need for staff to safeguard their own wellbeing. The Chair summarised the discussion, recognising the positive intention to improve behaviour across the school whilst ensuring sufficient flexibility in its implementation. Changes had been trialled successfully in the last academic year which was a consideration in the proposed updates. Governors **agreed** that the policy language should be revisited to better articulate this balance before further consideration. **Action01:** School Business Manager, JA to add a reminder in this week's school letter asking parents to provide feedback on the policy. Policy to be deferred to FGB02 for further clarification, discussion, and parental feedback.	**School Business Manager (JA)**
6.	**Head Teacher's report *** The Headteacher's Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The key updates, including the positive start to the academic year, implementation of the 2026/27 curriculum, progress against the School Development Plan, increasing pupil numbers, safeguarding activity, SEND provision, attendance, behaviour, pupil wellbeing, curriculum monitoring, premises developments, and the school's financial position. Governors noted the report and were assured that appropriate progress was being made across these areas. **<u>Governor questions/challenges/support followed:</u>** **Challenge:** Would the self-regulation and behaviour management policy approach, including targeted and targeted-plus support and proposed SEND reforms, create difficulties for the school? The Headteacher advised that this was not anticipated to cause any issues. **Challenge:** Is the behaviour management approach working effectively? The Headteacher confirmed that it is working effectively. **Challenge:** Was the increase in pupil numbers, including 11 additional pupils joining since September, creating any challenges for the school? The Headteacher advised that additional pupils had joined the school since	

	September. Governors noted that the school's safeguarding responsibilities commenced once pupils were admitted to the school roll. **Challenge:** Was there a pattern or trend in where new pupils were coming from? No specific pattern or trend had been identified. **Challenge:** Given the high level of SEND need, what were the current leadership arrangements for inclusion? Governors were advised that the SENDCo and EYFS SENDCo were currently leading SEND provision. The vacant Deputy Headteacher post had included responsibility as Inclusion Lead, and interviews were scheduled for the following week. Five strong candidates had been shortlisted, and the panel was confident of making an appointment. **Challenge:** If appointed, when would the successful Deputy Headteacher start in post? A potential start date of January 2027 was anticipated. **Challenge:** Was SEND demand placing pressure on teachers and teaching assistants? The Headteacher confirmed that recruitment for additional teaching assistants was underway using EHCP funding. **Challenge:** Had the new phonics structure been implemented? Governors were advised that the proposal had not been progressed due to concerns regarding the impact on teaching assistant capacity and SEND support. **Challenge:** Were there particular year groups with higher levels of SEND need? The highest levels of need were currently evident in Years 1, 2 and 3. **Challenge:** Had parents been supportive? The Headteacher advised that support varied, although similar behaviours were often reported at home. **Challenge:** Was Pupil Premium funding supporting pupils with additional SEND needs? Governors noted that funding was already being used to support the appointment of an InterventionTeacher. **Challenge:** Had the school experienced a reduction in Pupil Premium funding? School Business Manager (JA) confirmed that funding levels remained unchanged.	

	Challenge: Was funding sufficient to provide one-to-one support for pupils with high levels of need? Governors were advised that available funding was insufficient to cover the full cost of such support. **Challenge:** Had opportunities to engage parent or community volunteers been explored? The Headteacher confirmed that this had been considered. **Action 02:** Chair (CS) to include an article in the next edition of Willingham News seeking volunteers to support reading in school. **Challenge:** Could any Inclusion Lead responsibilities currently undertaken by the Headteacher be delegated to the SENDCo? The Headteacher advised that this would not be possible. **Challenge:** Could additional SENDCo capacity be sourced externally? Governors were advised that Local Authority SENDCo support could be commissioned if required. Governors acknowledged the significant SEND pressures currently facing the school and discussed the support available to staff, including specialist teachers, Educational Psychologists, and external professional advice. Governors also commented positively on the calm learning environment observed during recent visits and recognised the considerable work being undertaken by the Headteacher and staff to support pupils with complex SEND needs. There were no further questions.	**Chair**
8.	**Finance Budget Update** Governors received a financial update from the School Business Manager (JA) and noted that the budget remained broadly in line with expectations. Governors noted that increasing pupil numbers were having a positive impact on the school's financial position, while financial pressures associated with supporting pupils with additional needs continued to be monitored. **i. Pay Committee Report and Approval of Pay Awards** Consideration of the Pay Committee report and approval of pay awards was deferred to the Finance and Premises Committee meeting. **ii. Financial Scheme of Delegation** Review and approval of the Financial Scheme of Delegation was deferred to the Finance and Premises Committee meeting. **iii. Local Authority Audit Recommendations** Consideration of the recommendations and checks identified by the Local Authority Schools Finance Team audit letter was deferred to the Finance and Premises Committee due to the absence of the Finance Link Governor.	

9.	**Planning** **Strategic Planning & Governor Monitoring Priorities** **i. Review of Academic Year – key learning / areas for improvement / priorities for next year.** a. Review school vision/values/ethos and strategic plan – no changes required. b. A review of RAP – review areas for governors in the academic year 2026 – 2027 for visits. **ii. Governor Monitoring Priorities** a. Key dates and planning b. Agree that monitoring priorities, Link Governor focus areas and the annual monitoring schedule would be aligned to the School Development Plan (SDP) to support effective oversight and accountability **- agreed.** **Action03:** All Governors to review the SDP and identify priority areas for monitoring, linked to their respective Link Governor roles and planned visit programme	**All**
10.	**Safeguarding Update*** **i. Termly safeguarding report** The safeguarding update was received and considered as part of the Headteacher's Report. Governors noted updates on staff training, safeguarding supervision, referrals, multi-agency working, and support for vulnerable pupils and families. Governors received assurance that appropriate monitoring and support arrangements were in place for pupils requiring additional safeguarding support. **ii. KCSIE Update** The Chair reminded Governors of their collective safeguarding responsibilities and the requirement to read the full Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance and complete the relevant declaration via their GovernorHub profiles.	
11.	**Committee Updates *** Governors noted that no committee meetings had taken place during the 2026/27 academic year to date and, therefore, there were no committee updates to receive. The Chair reminded Governors to review the Committee Terms of Reference in advance of their consideration and approval at the next Full Governing Board meeting (FGB02).	
12.	**Governor Business & Development** **i. Governor Training and Board Development*** a. Governor training opportunities 2026-27 Governors noted the governor training opportunities available for 2026/27 through the Local Authority and National Governance Association (NGA). b. Complete KCSIE 2026 updated training online Governors were reminded to complete the updated KCSIE training.	

	c. Note Governors trained in Safer Recruitment Governors also noted that CS held current Safer Recruitment training accreditation. d. Safeguarding for Governors training Update Governors were reminded to complete the Safeguarding training. **ii. Recruitment needs and Succession Planning** a. Governor vacancies and recruitment priorities Governors were advised that AT wished to step down as a Parent Governor and be appointed as an Associate Member. Governors **agreed** to appoint AT as an Associate Member and noted that they would serve on the Curriculum Committee without voting rights. Governors noted that this resulted in four Co-opted Governor vacancies and two Parent Governor vacancies. The importance of maintaining an appropriate balance of parent and non-parent governors on the Board was acknowledged. The Chair advised that two potential Co-opted Governors had expressed an interest in joining the Governing Board. Governors discussed recruitment priorities and were encouraged to promote vacancies, particularly to individuals with skills and experience in IT, safeguarding, finance, and education. **Action 04:** Chair (CS) to prepare an article for *Willingham News* promoting Co-opted Governor vacancies. **Action 05:** Chair (CS) to prepare an item for the school newsletter highlighting current governor vacancies. Governors noted that the School Business Manager (JA) would circulate. the MyNewTerm governor recruitment advertisement link to Governor in order to support wider promotion. b. LA Governor (CS) term of office end October 2026 Chair (CS) confirmed his willingness to continue serving as a Local Authority Governor for a further one-year term, subject to reappointment by the Local Authority. The governing board formally supported the re-nomination. **Action 06**: Clerk to contact the Local Authority regarding the reappointment process for CS, obtain the necessary documentation and bring a recommendation to the Governing Board before the current term expires. **Deadline:** Before October 2026 term expiry. **iii. Policy Review and approve school policies in accordance with policy review cycle/schedule** School Policy Tracker a. Review and approve the updated model LA Complaints Policy 2026 Governors noted that consideration of the updated Local Authority Complaints Policy had been completed under Agenda Item 6(ix).	**Chair** **Chair** **Clerk**
13.	**Summary of Actions*** See table at end of minutes.	

12.	**Date of Next Meeting*** *12th November 2026, 7pm at the school*	
13.	**Review the Impact of this Meeting*** Governors gained assurance regarding the school's positive start to the academic year, progress against the School Development Plan, and the effectiveness of arrangements to support pupils with increasing SEND and safeguarding needs. The meeting also strengthened governance through the agreement of leadership appointments, committee memberships, succession planning priorities, and governor monitoring arrangements for 2026/27.	

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.26pm

Table of Outstanding Actions

No	Action	Owner	Deadline
Actions from meeting held on 9 July 2026:			
02	Chair to write to new parents in September to promote current Governing Body vacancies. **Action – ongoing –**	Chair	September 2026
03	At FGB02 Headteacher to provide feedback on staff responses to increased classroom ownership and accountability, including the impact on teaching standards. **Action – ongoing**	Headteacher	FGB02
Actions from meeting held on 24 September 2026:			
01	Add a reminder in the school newsletter asking parents to provide feedback on the Self-Regulation and Behaviour Management Policy.	JA (School Business Manager)	School letter this week
02	Include an article in the next edition of Willingham News seeking volunteers to support reading in school.	CS (Chair)	Before next publication
03	Review the SDP and identify priority areas for monitoring linked to Link Governor roles and planned visit programme.	All Governors	FGB02
04	Prepare an article for Willingham News promoting Co-opted Governor vacancies.	CS (Chair)	Before next publication
05	Prepare an item for the school newsletter highlighting current governor vacancies.	CS (Chair)	Next school newsletter