



Leadership and Governance

Strategic Priority 1

Leadership drives continuous improvement through clear vision, strong governance, distributed responsibility and rigorous self-evaluation.

Why this matters:

The 2026-27 academic year marks a significant point in Steeton's journey as the school transitions from federation to a standalone governance model. This presents an opportunity to establish strong governance from the outset, ensuring that leaders and governors share a clear vision, provide effective strategic challenge and support, and continue to build leadership capacity at every level. Through honest self-evaluation, evidence-informed decision making and distributed leadership, we will create the conditions in which pupils, staff and the wider school community continue to thrive. Alongside this transition, 2026-27 will be a year in which we define and prepare for Steeton's next chapter, ready for a purposeful and coherent relaunch in September 2027.

Ref	Key Action	Success – what will it look like?	Impact Evidence – how will we know?	Lead	By
LG1.1	Refine the School Development Plan and Self Evaluation Form (SEF) to align with the new Ofsted framework whilst remaining rooted in Steeton's priorities.	Leaders and governors have a shared understanding of school priorities and can articulate the rationale behind improvement decisions.	School priorities are clearly reflected in strategic decisions; governors confidently discuss improvement priorities; the SEF accurately reflects the school's strengths and next steps.	HT	Autumn

LG1.2	Establish and develop an effective standalone governing board following the dissolution of the federation, recruiting governors with the breadth of skills, experience and perspectives needed to support and further challenge the school.	The governing board is fully constituted and has the collective knowledge, skills and experience required to fulfil its strategic responsibilities effectively.	Vacancies are filled swiftly but purposefully; a skills audit demonstrates appropriate breadth and strength across the board; governors increasingly provide informed support and challenge; meetings are consistently quorate and effective.	HT / Chair	Spring
LG1.3	Establish a clear link governor structure aligned with the school's four development areas: Leadership and Governance; Attendance, Behaviour, Safeguarding and Inclusion (ABSI); Curriculum and Teaching; and Early Years.	Governors develop secure first-hand knowledge of their areas and provide appropriate strategic challenge without becoming involved in operational leadership.	Link governors undertake planned visits; reports demonstrate increasing understanding of provision and impact; governor questioning reflects knowledge gained through monitoring; findings contribute meaningfully to full governing board discussions.	HT / Chair	Autumn / ongoing
LG1.4	Recruit and induct a high-quality new clerk to governors, ensuring continuity of effective governance following the retirement of the current clerk.	The transition is managed successfully, with strong administrative and procedural support enabling the new governing board to operate confidently and effectively.	Statutory governance requirements and records remain secure; meetings are well organised; actions are followed through; governors and leaders have confidence in the advice and support provided by the clerk.	HT / Chair	Autumn
LG1.5	Implement a coherent whole-school monitoring calendar that brings together learning walks, curriculum reviews, safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, pupil voice and staff development.	Monitoring is purposeful, proportionate and directly informs school improvement rather than becoming an exercise in compliance.	Monitoring findings lead to clear actions and identifiable improvements; duplication is reduced; evidence gathered contributes directly to self-evaluation and development planning.	HT / SLT	Ongoing

LG1.6	Use appropriate external validation, moderation and peer review to test the accuracy of school self-evaluation and inform future improvement.	Leaders and governors have confidence that self-evaluation is accurate, ambitious and evidence-informed.	External evaluation validates leaders' judgements; recommendations are acted upon where appropriate; leaders can demonstrate how external challenge has strengthened provision.	HT	Annual
LG1.7	Use 2026-27 to define and prepare for the next chapter of Steeton, bringing together our refreshed vision, Learning for Life, the emerging Cultural Capital Strategy and our identity as a standalone school. Develop a coherent plan for a September 2027 relaunch, including branding, publications, website, signage and the wider presentation of the school.	Steeton has a clear, distinctive and reinvigorated identity that reflects who we have become and our ambition for the future. The September 2027 relaunch is carefully planned and represents meaningful school development rather than simply a cosmetic rebrand.	A refreshed visual identity and branding are agreed; prospectus and key information materials are redesigned; website and signage requirements are identified; pupil, staff, parent and governor voice inform the work; costs and implementation are planned; the Cultural Capital Strategy and wider school vision are coherently reflected throughout; the school is ready for a coordinated relaunch in September 2027.	HT / DHT	Summer 2027

Strategic Priority 2

Secure Steeton's long-term organisational and financial sustainability while protecting the quality of education, staff wellbeing and the culture of the school through a period of significant change.

Why this matters:

2026-27 will be a period of significant organisational change for Steeton. Falling pupil numbers and the move to one-form entry mean that difficult decisions about staffing and structures will be necessary, including redundancy processes. We recognise that change of this nature creates uncertainty for staff and has the potential to affect morale, workload and the wider culture of the school. Leaders and governors will manage this period with honesty, sensitivity and transparency, while remaining focused on securing the long-term sustainability of the school. Decisions will be carefully considered so that resources are used effectively, essential capacity is retained and the quality of education and care provided to pupils remains at the heart of every decision. Where staffing capacity reduces, we will not simply expect fewer people to carry the same workload. We will deliberately 'prune' the things we do - stopping, simplifying or adapting activity where necessary - so that staff capacity remains focused on the work that makes the greatest difference to pupils.

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
LG2.1	Develop and implement a sustainable staffing structure that reflects the school's move to one-form entry and its projected financial position, whilst protecting the capacity required to provide a high-quality education.	The school has a staffing structure that is educationally effective and financially sustainable, with roles and responsibilities clearly aligned to need.	Staffing and budget projections demonstrate increasing sustainability; the structure retains sufficient teaching, leadership and support capacity; pupil provision remains strong throughout the transition.	HT / BM / Governors	Ongoing
LG2.2	Manage any required workforce change and redundancy processes fairly, transparently and sensitively, working closely with HR, governors, staff and professional associations.	Staff understand the reasons for change, processes are legally and procedurally robust, and individuals are treated with dignity throughout.	HR processes and timelines are followed; consultation is meaningful and documented; appropriate governor oversight is evident; staff are kept informed throughout the process.	HT / BM / Governors	As required
LG2.3	Maintain clear, regular and honest communication with staff throughout the period of organisational change, including where decisions or outcomes are not yet known.	Staff feel appropriately informed and understand both the challenges facing the school and the rationale for decisions being made.	Staff feedback and supervision identify that communication is timely and transparent; emerging concerns are identified and addressed; misinformation and unnecessary uncertainty are minimised.	HT / SLT	Ongoing
LG2.4	Monitor and actively support staff wellbeing, morale and workload throughout the period of change, maintaining established opportunities for staff voice and professional support.	The positive culture of the school is maintained despite uncertainty and staff continue to feel listened to, valued and supported.	Supervision, Triple C and staff feedback identify emerging issues early; leaders respond appropriately to concerns; absence, retention and workload are monitored; staff continue to report a strong sense of support and belonging.	HT / SLT	Termly

LG2.5	Actively 'prune' systems, processes and expectations as staffing capacity changes, removing, simplifying or adapting activity that no longer adds sufficient value or creates unnecessary workload.	Reduced staffing does not simply result in remaining staff absorbing additional work. Leaders continually consider what can be stopped, simplified or done differently, protecting staff capacity for the work that matters most.	Staff feedback demonstrates that workload remains manageable; leaders can identify specific examples of activity that has been stopped, simplified or streamlined; monitoring demonstrates that pruning has not compromised the quality of education, safeguarding or essential provision.	HT / SLT	Ongoing
LG2.6	Maintain rigorous governor oversight of financial planning and workforce change, including regular review of pupil-number projections, staffing costs, reserves and medium-term forecasts.	Governors understand the school's financial position and provide informed strategic challenge to decisions affecting staffing and resources.	Minutes demonstrate scrutiny and challenge; budget and staffing scenarios are regularly reviewed; decisions can be clearly linked to reliable financial information and the school's strategic priorities.	HT / BM / Chair	Termly
LG2.7	Evaluate the impact of organisational change on pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and others who may be more vulnerable to changes in staffing or provision.	Organisational change does not disproportionately affect pupils who require additional support and leaders respond quickly where unintended consequences emerge.	Monitoring of provision, outcomes, pupil voice and inclusion identifies no significant deterioration attributable to restructuring; identified concerns result in timely action or redeployment of resources.	HT / SLT / SENDCo	Termly

Strategic Priority 3

Develop leadership capacity and professional expertise across the school so that improvement is increasingly led, owned and sustained at every level.

Why this matters:

At Steeton, leadership is not confined to senior roles. As the school moves through organisational change, it is increasingly important that expertise, responsibility and ownership are distributed effectively across the staff team. Our developing phase and middle leadership structure provides an opportunity to build greater capacity within the school. Leaders will be supported to move beyond completing leadership tasks towards confidently evaluating provision, identifying priorities, leading improvement and demonstrating impact. Professional development will be purposeful and closely connected to the needs of pupils, staff and the school. We will continue to create a culture in which staff learn from one another, professional dialogue is valued and people are given both the support and the trust to grow.

Ref	Key Action	Success - what will it look like?	Impact Evidence - how will we know?	Lead	By
LG3.1	Embed the revised phase and middle leadership structure, ensuring that leaders have clear responsibilities, appropriate authority and a secure understanding of what effective leadership looks like at Steeton.	Leaders understand their remit and take genuine ownership of improvement within their areas rather than relying on senior leaders to drive action.	Leadership discussions, monitoring and reports demonstrate increasing independence and ownership; responsibilities are understood across school; fewer actions require direct HT/SLT leadership.	HT / SLT	Autumn / ongoing
LG3.2	Develop leaders through coaching, joint monitoring, professional dialogue and opportunities to lead whole-school improvement.	Leaders become increasingly confident in identifying strengths, recognising where improvement is needed and taking appropriate action.	Monitoring becomes increasingly evaluative rather than descriptive; leaders can explain what they have changed, why they changed it and the difference it has made.	HT / SLT	Termly

LG3.3	Strengthen leaders' ability to evaluate impact, ensuring monitoring focuses on pupils' experience, learning and outcomes rather than whether activities have simply been completed.	Leaders routinely ask 'what difference has this made?' and use a range of evidence to reach secure conclusions.	Leader evaluations draw together evidence from children's work, pupil voice, observation, assessment and other relevant sources; resulting actions are precise and proportionate.	HT / SLT	Ongoing
LG3.4	Establish purposeful opportunities for leaders to report directly to and engage with link governors within the new governance structure.	Governors increasingly hear directly from the people leading improvement and middle leaders develop confidence in explaining and being challenged about their work.	Link governor discussions demonstrate secure understanding; leaders confidently articulate strengths, priorities and impact; governor challenge contributes to subsequent action where appropriate.	HT / Leaders	Termly
LG3.5	Ensure professional development is carefully targeted to identified school, team and individual need rather than driven by a programme of generic CPD.	Staff development is relevant, manageable and translates into improved practice.	Staff can identify how professional development has influenced their practice; monitoring identifies resulting improvements; CPD is adapted or discontinued where it is not having sufficient impact.	HT / SLT	Ongoing
LG3.6	Develop opportunities for staff expertise to be shared within and beyond the school, recognising and using the strengths already present within the team.	Staff increasingly learn from one another and expertise is used strategically rather than being concentrated in individuals.	Staff lead professional development, coaching or modelling; effective practice becomes increasingly consistent; leadership and specialist knowledge is shared across teams.	SLT / Leaders	Ongoing
LG3.7	Identify and nurture future leadership potential to support succession planning and the long-term sustainability of leadership at Steeton.	Staff with leadership potential are recognised and provided with appropriate opportunities to develop their skills and experience.	Increased confidence and responsibility amongst emerging leaders; leadership opportunities are successfully undertaken; succession planning identifies capacity for future roles.	HT	Annual