

## The Steeton Primary School Governing Body

Meeting of 11 November 2025

### MINUTES

The meeting opened at 4.02pm

#### Attendance

##### **School Governors**

Hamzah Ashfaq  
Elinor Birtwistle – Deputy Headteacher (DHT)  
Stephen Hammond  
Shakila Towasin  
Katie Walshaw

##### **Rights to attend and vote**

John Cooper – Executive Headteacher (EHT)

##### **Others**

Helen Osman - Clerk  
Robert Scaife – Early Years teacher (EY – *Item 01/25 only*)  
Emma Varley – Early Years teacher (EY) – *Item 01/25 only*

##### **Associate Member with voting rights**

Claire Redman – Head of School (HoS)

##### **Apologies**

Emma Wainwright  
Sue West

#### Documents

A. Action from previous meetings (Stn 19/24(i)) Public Sector Equality Duty data	Item Stn 06/25	Available 04-11-2025
B. Head of School report to Governors	Item Stn 07/25	Issued with agenda
C. Pupil Premium Statement	Item Stn 10/25	Issued with agenda
D. 2025 Ofsted framework toolkit - <a href="#">here</a>	Item Stn 14/25	Link included on agenda
E. Ofsted 2025 framework – alignment to Link Governor groups	Item Stn 14/25	Issued with agenda
F. Federation Development Plan 2025-26	Item Stn 15/25	Issued with agenda
G. School Development Plan – 4 documents	Item Stn 16/25	Issued with agenda
H. Preliminary targets 2025-26	Item Stn 17/25	Issued with agenda
I. Recommended staff pay awards	Item Stn 19/25	Issued with agenda
J. Staff request to advance on Upper Pay Scale	Item Stn 19/25 (a)	Issued with agenda
K. Risk Register	Item Stn 21/25	Issued with agenda
L. School Calendar 2026-27	Item Stn 23/25	Available 07-11-2025
M. NGA Governing Body Code of Conduct	Item Stn 25/25 (a)	Issued with agenda
N. Annual Declaration of Pecuniary Interest form	Item Stn 25/25 (c)	Issued with agenda
O. Declaration of Eligibility form	Item Stn 25/25 (d)	Issued with agenda

#### Summary of Actions

Action No.	Action	Person	Deadline
Stn 19/24 (i)	HoS to add to the equalities information on the website a link to information on attendance and outcomes of pupils with protected characteristics.	C Redman	31-12-2025
Stn 52/24	HoS to ascertain whether the inspector who had led the Ofsted inspection would be willing and available to return in a consultancy capacity to review the changes made to Early Years provision.	C Redman	Contact Spring Review Summer 2026
Stn 70/24	All to notify the Chair of any potential candidates for the two School Governor vacancies.	All	31-10-2025
Stn 66/24	HoS to provide to governors the number of children who would be affected if the school no longer offered afterschool clubs to Pupil Premium pupils free of charge.	C Redman	31-07-2025
Stn 06/25 (i)	Clerk to re-circulate the Governor Visit Report form.	H Osman	30-11-2025
Stn 06/25 (ii)	HoS to past list of previous expressions of interest in governor role to the Chair.	C Redman	15-12-2025
Stn 09/25	HoS to circulate the Annual SEND report to the FGB to school governors.	C Redman	12-11-2025
Stn 21/25	SDF to advise which section of the Risk Register includes risks related to medicines.	J Cooper	15-12-2025

Stn 24/25	K Wilshaw to approach potential new governor.	K Wilshaw	15-12-2025
Stn 25/25 (i)	HoS to arrange for form to be sent to governors to confirm they have read and understood <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i>	C Redman	15-12-2025
Stn 25/25 (ii)	All governors to return completed Declaration of Pecuniary Interest form to the Clerk.	All	Urgent
Stn 25/25 (iii)	All governors to return completed Declaration of Eligibility form to the Clerk.	All	Urgent
Stn 26/25	Subject to authorisation from Chair/FGB, Clerk to copy to school governors correspondence between staff and the FGB.	H Osman	30-11-2025

### Stn 01/25 Curriculum focus – Early Years

1. Governors welcomed Emma Varley, Early Years Teacher, and Robert Scaife, a new Early Career Teacher (ECT) to the meeting. The HoS said that the school had considered it important to appoint an ECT in Early Years rather than a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) to ensure that children were taught by the most qualified staff at this critical point in their education.
2. Governors had been briefed on the high level Early Years curriculum at the last meeting and now looked forward to hearing from front line staff about how this was being implemented and what differences they had seen with the move of the Early Years unit into the main school building.
3. The Early Years Teacher said that the Ofsted outcome had been distressing. Governors pointed out that Ofsted had judged Early Years to be Good: the EY teacher recognised this but said that, because the other aspects of the school had been judged Outstanding it was hard not to feel that Early Years had let the school down. She had not clearly understood what Ofsted were looking for and so had been unable to answer inspectors' questions in the way that they had wanted. Governors said that the HoS had previously explained to them that the EY teacher knew and understood the development of skills in Early Years children but that this had not been articulated in Early Years in the way that it had throughout the rest of school. Leadership needed to focus on addressing this, but staff should not blame themselves for what was, after all, a very positive Ofsted outcome. It was the work of the Early Years staff that established the foundations on which the rest of the school built, which had enabled it to secure an overall Outstanding Ofsted judgement. The Strategic Director of the Federation (SDF) agreed: the Good rather than Outstanding judgement for Early Years related less to the EY Unit itself than to leadership, which had not articulated the Early Years curriculum as clearly as the curriculum for the rest of the school. Governors agreed: it is important to be clear that the development of Early Years was not remedial but to improve something that was already good and make it exceptional.
4. The EY Teacher reminded governors that the Early Years curriculum was less prescriptive than the National Curriculum, with more scope for interpretation. Schools drew out the key elements and developed the curriculum around them taking account of the needs of their own pupils. Steeton had started by defining a Skills Continuum setting out the skills that children needed to develop in relation to, for example, using scissors, in water, working with sand etc. When Ofsted had visited, Early Years staff had been teaching all these skills but staff had been unable to explain specifically which skills were being taught in any particular task at any given time: this was now set out in the Skills Continuum so that it was clear to all staff.
5. A long term curriculum plan had been drawn up, based on the government guidance *Development Matters*, which had been matched against the statutory Early Learning Goals for the end of Reception. From this, a medium term plan had been developed, which set out the skills and the classroom areas that would be the focus in each week of the school year. **Replying to questions**, the EY Teacher confirmed that day to day teaching in Early Years was much the same as it had been at the time of the Ofsted inspection but that it was now supported by written plans that clarified, and enabled staff to articulate, the skills that they were teaching through any given activity.
6. The EY Teacher showed governors examples of pupils' Phonics books. Governors could see the development in children's skills since the start of the school year, when they had struggled to draw anything recognisable to more controlled drawing and the start of letter formation on recent pages. The difference

was very clear after only a term and a half in Reception: governors marvelled that such rapid development was achievable at a time when children were being settled into school, learning school routines etc.

7. The EY Teacher said that this rapid development depended not just on the teaching of letter formation, how to hold a pencil etc but also on the wider Early Years provision that taught the gross and fine motor skills to enable children to do this. Teaching in Early Years focused on skills progression from emergent to extended skills. For example, when children were working with sand they moved from emergent skills, such as using buckets and other large items to dig; teaching words for spades, buckets, sieves etc; to extended skills such as moving sand with a teaspoon, using smaller containers and funnels etc – again, taking children from the development of gross to fine motor skills.
8. **Asked** whether she felt confident that, if Ofsted were to return tomorrow, she would be better placed to answer their questions, the EY Teacher said that she would. She now had a clearer understanding of what inspectors were looking for; the Early Years curriculum was now more tightly defined, consistent with the wider school curriculum; and the work to lay out the step-by-step processes and progression of what the EY Unit had already been teaching would enable her to articulate it more effectively.
9. **Asked** whether the identification and teaching of skills was done as a whole class or tailored, the EY Teacher said that it was tailored to the needs of each pupil: children developed at different rates and the stage of development varied significantly according to age: in Early Years there was a very clear difference in the level of development of children who were summer-born and those who were older in terms of physical development and gross motor skills. They were all working towards the same end points, but they needed individual approaches to get them there. As some children developed greater skills, new resources were introduced to enable them to move forward; but the older resources were kept in place for those who had not yet reached that point.
10. **Replying to questions**, the EY Teacher said that the move of the EY Unit into the main school building had been positive: the unit felt more integrated with the rest of the school, and both staff and children had a lot more regular contact with their peers. The new, single, Early Year room and outdoor area functioned far more effectively than the old two-room unit. It was important to understand that the purpose of outdoor learning in terms of skills development was different from indoor learning: the outside area focused on gross skills, risk taking, moving things etc, while the indoor area focused more on fine motor skills, artistic development etc. The outdoor area did not need to be expensively equipped: moving around planks, rolling balls through pipes etc all developed motor skills, strategic thinking etc. **Replying to questions**, the HoS confirmed that there was a clearly defined outside skill set.
11. The EY Teacher showed examples of short term plans, which identified the precise skills to be taught in each area in Week 3 of term. **Governors asked** whether EY staff made notes throughout the year of what had worked well and what might need adjustment, to inform planning for the following year. The Staff Governor said that, in the rest of school, the curriculum was annotated as the year progressed so that the information was all to hand when leaders reviewed the curriculum for the following year: the EY Teacher agreed that this would be a useful approach in Early Years.
12. The EY Teacher said that some topics were being dropped from the Early Years curriculum and new ones developed that were more related to children's interests. **Asked** for examples, she said that a topic on the Royal Family had been dropped because it was addressed later in school and replaced with new and revised topics such as mini-beasts, Once Upon A Time, the Antarctic and African Animals.
13. The Staff Governors said that it could be unnerving for staff to work in Early Years if they had not previously experienced and/or been trained in it. Staff throughout school was now more experienced. The Early Years area had been stripped back and leaders were able to have more challenging conversations to ensure that provision was exactly right for Steeton's children.

14. The ECT spoke of recent training he had undertaken in Lau Lau<sup>1</sup>, an approach to achievement of all the Early Learning Goals by focusing on song and writing. Lau Lau was specifically designed for Early Years and Key Stage 1, but could be used with SEND children throughout school. Steeton had purchased a one-year licence for the programme, which included the music and other resources.
15. Governors examined a sample of children's Drawing Club books. The EY Teacher explained that staff modelled a drawing in a Master Class to show how it was done and then children tried. Typically, they found it hard at first, but a lot easier the second time. The books showed children's drawings of a witch and a house: governors could see how children's drawings improved over a two-week period. The EY Teacher said that, once children understood the concepts of how a few lines and some space could look like something, their drawing improved rapidly. The HoS added that this learning was taken forward in Magic Mondays.

*Emma Varley and Robert Scaife left the meeting at 4.39pm*

*The Clerk took the Chair for Item Stn 02/25*

#### Stn 02/25 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

16. **The Governing Body agreed** that the terms of office of the Chair and Vice Chair should be one year, until the first meeting of the School Governing Body in school year 2026-27.
17. The Clerk said that Sue West had informed her that she was stepping down as Chair and would not accept any nomination for that role or the role of Vice Chair.

#### Chair

18. Stephen Hammond was nominated as Chair. **Asked** whether he was willing to serve as Chair, he said that he was inexperienced in governance and education but that he understood why Sue West wished to stand down and, with the support of other governors, he would be willing to take on the role.
19. Governors noted that both the school and the Governing Body were strong. While the inspectors had met the Chair at the last inspection, she had not been on her own, and the new Ofsted framework emphasised that inspectors would look to meet as many of the governor as possible. Furthermore, an Ofsted inspection was not likely in the near future.

*Stephen Hammond withdrew from the meeting.*

20. **The Governing Body unanimously elected** Stephen Hammond as Chair.

*Stephen Hammond rejoined the meeting and took the Chair. He asked that the Clerk conduct the election of the Vice Chair.*

#### Vice Chair

21. Emma Wainwright was nominated as Vice Chair. In her absence, the Clerk said that she had indicated her willingness to serve in this role.
22. **The Governing Body unanimously elected** Emma Wainwright as Vice Chair.

#### Stn 03/25 Apologies for absence and their acceptance

23. Apologies had been received, and were accepted, from Sue West and Emma Wainwright.

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<sup>1</sup> Lau Lau – the Lau Lau songdrawing method: singing, drawing, movement and story-telling are combined in a holistic and interactive process, and drawings are conjured up through drawing songs.

**Stn 04/250 Notification of other business and request to vary the order of the agenda**

24. No other business was notified and there were no requests to vary the order of the agenda.

**Stn 05/25 Declarations of interest in items on this agenda**

25. No interests were declared in items on the agenda for this meeting.

**Stn 06/25 Minutes of meetings of 08 July 2025 and matters arising – Document A**

➤ **The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting**

Update on actions arising from previous meetings		
Item	Action	Status
Stn 19/24 (i)	<i>HoS to review the current equalities information on the website for approval at the next meeting.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	See Document A. The meeting agreed that Document A should include a link to information on the attendance and outcomes of pupils with protected characteristics.	<b>Follow-up action</b>
Stn 30/24	<i>HoS to ask LA Comms to contact E Wainwright to seek to resolve the issue of governors losing access to Teams if they did not use it for a period of time.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	Completed.	
Stn 31/24	<i>HoS to invite Early Years teacher to attend the autumn term SGB meeting to discuss her work and priorities.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	Completed at this meeting.	
Stn 52/24	<i>HoS to ascertain whether the inspector who had led the Ofsted inspection would be willing and available to return in a consultancy capacity to review the changes made to Early Years provision.</i>	<b>Ongoing</b>
	The HoS said that she planned to make contact in early 2026 with a view to her undertaking a review visit in the summer 2026 term. She added that an LA adviser had been invited to review Early Years in light of the relatively low GLD outcome in 2025: the LA adviser had been content with all the school was doing.	
Stn 58/24	<i>All to notify the Chair of any potential candidates with expertise in financial scrutiny for the role of Federation Governor.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	Governors noted that the previous Chair had asked Hamzah Ashfaq to attend the next meeting of the Federation Resources Committee.	
Stn 63/24	<i>School to consult staff and pupils on school vision and provide a vision statement to the Clerk for formal approval by e-mail.</i>	<b>C Redman</b>
	The HoS proposed, and Governors agreed, that it would be useful to defer this action to Autumn 2026.	
Stn 65/24 (a)	<i>Prior to each governor monitoring visit, school to brief the governor on the headlines from the previous such monitoring event so that governors know what leaders will be looking for.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	The HoS said that governors' monitoring visits now routinely included an explanation of what leaders would be looking for in the monitoring event.	
	Governors asked that the Clerk re-circulate the Governor Visit Report Form.	<b>New action</b>
Stn 70/24	<i>All to notify the Chair of any potential candidates for the two School Governor vacancies.</i>	<b>Ongoing</b>
	None identified. <b>Asked</b> about the role of the Chair in governor recruitment, the Clerk said that, in addition to regularly reminding other governors to consider potential new governors, the Chair might consider writing to local employers,	

	Parish and other newsletters, local media etc to promote the role of governor, which could be useful for staff and personal development. It would be ideal if candidates had some experience of governance but was not essential.	
	Governors asked that the HoS review past expressions of interest so that governors could see whether any remained interested.	<b>New action</b>
Stn 66/24	<i>HoS to provide to governors the number of children who would be affected if the school no longer offered afterschool clubs to Pupil Premium pupils free of charge.</i>	<b>Ongoing</b>
	The HoS said that she would bring this information to the next meeting: this would allow time to include information from the first complete cycle of clubs.	
Stn 65/24 (b)	<i>SDP priorities for 2025-26 to include the ambition to instil in Steeton pupils the poise and confidence of children educated at the best private schools.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	See Item Stn 16/25 below.	
Stn 74/24	<i>Clerk to establish the earliest time that E Wainwright and S Towasin can attend SGB meetings.</i>	<b>Closed</b>
	Completed: Future SGB meetings will start at 4.00pm.	

## Standing and other reports to the School Governing Body

### Stn 07/25 Head of School's report – Document B

26. The agenda paper was taken as read.
27. **Asked** about the ongoing issue with traffic congestion around school at pick-up and drop-off times, the HoS said that the local authority had indicated that the road leading up to the school could not be designated as a School Street because its junction was with the busy main road. She had been advised that there was no scope to use the car park behind the nearby café because that would require the widening of a footpath, which could not be done because it would interfere with space that was needed for articulated lorries to turn.
28. The LA had agreed to make the road leading to school (Market Street) a one-way street and to shape the pavement and introduce bollards to prevent drivers from turning right out of the car park near the junction, so that they had to use the new one-way route.
29. **Asked** whether there had been further information from the LA about the scope to create a crossing on the main road, the HoS said that there had not. Parent Governors commented on the danger to children crossing the main road.

### Stn 08/25 Report from Federation Governing Body

30. Item deferred in the absence of Sue West and Emma Wainwright.

### Stn 09/25 Recommend annual SEND Information report to the FGB

31. The HoS undertook to circulate the Annual SEND Report for the FGB to governors on 12 November 2025 for information. Any question should be directed to the HoS.

**Action: HoS**

### Stn 10/25 Approval of the annual Pupil Premium statement – Document C

32. The HoS said that the three-year Pupil Premium statement had been updated to take account of the funding received this year, which was lower than previously, and changing circumstances.
33. **Asked** about the £50k set aside for CPD, recruitment and retention, the HoS confirmed that this related to paying for Teaching Assistants, as well as academic support, interventions, trips and visits etc. She highlighted Part B of the statement which demonstrated the very strong outcomes achieved by vulnerable groups of pupils in 2025.

34. **Replying to questions**, leaders said that Ofsted inspectors could be expected to review the Pupil Premium Statement on the website prior to any inspection but would not necessarily wish to discuss it during an inspection unless it raised concerns.
35. **The Governing Body unanimously approved** the updated Pupil Premium Statement.

**Stn 11/25 Note any safeguarding incidents since the previous meeting**

36. The HoS reported that there had been one major safeguarding issue since the previous meeting. A Year 1 pupils had tried several times to leave the school premises without authorisation and had sometimes succeeded in doing so. The school was having new internal and external doors fitted. It had also arranged for the LA Safeguarding Team to assess the site and was on the waiting list for emergency funding to replace the fencing around school with a higher fencing.
37. **Replying to questions**, the HoS said that the new doors had been installed by Bradford Council: she hoped that they would pay for this work. In addition to the physical security measures described, the school had also employed an additional Teaching Assistant to provide one-to-one support for this child.

**Stn 12/2 Report on School Governors' visits, training and development**

38. Katie Walsh and Stephen Hammond had conducted a Phonics visit, during which they had seen the differentiated scale of Phonics set from Reception to Gray Book according to pupils' ability. All had started with the key sounds and moved on to comprehension tasks: governors had seen both. They had discussed with the Phonics Leader what she was looking for, what she had not seen and how she would address gaps. The Phonics Leader evidenced this monitoring with photographs and tracked progress closely. They had found it useful to visit the school to see teaching and learning in action.
39. Hamzah Ashfaq said that he would visit the school before the next Governing Body meeting.
40. Katie Walsh had undertaken a safeguarding training course for rounders: she would send the training certificate to the Federation Business Manager.
41. Asked whether there was specific training for the Chair in his new role, the Clerk recommended the LA and NGA courses for Chairs.

**Stn 13/25 Report on Chair's actions and correspondence**

42. None reported.

**School performance, planning and impact**

**Stn 14/25 New Ofsted inspection framework and alignment with Link Governor groups – Documents D and E**

43. The HoS said that the Link Governor groups how the sections of the new Ofsted framework could most sensibly aligned with the Link Governor structure. They had recommended as follows:

Section of 2025 Ofsted framework	Link Governor oversight
Attendance and Behaviour	Behaviour & Attitudes
Safeguarding	
Inclusion	
Curriculum Teaching	Quality of Education
Achievement	
Early Years	
Personal Development & Wellbeing	Personal Development
Leadership & Governance	Leadership & Management

44. Although Early Years would be overseen by the Quality of Education Link Governor group, it would have its own discrete section of the School Development Plan (SDP).
45. **The Governing Body unanimously approved** this breakdown of Link Governor responsibilities.

Stn 15/25 Note draft Federation Development Plan (FDP) for 2025-26 – Document F

46. The agenda paper was taken as read. There were no questions.

Stn 16/25 Approval of the 2025-26 School Development Plan (SDP) – Documents G

47. **The Governing Body unanimously agreed** the School Development Plan for 2025-6 as set out in Documents G.

48. Link Governors reported the key points from meetings held in the autumn term:

Behaviour & Attitudes – 17 October 2025

49. The school had introduced YouHue, an online resource that pupils could use to indicate their emotional state to staff using iPads instead of the old Mood Boards. Staff had given examples, including how use of YouHue had enabled them to identify and support a pupil showing early signs of a potential eating disorder.

50. **Replying to questions**, the HoS said that the trial of YouHue had been very positive but had uncovered some points that needed to be addressed before full roll-out. Examples included ensuring that children could not access the system at home so that they did not believe that they had signalled a need to staff only for it not to be picked up in school. The school would put the appropriate protocols in place before the system was implemented throughout school. There was a paid version of YouHue that prevented access from home, but the free version did not offer this facility. **Replying to questions**, the HoS said that the school would prefer to use the paid version, which was not unreasonably priced, but that the cost was not in the school budget. **Asked** whether there were alternative free packages, the HoS said that there were one as good as YouHue, and those that existed also had free and paid versions.

51. Attendance so far this year was above the national average. The LA Attendance Officer was moving Steeton to light touch monitoring for attendance, as she considered that attendance at Steeton was not of concern.

Leadership & Management – 04 November 2025

52. Governors had reviewed the alignment of the new Ofsted framework with Link Governor remits and recommended the Leadership & Management sections of the 2025-26 SDP. They supported the intention of leadership to carry out much needed improvements to the staff room, which was unpleasant and hard to maintain in a hygienic condition, but noted that any cost in excess of the sum included in the existing revenue budget would have to be funded from the capital budget.

53. The SDF said that there was provision for works to the staff room in the revenue budget, with the option of drawing on capital as necessary: that would need to be approved by the resources Committee. **Replying to questions**, leaders confirmed that staff could work in the Woodlands Suite if it was not in use, but noted that there was no decent space in school that staff could have to themselves.

Personal Development – 17 October 2025

54. A programme of work was to be carried out in 2025-26, for launch in 2026-27, around taking personal development beyond Outstanding to provide the kind of skills and confidence instilled by the best private schools.

55. The emphasis in 2024-25 on British Values would switch in 2025-26 to developing pupils' familiarity with the language and meaning of protected characteristics. The SDF added that the experience at Sandy Lane had been that the main focus needed to be on staff understanding of the protected characteristics. There was a danger of teaching children to identify a problem that might otherwise not have occurred to them.

Quality of Education – 04 November 2025

56. Governors had benefited from a detailed and valuable discussion with the Inclusion Leader and SENCo about how the school supported multiply vulnerable children. They had also reviewed the

2025 outcomes for these children, which demonstrated the value of the support that the school provided.

#### Stn 17/25 Recommend 2026 SATs and other outcome targets to FGB – Document H

57. The HoS reminded Governors that the current Year 6 cohort had not been formally assessed in Early Years due to the Covid disruption. Overall, the cohort was able and was the least deprived in school, but it included one child with an EHCP and eight with significant SEND needs who were significantly behind their peers.
58. Assessments would be carried out in December and mock SATs tests, practice and awareness sessions would be delivered in the new year, along with the full curriculum.
59. Phonics outcome for 2026 were expected to be lower than in previous years due to the nature of the Year 1 cohort, but above the national average and possibly above the target.
60. Noting that they had heard earlier that a high proportion of children in Early Years were summer-born, **governors asked** whether the targets were realistic. The HoS said that staff were confident that they were. There was much to learn in Early Years and it was tough for four year olds to be proficient in all areas: the key was to give children a firm grounding in Early Year to enable them to make strong progress to Year 6 and beyond.
61. **The Governing Body recommended** the targets for 2025-26 to the Federation Governing Body.

#### Stn 18/25 Recommend to the Federation Governing Body the business case for restructuring of middle leadership

62. The SDF reminded governors that discussion of the proposed restructuring of middle leadership in light of the reduction in the school PAN<sup>2</sup> had been deferred from the previous meeting while the school consulted PACT HR. PACT HR had asked whether this was the right time to conduct the proposed restructure. The SDF said that the details were complex and had not yet been fully resolved. **The Governing Body therefore agreed** to defer this item.
63. The SDF said that The Federation Governing Body was reviewing the budgets of both schools for the next three years in light of updated Quarter 2 forecasts and considering the need for further restructuring at both schools. Budgets were very tight for many schools, not just Steeton and Sandy Lane.
64. The Governing Body agreed to take a standing item until further notice to consider the school's financial resources and potential restructuring.

#### Stn 19/25 Approval of recommended pay awards – Documents I and J

65. The agenda papers were taken as read. The Clerk said that the role of governors in the approval of local staff pay awards had changed. Her understanding was that, as of this year, governor approval was no longer required for staff to receive an annual increment of one point on their pay scale: this increment was automatic provided that the staff member had achieved their objectives and had not yet reached the top of their pay scale. Governor approval was required if an increment of greater than one point on the pay scale was recommended or if a staff member had applied to move from the Main Pay Scale to the Upper Pay Scale. The HoS confirmed that this was correct.
66. The Governing Body noted the local pay awards set out in the agenda paper with approval.
  - a) Approval of staff request to progress within the Upper Pay Scale

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<sup>2</sup> PAN – Published Admission Number: the maximum number of pupils that the local authority believes a school can accommodate. Typically expressed as the number of pupils per year group: eg a PAN of 30, meaning a single form entry school.

67. The Governing Body accepted the recommendation of the HoS that request of a staff member to progress within the Upper Pay Scale be approved.
68. **Asked** whether governors ever rejected such requests, the Clerk said that it was unusual for them to reject a request that was recommended by the Head. However, they sometimes asked why such a request had not been recommended by the Head or why staff had not applied for progression. It was important the governors were confident that staff knew how to make such applications and that leaders considered applications objectively.

#### Stn 20/25 Update on the impact on staffing requirements of the move to single form entry

69. The Clerk apologised for the inclusion of this item on the agenda: it duplicated Item Stn 18/25.

#### Stn 21/25 Review Steeton elements of the Federation strategic risk register – Document K

70. The SDF said that, at the request of the Chair of the Federation Governing Body (FGB), he had divided the Federation Strategic Risk Register into separate sections for the FGB, each School Governing Body (SGB) and the Resources Committee.
71. Referring to Risk AR 001 (Allergen risk), the SDF said that confirmation was awaited that the Catering Manager had sent the allergen questionnaire to all families at the start of the year. Once this confirmation had been received, the review of the Risk Register would be complete.
72. Referring to Risk AR 003 (Allergen Risk) the SDF said that the kitchen had recently been audited and had been found to be 99% compliant.
73. On Risks AR 009 and 010, governors who were parents of children in school said that the weekly school newsletter routinely included a reminder to parents about the risk of allergens and the need not to send food into school.
74. **Replying to questions**, leaders confirmed that training on allergen risk had taken place for all staff.
75. The SDF explained the arrangements in place for the Risk Register to be reviewed in school and then brought to the School Governing Body. **Asked** about the role of the SGB, he said that governors should check the risk register and ask questions to satisfy themselves that the register included all risks and that actions to manage risks were taking place in a timely manner.
76. **Replying to questions**, the SDF said that the Federation Governing Body monitored the Federation-level risk register, which included risks such as recruitment and retention of senior leaders and governance of the whole Federation.
77. **Replying to questions**, the SDF undertook to check which section of the Risk Register included risk related to medicines.
- Action: SDF**
78. The HoS said that the school had learned a valuable lesson about the need to ensure tight systems were in place before the start of each term to manage risks related to allergens. The risk management actions set out in the Risk Register had all been in place at the start of the autumn term and the school had discussed allergens with the parent of a child with an allergy, but staff had then given the child milk. The information had been in place, but not the system for managing it. The child was fine and the school had dealt with the incident well, but the lesson had been timely. Conversely, the school had also dealt promptly and effectively with an incident involving a child with a severe allergy.
79. **Replying to questions**, the SDF said that all Federation Risk Registers would be held by the Federation Business Manager.

#### Review policies and other key documents

#### Stn 22/25 Update on the Curriculum policy handbook

80. The HoS said that, as discussed at Item Stn 01/25, the curriculum review cycle was underway. She proposed, and governors agreed, to defer this item to the next meeting. The Early Years section might still be work in progress at that time.

#### Stn 23/25 Approval of Holiday schedule for 2026-27 – Document L

81. **The Governing Body unanimously approved** the Holiday schedule for 2026-27.

#### School Development Board business

#### Stn 24/25 Review School Governor vacancies

82. The Clerk confirmed that the Governing Body currently had vacancies for up to two Co-opted Governors. Katie Wilshaw undertook to approach a contact who might be willing to become a governor.

**Action: K Wilshaw**

#### Stn 25/24 Annual confirmations – Documents M to O

a) Re-adopt GB Code of Conduct

83. The Governing Body unanimously agreed to re-adopt the NGA Governing Body Code of Conduct.

b) Sign to confirm read understood Keeping Children Safe in Education

84. The HoS would arrange for a form to be sent to governors to sign to confirm that they had read and understood *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

**Action: HoS**

c) Declaration of pecuniary interest

85. All Governors would return a completed Declaration of pecuniary interest form to the Clerk.

**Action: All**

d) Declaration of Eligibility to be a governor

86. All Governors would return a completed Declaration of Eligibility to be a governor form to the Clerk.

**Action: All**

#### Closing items

#### Stn 26/25 Any other business referred from Item Stn 04/25 above

87. Governors asked for an update on the recruitment of a new Strategic Director of the Federation. In the absences of the Governors who were also members of the Federation Governing Body, the Clerk said that:
- Following the decision of the SDF to resign at Christmas 2025, the FGB had met in July to review the position and had decided to recruit a like-for-like replacement.
  - In September, staff at both schools had sent a letter to the FGB saying that they opposed this decision, that they had not been consulted and that the cost of the Strategic Director post should be spent elsewhere in the schools.
  - Separately, Bradford Council's School Finance Officer (BC/SFO) had addressed the Resources Committee about the Quarter 2 2026-27 forecast outturns for both schools and stressed the need for urgent action.
  - The FGB had held a confidential meeting at the end of October to discuss its response to the staff letter. In light of the discussion with BC/SFO it had requested updated three-year budget forecasts for its meeting on 14 November and agreed to conduct a full review of all options.

- This had put back the timing of the planned recruitment: the FGB had originally planned to recruit for the Summer 2026 term, but this would have required advertising now. To avoid possibly nugatory expenditure, the FGB had agreed to defer recruitment until its review of options had been completed, which meant that any new SDF would not be in place until September 2026.
  - The FGB was therefore working with the LA to identify an interim Strategic Director.
  - The Chair had replied to staff on 08 November 2025 reporting back on what the FGB had agreed.
88. The Staff Governor said that the letter from staff to the FGB had been unanimous that they did not want a new Executive Headteacher.
89. It emerged from discussion School Governors had not seen the correspondence between staff and the Federation Governing Body. Subject to authorisation from the Chair of the FGB, the Clerk would circulate this correspondence to school governors.

**Action: Clerk**

#### Stn 27/25 Date of Next meeting

90. The next meeting would be held at **4.00pm on Thursday 26 March 2026**. [*Note: this is a change from the original date of Tuesday 17 March 2026*]

**The meeting closed at 6:41pm**

**Helen Osman Governance Services**  
*Supporting excellent governance in Bradford*