

York High School

Minutes of the meeting of the Local Governing Board held on Monday 2nd December 2024 at 6pm held at the school

<u>Present:</u>	Gavin Kumar (Principal)	Val Roddis
	Andy Pope (Chair)	Andrew Waller
	Sally Gordon	Ian Savage
	Sarah Hammond	Clare Besant

In Attendance Victoria Burns (Vice Principal), Sophie Triffitt (Clerk)

Action

1. **Welcome, Apologies for absence, Declarations of Interest**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted for Richard Lavell.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 26th September 2024** (previously circulated)

Resolution: The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and approved.

Matters Arising and Action Plan

Action 1: The link roles were circulated.

Action 2: Training requirements were circulated.

Challenge: A governor asked for an update on the rationale for the decision to move to double science. The Chair suggested addressing that question later in the agenda.

3. **SLT Feedback - Victoria Burns, Attendance Update** (papers tabled)

The Vice Principal presented an update on attendance and noted that currently attendance was reporting 1.2% better than the same period last year, but it had been difficult to build back from the lower starting point at the start of term.

The Vice Principal presented trends for the whole school and Year 11 including Pupil Premium and SEND.

The Vice Principal presented a list of interventions used for attendance and explained that there was a wealth of data provided by the School Improvement Partner which informed targeted intervention including focus on those who could reach 90% although this needed to be balanced with work to avoid those on the borderline from slipping below 90%.

Year 11 SEND were identified as a cohort of need for attendance but with 15 children the cohort was small and three were in Inspire, three had an Education Health Care Plan and three had a very personalised approach in collaboration with the Local Authority.

Challenge: A governor asked how the attendance compared to other schools in the city. The Vice Principal confirmed that York High had the lowest attendance and historically would track circa 4% below the local average. The Vice Principal assured governors that on discussion with other schools no other school was doing more to address attendance and the local Attendance Adviser had no other suggestions.

Challenge: A governor suggested that it would be useful to have a national comparison with a school of a similar size and demographic and potentially share best practice. The Vice Principal explained that practice was shared within her professional network, within the Trust and from the Trust Attendance Adviser who had experience in the Northeast but would remain alert to any opportunities to learn from others.

The Principal referred to the DfE guidance on a good attendance offer and assured governors that the York High offer was second to none.

The Vice Principal added that rewards linked to attendance would be investigated. The Principal reported on an attendance drive with Year 11 to encourage attendance on the last day of mock week. The Vice Principal reported that the fun day delivered a 3% uplift in comparison to the equivalent day last year, but the level of work was significant and there was a need to consider what would be feasible in the future.

Challenge: A governor asked if there was a trend that as the younger years with stronger attendance move up that would be reflected in the attendance data. The Vice Principal explained

that attendance tends to worsen as the children move up through school and that declining trend was reflected in national data. The Vice Principal noted that recovering persistent absence in Year 7 would deliver improvements as students move up through school but there was a need to prioritise Year 11 for their GCSE year.

The Principal informed governors that the Trust would be extending the October half term for 2025/26 which would hopefully positively impact attendance.

Challenge: A governor suggested liaising with primary schools where families would have children at both schools.

Challenge: A governor asked if there were any organisations that should be helping that aren't. The Vice Principal explained that the school does bridge a gap left by statutory services such as social care and CAMHS but noted that locally communication with CAMHS had improved over the last few years. There was an in school offer to support children that can be accessed irrespective of a confirmed diagnosis such as Autism Champion.

The Chair noted that there was a high level of data that provided rich intelligence for intervention and recorded thanks to the Vice Principal and team for their hard work on attendance.

The Vice Principal invited feedback from governors, who had children in or had been in school, on messaging to parents to communicate expectations on attendance whilst being mindful of personal circumstances. A governor suggested the need to explain what 80% and 90% attendance equated to and governors reflected that reasons for non-attendance could be very personal that required tailored expectations. The Principal added that the staff work hard to know the students and personal situations were considered but accepted that it could be difficult to convey that in general attendance messages.

A governor noted that if a family secured a medical appointment given the current climate, they would need to accept that as they could not always get appointments outside of school hours.

The Vice Principal reported that there had been unexplained absences for circa 60 students in one week which took staff capacity away from intervention and support work to ensure safeguarding. A governor suggested that a message on the importance of reporting an absence could be shared on social media.

Challenge: A governor noted that the suspensions would be impacting attendance. The Principal explained that the reflection room protocols and policies had been reviewed which had delivered a reduction in the suspensions which would positively impact attendance. There was a need to balance high expectations with the need to reduce suspensions and improve attendance but would remain vigilant to identify areas where systems and policies could be improved.

The Chair referred to the disappointment he witnessed on Year 11 results day noting that the attendance of those students who didn't achieve what they needed for their next stage was around 75% and had been assured by staff that they would likely have achieved the results needed if they had close to 100% attendance.

The Principal noted that there was work to do on the career offer to communicate that options were narrowed if certain subjects were not achieved.

The Principal recorded thanks to the Vice Principal for her hard work and significant contribution to the school on attendance and safeguarding.

Safeguarding on a Page (previously circulated)
Circulated for information.

The Deputy Headteacher explained the filtering and monitoring software and noted that the Safeguarding Link Governor had raised a point around unpicking adult content themes to ensure risk was minimised.

Governors recorded thanks to the Vice Principal for her hard work and for attending the meeting to present to governors.

The Deputy Headteacher left the meeting at 6.46pm.

4. **Principal Feedback**

Pulse Update

The Principal explained that SLT feed into the strategic aims for the week which in turn pulls through to the Pulse document.

Attendance: The Principal reported that attendance was reporting 1.2% higher than the same period last academic year. The level of intervention led by the Vice Principal was strong.

Behaviour: The Principal reported that the number of suspensions had reduced to 258 from 380 in the same period last academic year which equated to a 32% reduction. The need to develop the reflection room provision was identified and the Principal had met with the Rotary Club for investment into Chromebooks to support students working in reflection on Sparx Maths, Sparx Reader and Reading Plus. The Principal explained that a significant number of students accessing reflection room were well below the expected reading age so work to develop reading skills would help them access the wider curriculum. The students were now taken to the canteen for a hot lunch and given a movement break. The new approach had been in place for 2.5 weeks and there were only four suspensions from reflection last week compared to the previous weekly average of 15. The Principal explained that the SEMH and Zones of Regulation offer for students in that room was also being developed. The Principal noted that he meets with the Senior Pastoral Leader fortnightly.

Outcomes: The Principal reported that data was tracking at 47% 4+ basics and 38% 5+ basics against the target of 65% and 45%. The English exam board had changed to Eduqas and the Head of English was progressing that move and mock results reported strongly. Mr Byrne had increased his time within the Maths department and was delivering eleven hours Maths intervention work. There were two tutors on site delivering 40 hours of Maths and English small group work or one to one intervention. The Principal noted disappointment that there would be no Progress 8 this academic year due to that cohort having no KS2 data (Covid) but was confident the targets were achievable.

Challenge: A governor asked if the interventions would impact the student's wider offer. The Principal confirmed not as the intervention would be delivered during core PE or the RAS curriculum but assured governors the mandatory requirements would be met. Mr Byrne delivered option Maths and statistic GCSE which should positively impact bucket performance.

The Chair highlighted the reduction in suspensions from internal exclusion which would keep the vulnerable children in school learning, support attendance and give the student a better chance at success.

Challenge: A governor asked if the reading intervention was Chromebook based. The Principal confirmed it was, the programme was individualised and identified gaps in learning as the students works through the programme. The Principal explained that the detention format would be changed to focus on reading.

Challenge: A governor asked if there were restrictions on the Chromebooks to prevent students from have other tabs open. The Principal confirmed they were restricted through net support and the student could only use Sparx/Reading Plus.

Challenge: A governor asked if the reading materials align with student interests. The Principal explained that there was work to develop the reading materials and Google Platform was being explored. Subject Leaders would establish a subject area platform that would support learning and develop a sense of belonging and enable teaching staff to engage the student in work even if not in school.

Challenge: A governor asked if there were any issues with connectivity at home inhibiting access for some students. The Principal explained that Chromebooks could be sent home with students if needed but at home access would need to be investigated.

Challenge: A governor asked about the impact on teaching staff. The Principal explained that the impact should be minimal as the aim was making the teaching and learning easily accessible. There would be an initial workload impact but once populated would only require tweaks and amends going forward. The Principal confirmed that CPD time would be built into the schedule to establish the resources.

Deeps Projects

The Principal presented the Deep projects noting that the overall cost impact was £15k. There was an application, interview and selection process and the projects provided development opportunities for staff. There were 19 expressions of interest and staff not successful this year had been encouraged to apply next year as there was value seen in all the suggested projects.

Challenge: A governor asked if the mental health intervention offer was reframed to maximise engagement. The Principal explained that mental health was not a taboo subject at York High and was framed around York High Cares. The wellbeing offer at school was strong, but this added another layer that was needed.

Challenge: A governor asked if the school had many young carers. The Principal explained that the Young Carers were supported through the Senior Pastoral Leader and young carers had regular sessions.

The Chair suggested inviting the Senior Pastoral Leader to the next governor meeting to present on behaviour and wellbeing.

Challenge: A governor asked about staff wellbeing. The Principal confirmed that there had been various stakeholder voice including parent questionnaire, parent coffee morning and staff sessions. A wellbeing group had also been established.

School Improvement Plan

The Principal explained that the SIP was not a standalone document, would be reviewed regularly and informed a half termly SLT meeting.

Action: School Improvement Plan to be added to the meeting pack.

Challenge: A governor suggested the need to consider how governors could support planning and preparation for Ofsted. The Principal noted that he would regularly share Ofsted preparation documentation. The Principal reported that his assessment of the school was securely good with the need to focus on strengthening outcomes.

The Principal reported a full PAN of 150 in Year 7 and there were currently 157 first choice applications for September 2025 intake which made the school oversubscribed (compared to the previous year's 120 first choice applications). The Principal noted that the applications reflected York High as a school where people in the local area want to attend and the move to a 150 PAN supported effective planning.

A governor noted that the perception of the school was changing and securing the Good Ofsted rating was significant to that.

The Principal reported that there was a significant amount of work being done around school community and building relationships.

The Principal noted that the leadership team and structure was in the position needed and there was strong practice across school and whilst there were some adaptations to be made there were no significant changes planned.

The Principal left the meeting at 7.32pm.

5. Chair Feedback

The Chair reported that he was meeting with the Principal weekly given they were both new in post.

Challenge: A governor asked how the Chair found the relationship with the Principal given he was also an employee. The Chair explained that due to the Trust Scheme of Delegation there was no direct responsibility for the Principal and their role as staff was separate to the day to day running of the school. The Chair reported that he had also met with the Vice Principal and planned to meet with the Senior Pastoral leader.

School Improvement Plan

There was no update to report.

Attendance (previously circulated)

There were no questions on the circulated link governor report.

Trust FAQ Attendance (previously circulated)

Provided for information.

BRAG Pulse Trends – Attainment and Behaviour (previously circulated)

Provided for information.

The Chair recorded thanks to governors for the number of governor visits and associated reports which included question and challenge.

Governors requested that Katy Lawson provide a report on the rationale and justification for the move to double science for the February 2024 meeting.

6. Governing Feedback Deep Learning (link governor report previously circulated)

There were no questions on the circulated link governor report.

Teaching and Learning (link governor report previously circulated)

There were no questions on the circulated link governor report.

Reading and Literacy

There was no update to record.

7. Governor Feedback – Deep Experience

There was no update to record.

Assessment and Destinations

There was no update to record.

Careers and Education

There was no update to record.

8. Governor Feedback Deep Support

Child Protection and Safeguarding (link governor report previously circulated)

There were no questions on the circulated link governor report.

SEND

There was no update to record.

Community (link governor report previously circulated)

There were no questions on the circulated link governor report.

Pupil Premium and Disadvantaged

There was no update to record.

Behaviour

There was no update to record.

9. Finance Report (link governor report previously circulated)

Governors were provided with the P2 monitoring report and October 2024 consolidated management accounts.

The link governor reported that the £111k surplus was reporting slightly below the budgeted £125k surplus. Income was higher than budgeted mainly due to additional central funding. The link governor highlighted the additional expenditure allocated to deeps projects, tutoring, marketing, and a recharge back to the Trust which included a contribution to additional intervention.

Challenge: A governor asked if the National Insurance contribution uplift and the way the funding formulae worked would lead to a shortfall in future years. The link governor agreed to pick that up with the SBM at the next meeting when they reviewed period 3.

Action: Mr Savage to confirm impact to the budget of the National Insurance contribution.

Governors recorded thanks to the SBM for the significant contribution to the effective running of the school.

10. School Policies

Resolution: Governors approved the below policies:

- Allergens Policy (previously circulated)
- Anti-bullying Policy (previously circulated)
- Positive Behaviour Policy (previously circulated)
- Staff Dress Code Policy (previously circulated)
- Pupil Premium Statement (previously circulated)

11. Governor CPD (previously circulated)

Governors noted the training tracker and CYC governance training schedule.

12. MAT Update (previously circulated)

Cllr Waller reported that he attended the Trust governance evening and noted that there was a commitment made for all governors to get an update on a termly basis.

13. Any Other Business

The Chair of Governors highlighted the two general governor vacancies and asked governors to use their contacts to identify potential governors.

14. Future Meeting Dates

Thursday 6th February 2025 – 6pm

Tuesday 18th March 2025 – 6pm

Tuesday 6th May 2025 – 6pm

Thursday 10th July 2025 – 6pm

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Approved at LGB on 6th February 2025

Approval

ACTION POINTS
From the meeting of the Local Governing Board held on 2nd December 2024

	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>WHO</u>	<u>WHEN</u>
1.	Add School Improvement Plan to the agenda pack.	4	Principal	Complete
2.	Confirm impact to the budget of the National Insurance contribution.	9	Ian Savage	Feb 2025

Future meeting:

Move to Double Science Rationale
 Senior Pastoral Leader – Behaviour & Wellbeing