

## **Minutes of the Local Governing Board of Winifred Holtby Academy**

Tuesday 03 February 2026, 17:00

in the Winifred Holtby Academy Conference Room

### **PRESENT:**

Mr S Berry (Chair, SB), Mrs E Fairclough (EF), Mrs K Farmer (Headteacher, KF), Mr B Horsley (BH), Mrs A Hoy (AH), Mrs C Marshall (CM), Mr S Mills (SM), Mr D Ord (DO)

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs L Craxton (Clerk to the LGB, LC), Mr I Fernie (Deputy Headteacher, IF), Mrs Y Jackson (SENDCo, YJ), Mr J Nassau (Assistant Headteacher, JN), Mr P Stallard (Assistant Headteacher, PS)

Throughout these minutes a question is indicated by Q followed by the initials of the questioner and a comment is marked by C.

### **32 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

SB welcomed all to the meeting

It was noted in the pre-meet that R Hannam has stepped down due to personal commitments. All present wished her well

### **33 APOLOGIES**

Full attendance

### **34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

All previously declared

### **35 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (09 December 2025)**

A slight amend was noted on page 7

After the amend was agreed, the minutes of the meeting held on 09 December 2025 were declared a true record and are to be signed by the Chair, SB

### **36 MATTERS ARISING**

**ACTION:** LC to contact People Services regarding a standard safeguarding induction for all new starters **Completed**

**ACTION:** K Armstrong to attend a future meeting to present on enrichment, NEET sustained data and inclusion **See minute 41**

**ACTION:** All relevant governors to complete their GDPR training before the next meeting **CM to complete before the end of the month. To be removed from the minutes**

**ACTION:** SMc to forward local attendance procedures to LC for distribution to and electronic approval from the LGB **Completed**

**ACTION:** LC to discuss the meeting frequency and agenda size with the Director of Governance and will feedback to SB and KF **Completed**

### **37 READING INTERVENTIONS IMPACT**

PS discussed the reading interventions in place at the Academy. He explained that he had taken over the reading interventions since Christmas, separating the roles of reading for purpose and pleasure from reading interventions. The interventions are divided into two main categories: phonics and reading fluency. Data is collected on students' reading abilities, including their reading age and fluency, and interventions are tailored based on this data

Students in the bottom 20% of reading ability in Years 7 and 8 are tested and assigned phonics interventions if needed. Those who do not require phonics interventions are placed in small group reading sessions to improve fluency. The Reading Army programme aims to enhance reading fluency through consistent, small group sessions. The success of these interventions is monitored, with an average reading age improvement of seven months noted for participating students

PS also highlighted the use of Read, Write, Inc. for phonics interventions and the deployment of the Winifred Reader model to support reading comprehension across the curriculum

*Q: (CM) How often do you take them out for the Reading Army?*

*PS: That depends on the individual. Some get 2 x 30 minutes, others get more*

*Q: (SM) What interventions do you use?*

*PS: Read, Write, Inc. It works well for us*

*Q: (SB) Do the students say they feel it helps?*

*PS: Historically they have spoken about the positive impact it has had on them being able to access the curriculum. We need to do a student voice soon*

*Q: (SB) Is it embedded across all subjects or just English?*

*PS: All subjects. We have the Winifred reader which gets promoted through the weekly bulletin but we need to embed it consistently*

*Q: (SB) How are you addressing the gaps still seen with DA?*

*PS: I track all of them and they are not treated any differently to others, they all receive the same level of intervention. No-one is singled out*

*Q: (SB) Do you look at comprehension as well as reading fluency?*

*PS: Yes. They are given 2 new words each week and are tested on them when they are placed in a text*

*Q: (DO) Are you seeing more boys than girls needing extra help?*

*PS: It's usual to see more boys but this year there are a lot of girls*

*C: (YJ) This cohort were year 1 in lockdown, they missed out on a lot of phonics work*

### 38 IDSR THROUGH THE LENS OF A GOVERNOR

JN spoke to governors about the IDSR, which is used by Ofsted to assess school performance. The document highlighted areas of strength and those needing improvement. Key points included the school's high enrolment stability, the socioeconomic context affecting results, and the increasing number of SEN students. Behaviour and attendance were discussed, noting improvements in overall absence but high levels of persistent absenteeism

Academic performance indicators such as A8 and P8 were identified as areas for improvement, with specific emphasis on raising the performance of higher ability students. Faculty leads have been advised to focus on challenging these students to achieve higher grades. Subject-specific strengths and weaknesses were reviewed, with English being a consistent performer, while maths and science showed areas needing improvement.

The importance of growing MFL to reduce volatility was discussed. Also highlighted was the need to improve student destinations post-16. Strategies to raise aspirations and improve outcomes were shared, including the introduction of a scholarship programme for high-achieving pupils and tracking progress through standardised assessments.

The importance of exam marking was noted as part of continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers. Having examiners around the building, particularly for subjects like History and English, is beneficial

JN noted the absence of Maths examiners in the past, but now there are three Maths examiners, which is seen as a positive development. It was stressed that marking exams helps teachers understand the nuances of the subject, which in turn benefits the students. The school encourages teachers to mark exams and records this activity as part of their CPD. The ultimate goal is to improve the skills of teachers, which will then positively impact student learning

WHA has started to identify and reward top-performing students across various subjects, as well as those who have shown significant progress. For instance, one student moved up 87 places within the school rankings. The idea is to foster a competitive spirit and instil confidence and belief in students from an early age. This recognition is part of a broader strategy to create a culture of excellence within the school

*Q: (AH) How will you get them interested in achieving?*

*JN: It comes down to the relationships we have with the students. We are honest and we push them to have aspirations. We believe in them and hope they believe in themselves*

*C: (IF) We have introduced a scholarship programme into Year 9 and have created 2 top sets. We launched it on 15 January and had an 85% turnout from parents. There will be activities such as introducing girls to STEM and we have a theatre trip booked. Great connections have been made with high profile people*

*Q: (CM) What about exam techniques?*

*IF: We are doing a lot of work already*

### 39 YEAR 11 INTERVENTION PLAN OVERVIEW AND ENGAGEMENT

WHA has implemented several interventions to support students, particularly in Maths and English. Initially, students underperforming in Maths were identified using Year 10 mock data, and they were taken out of core PE for additional Maths lessons. The intervention involved

Maths teachers and, later, external support from the Trust's Maths Director and Assistant Director. Despite some challenges, such as illness, the intervention has reached 66 students weekly

Similarly, English interventions were conducted by PS and will soon include the Trust Director of English. Students were chosen based on their November mock data through RAP meetings, where faculty leads identified those needing extra support. The intervention also included subject-focused tutor groups, inspired by a visit to Macmillan Academy in Middlesbrough. These groups provide targeted support in Maths, English, Science, History, and MFL with experienced teachers delivering extra lessons

Another significant initiative is the Lesson Six programme, where Year 11 students have personalised timetables for after-school sessions. This programme includes incentives such as prom tickets and early access to hoodies to encourage participation. Despite some drop-off in attendance, WHA continues to track and adjust the programme to maximise impact

Additionally, a small number of students have been allowed to drop a subject to focus more on core subjects like English and Maths. This decision aims to help students secure essential grades, particularly those struggling in other areas.

*Q: (SB) There is a lot going on. Is there any early evidence that attendees are on a better trajectory?*

*JN: The data will show the progress but it's hard to know where they would have been without the additional support*

*Q: (SB) Engagement is still an issue, do we know why? Is it lack of parental support, low aspirations?*

*KF: All of that. Things like social media and gaming are bigger draws for some students*

*C: (SB) Neil Hudgell is an excellent role model, he shows what can be achieved*

*C: (IF) We are also working on getting the alumni in*

#### **40 HUB 3 – THE EVOLUTION OF THE GROUP, THE TRIALS AND CURRENT CHALLENGES**

YJ spoke about the challenges faced by Hub 3, a group of students with EHCPs and SEMH needs. These students have significant behavioural and emotional difficulties. The Hub is staffed with specialist SEN teachers and TAs trained in emotional literacy and self-regulation

Despite various interventions, such as blended timetables, external provisions like Y-Engage, and Rewilding activities, the mainstream academy environment is not conducive to the needs of some students

Behaviour contracts have been introduced to manage conduct, but detentions and suspensions have proven ineffective. The school has sought support from the Gateway and Inclusion panel, the LA SEND team, and other external agencies. However, the lack of appropriate provisions and the challenges of parental choice have made it difficult to find suitable placements for these students

The discussion highlighted the need for better SEND provision across Hull, as the current system is inadequate to meet the needs of these students. Despite the staff's best efforts, some students may require permanent exclusion to access the specialist support they need

*Q: (SB) Are you receiving multi-agency support?*

*KF: A lot of what the LA suggest we have already done*

*C: (YJ) Parental choice overrides everything else*

*Q: (CM) Can parents change their choice?*

*KF: Yes but then it's very difficult as the places at other schools will no longer be available*

*C: (YJ) Special schools can refuse entry, they have to stick to their PAN*

## **41 CAREERS, NEET AND ENGAGEMENT**

### **Careers**

The WHA careers programme starts from Year 7 and progresses through to Year 10. The programme includes employer engagement, workshops, and the introduction of careers apps

- Year 8 focuses on the labour market and employability skills
- Year 9 helps students make informed choices about their next steps, including GCSE options
- Year 10 ramps up the preparation for post-16 pathways, with mock interviews, CV workshops, and apprenticeship encounters
- Year 11 students focus on next steps, including applications to colleges, as well as engaging with panels of employers and apprenticeship providers

Employers like Cranswick, Heta, and Swift are involved in providing practical insights and support to students. The programme aims to equip students with the skills and knowledge needed for their future careers, ensuring they are well-prepared for the transition from school to the workplace or further education

Students are encouraged to find their own placements, which are thoroughly vetted. Additionally, there are taster days for further and higher education, including universities, aimed at fostering aspirations among students

The programme also includes NHS career sessions and one-to-one guidance support

The programme aligns with the Gatsby benchmarks, which were revamped and launched in September. The first evaluation against the new standards took place in December, showing a decline in evaluations due to the transition period required to meet the new standards. The team is working on ensuring all encounters with external employers and apprenticeship providers have specific learning outcomes. Efforts are also being made to help students understand and practically apply the information provided to them

A new initiative involves Key Stage 3 pupils having at least one meaningful workplace experience by 2029, which may include virtual work experiences. This national programme is being developed with considerations for safeguarding concerns

### **NEET**

Discussed next was the issue of students who are at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). An update was provided on recent efforts to re-engage NEET students, including collaboration with Connexions and the LA SEND team. Specific examples were given regarding students who had secured apprenticeships with support from Connexions

Connexions team members visit regularly to provide careers advice and support to Year 11 and Year 10 students. A specific member focuses on students at risk of becoming NEET, using criteria such as attendance to identify and support them. Detailed tracking of students who have left the school ensures that their progress is monitored

The discussion highlighted the need for targeted intervention to address the slight increase in NEET figures among boys, while noting the positive downward trend in girls' NEET figures. The aim is to ensure post-16 pathways meet the students' needs, reducing NEET outcomes.

*Q: (SB) How do you ensure the careers advice is fair and unbiased?*

*KA: A lot of work is done through PSHCE and subject areas regardless of interest and where they are in school. They all get the same*

## **42 POLICY REVIEW**

### **42.1 Teaching and Learning Policy**

The Teaching and Learning Policy was tabled for approval

**Resolved:** The Teaching and Learning Policy was approved

It was noted that this document is only in place until the Trust policy is ready

## **43 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 24 March 2026, 17:00

## **44 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None

**The meeting closed at 18:47**

