**MINUTES OF MEETING**

Nottinghamshire County Council

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| **School:** | **Trent-Rylands Federation** |
| **Meeting title:** | **Autumn term 1st meeting of the governing body** |
| **Date and time:** | **Thursday 25 September 2025 at 5.30pm** |
| **Location:** | **At BRJS** |

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| **Membership** | | Ms L Griffiths (co-chair) |
| 'A' denotes absence | | Mrs D Bagley |
| | | Mrs E Truman |
| | | Mrs S Osborne |
| | A | Ms K Foale |
| | | Mr C Jones |
| | | Mr A McPherson |
| | A | Miss M Gough |
| | | Mrs T Walker |
| | A | Mrs L Shepherd (vice-chair) |
| | | Mr S Williams (co-chair) |
| | | Ms R Hall |
| | | Mrs C Watts |
| | | Mrs K Harby |
| | A | Mrs C Turner– Head of school |
| | | Mrs J Barratt – Head of school |
| **In attendance** | | Mr J Wood (clerk to the governors) |

**Ms L Griffiths chaired the meeting**
**s**
Jump to Actions

**GB/69/25 Apologies for absence** **Action**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs M Gough (illness), Mrs L Shepherd (family commitment), Mrs C Turner (illness).

Ms K Foale did not attend in view of her appointment to the Governing Body being on the agenda. Clerk made Governing Body aware, that prospective appointees may attend a Governing Body meeting, but could absent themselves during the appointment item of the agenda.

Governor asked if there was a process to follow for governors who had been absent from consecutive meetings. Clerk said that there isn't a set process: but clerks can send reminder letters on behalf of the Governing Body highlighting the importance of attending. However, this is normally when governors haven't accepted apologies. The only set process to follow is when the Governing Body wish to remove a governor: the process is to not accept a governor's apologies for non-attendance at FGB meetings for a period of 6 months. Governor was clear that this wasn't relevant to her question.

It was

**RESOLVED**

**Action**

that the governing body **consent** to these absences.

**GB/70/25 Declaration of interest**

The following declarations of interest were declared, which have not changed from last year:

- Mr C Jones' wife works in both schools in the Federation.
- Mrs L Shepherd's her sister worked at Trent Vale I. S. and is now a member of the governing board.
- Ms K Foale's husband is chair of the Equals Trust.

There were no further declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

*Confirmation of completion of governor annual declarations (updates to school website and GIAS)*
*Review and sign 2025/2026 Register of Business Interest*
*Review and sign 2025/2026 Declaration of Eligibility*
*Review and sign 2025 Governor Code of Conduct*

**ACTION** - Governors present were reminded to complete all of the above on Governorhub by the next meeting. **All govs**

It was questioned whether paper copies of business interest need to be signed as well as completing declaration on GovernorHub

Clerk believes a report can be generated and printed from GovernorHub with this information - but will check.

**ACTION** – Clerk to check what GovernorHub compliance report includes **Clerk**

**GB/71/25 Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months**

The clerk brought to the attention of governors the following end of term of office:

Ms L Griffiths – Co-opted Governor - end date 9th March 2026
Mrs E Truman – Co-opted Governor - end date 30th November 2026

Both governors indicated they would like to continue on the Governing Body after their terms end.

A governor **questioned** whether, when re-appointed, they would need new DBS and Section 128 checks. Clerk informed meeting it was good practice for new governors *and* governors with renewed terms of office to redo both.

*Appointment of LA Governor*

Following her application, the service director has recommended the nomination of Ms K Foale on behalf of the County Council, as a Local Authority governor, to the governing body.

Following a vote, it was unanimously

**RESOLVED**

That Ms K Foale be appointed LA Governor.

There are now **no** vacancies on the governing body.

**GB/72/25 Determination of term of office for chair and vice-chair**

The meeting **AGREED** that this should be one year.

**GB/73/25 Election of chair of governors**

Ms L Griffiths and Mr S Williams were proposed and seconded for the position of chair. There were no other nominations. Following a vote, it was

**RESOLVED**

that Ms L Griffiths and Mr S Williams be appointed as co-chairs of the governing body.

Both chairs said they have enjoyed their tenure.

**GB/74/25 Election of vice-chair of governors**

Mrs L Shepherd was contacted by Headteacher, and she confirmed her interest in being nominated for vice-chair. Mrs L Shepherd was proposed and seconded for the position of vice-chair. There were no other nominations. Following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED**

that Mrs L Shepherd be appointed as vice-chair of the governing body.

**GB/75/25 Approval of minutes of second summer term meeting and any special governing body meetings**

The minutes of the second summer term meeting held on 10 July 2025 having been previously circulated were confirmed and signed by the chair.

*Review of actions*

GB/37/25: Mrs Turner to contact Mrs Foale with regards the vacant LA Governor post

**COMPLETED:** Ms K Foale appointed as LA Governor.

GB/39/25 Mrs E Truman to contact LA re kitchen working conditions:

**COMPLETED** Mrs E Truman contacted on 16th July with no response. **ACTION –** Follow up again to ask if LA will fund replacement extractor fan. **ET**

Headteacher gave update: fly screens have now been fitted, and windows can now be opened. Environmental Health turned up shortly after.

**Governor queried**: Was it passed?

5 stars were given for hygiene.

Headteacher thought that, now it has passed environmental health, and windows can be opened, the LA are unlikely to fund a new extractor fan, despite the very challenging working conditions. Neither is their room in the school budget for an

extractor fan. If there is no movement from the LA, it may be that the kitchen has to be closed, given the working conditions.

***See confidential item***

GB/63/25 Mrs T Walker to undertake a review of website in Autumn Term

**ACTION**: This should happen towards the end of the Autumn term: **TW**

**GB/76/25 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties**

*Approval of NCC HR model policies*
Whistleblowing Policy
School Pay Policy
School's Employee code of conduct
School disciplinary Procedure Part 1
School disciplinary procedure – part 2
Appraisal Policy
Attendance management in school – Employee guide

Charges and Remission Policy
Online Safety Policy
Child on child abuse
ICT and internet acceptable use Policy
Walking home from school/Mobile Phone use Policy
Anti-bullying Policy (+ children version)
Capability and Disciplinary Policy
Managing of human resources
Complaints procedure
Reporting Staff absence - Employee guide
Rarely Cover Policy
Staff handbook – Policies available on the Shared Drive
School dress code
School Disciplinary Procedure Part 2
Managing safeguarding risks and allegations/concerns of harm and abuse made against all school staff
Approval of updated Child Protection Policy
Approval of updated HR Pay Policy
Approval of new Complaints Policy

Governors had sent in queries and challenges relating to the above:

**Governor Challenge: Walking home from school / mobile phone - the policy is fine. Re inclusion of 'no smart watches' - presume this is a school wide restriction. Has this been included in other relevant policies or communicated to parents / children? Has there been any response / push back on this?**
**School Pay Policy to be further discussed and agreed at Governors meeting.**

It hasn't yet been included in other policies as it has only just come up.
Watches will be dealt with on a case by case basis with children.
This will communicated via newsletter.

**Governor Challenge: Is it Behaviour Policy or Relational Policy? Though I appreciate the change of focus to concentrate on developing relationships and helping children develop positive behavioural habits, the majority of the**

**policy does still focus on behaviour, rewards and sanctions etc. I would suggest for sake of clarity keeping behaviour in the title of the policy**

WE agree – it's confusing.
We had thought about naming it – Relational approach to behaviour and will change it as such.
**Governor Challenge: Child on Child Abuse**
**On pages 1 & 3 there is a list of "additional barriers to telling someone". Perhaps 'English proficiency' should be on this list? I'm thinking EAL children.**

**P. 4 Under "Training", I'm not clear on how "harms outside the home" is contextual to TRF?**

This is an LA policy – but we can include it.

Harms outside the home – not from immediate family such as being online elsewhere / exploitation/ gang violence / online grooming. This is part of developing staff understanding of what safeguarding is .
Discussion was had on School Pay Policy

**Governor queried: Do we need to confirm that the section at the beginning hadn't changed?**

Headteacher has highlighted the same areas that the Governing Body agreed last year. Headteacher also informed governors that there is a new TLR 3, in additional to 1 and 2. Also informed governors that the school does not contain any posts from TLR3.

**Governor queried: does the school still have flexibility to have a TLR 3 if needed?**

Headteacher confirmed the school did have that flexibility.

Headteacher highlighted decisions for governors to make on the pay policy. Adopting the following, would keep to last year's decision (highlighted in green on policy):

- The governing body will not award any recruitment and retention payments.
- The school structure does not contain any posts for which a TLR1 payment will be awarded
- TLR2 will be awarded to the following values
  minimum £3,527
  maximum £8,611
- The school structure does not contain any posts for which a TLR3 payment will be awarded.
- The school structure does not contain any posts for which a SEN payment will be awarded.
- Decision Teachers additional tuition: ( c) This does not apply in this school

Governors **AGREED** to these statements on the pay policy: policy was **APPROVED.**

It was noted that Ms K Foale was not in attendance and hasn't been able to through her policies – Reporting Staff Absence, and Rarely Cover. Mr S Williams has looked through both, and had no comments to make.

Subject to corrections and amendments governors sent in advance of meeting, regarding typos and formatting, the meeting **formally approved** all policies.

**GB/77/25** **Overseeing Financial Performance** - Financial reporting

*Year-end re-forecast*

Full details of this are contained in the headteachers report.

**Governor Challenge: The deficit for TV is concerning - but I understand your commentary - what does this mean for us in a practical way? Do we get 'told off' or monitored more?**

Headteacher informed governors that Vicky from the Finance Team believes there won't be additional monitoring when this is submitted: because it a better picture than deficit at other schools.

It was discussed that an in year deficit is aimed to be recovered over the next 3 years: but only if it is possible for the school.

Trent Vale is 22 children short – which will have a big impact on budget. A new child has come from new housing estate: but there are very few people living on the estate. The upside is there are new children to come yet: budgets can change year on year: because they are based on current child numbers.

Governors **acknowledged** and **noted** that reducing the original 70K deficit, to just under 16K – has taken lots of difficult decisions to bring it down: mixed classes for example, which contextualises some feedback from staff questionnaire. Sustaining a difficult budget, has not meant compromising on the experience for children – this feedback comes from governors' own experience through their children who attend the school.

Headteacher informed governors that Vicky will be leaving this year.

**Governor Query: Will there be a like-for-like change?**

Nottinghamshire County Council are likely to provide her replacement.

**GB/78/25** **Holding executive leaders to account**

*Summary of Headteacher's report*

Headteacher's report, has been uploaded to GovernorHub.

*The following challenges were made in the meeting:*
**Challenge**

**Is there a reason for persistence absence being higher at TV than BJRS?**
Response

It is largely Cohort-based.

Fining had not made a massive difference to attendance, from the few that have been given out.
**Challenge**

**Action**

**Personal Development and British Values which came up in Ofsted - what are you doing differently to embed this and how do you know it's working? What evidence do you have that it is working?**

Response
Jamie has been on training. Sue provided scheme that staff are working on, with each year group individually, in Thursday class assemblies. Within My Happy Mind scheme – there are British Values lessons.

When OFSTED came, they spoke to children and asked the what British values were – this will be the measure of success.

Governors discussed that it's a difficult concept to get across to children.
It was **noted** that having the headline SIP objectives was very helpful and clear: headteacher was grateful for the comment.

*Governors had previously sent in queries and challenges relating to the below*

**Challenges - SIP**

**1. Can we hear more about the transcription writing curriculum? 'Transcription policy' is mentioned in the TV SEF - is that the same thing?**

**2. Sorry, I know it's niche, but I can't help myself: what are the 'non negotiables for punctuation per year group'? (I will resist the temptation to argue that there is a missing hyphen here.**

Responses

1. Transcription writing is a focus on spelling / handwriting / grammar / sentence level work which provides the building blocks for longer writing for a purpose. Yes – it is the same . The policy is our approach – the curriculum is what we will teach.

2. Punctation non – negotiables are simply the expectation for each group in terms of punctuation – e.g. full stop through to colons.

**Challenge - Behaviour**

***See confidential item***

**Challenge - Attendance**

**New report data format seems useful for governors. Has it offered any wider insights so far?**

Response

It is simple and will be updated regularly so saves us time and also provides an instant picture.

At this point it hasn't shown us anything we didn't know but moving forwards it will be helpful.

**Challenge – SEND - Reduced Timetables**

***See confidential item***

**Challenge - Safeguarding**

**Action**

**KCSIE 2025 - Are there any amendments to our policies / ways of working that need to be implemented as a result of changes introduced by this?**

Response

We are still waiting for updated guidance on the use of AI and the impact this will have in school.

ESHAWH – are starting to send through information
Education, Safeguarding Health and Well Being Hub.

Governor **commented** that there are very few male teachers on the staff team.

Discussion that this was a common problem to primary education: and some schools have none at all.

**Governor Query: When there are student teachers – does school have a say in who is sent?**

No – but, a female maths ambassador is always requested, given underrepresentation in this area.

**GB/79/25** **Update on appraisal process for headteacher and staff including an update on the wellbeing of the headteacher and staff**

*Confirm external adviser for meeting in Autumn term*

Mr Bob Hattersley is to fulfil this this role. Appraisal is booked for November 25th.
**ACTION** – Headteacher to confirm time of appraisal **JB**

*Confirm/appoint appraisal governors – confirm appraisers have completed training*

Ms L Griffiths and Mr C Jones to continue as headteacher appraisal governors

*Confirmation of the Quality Assurance Governor arrangements*

Mrs D Bagley and Mrs E Truman to continue as QA governors.

*Confirm arrangements to receive the appraisal governors' pay recommendations effective from 1.9.25 for the headteacher in line with the scheme of delegation and the pay policy.*

Governing body has a pay committee which determines this. Mrs D Bagley and Mrs E Truman are on the pay committee.

**GB/80/25** **Update on headteacher and staff wellbeing.**
*Staff Questionnaire - summary report*

Staff wellbeing was discussed earlier in the meeting and is included in confidential item.

Headteacher wellbeing was discussed. Catherine has been absent – which has been a challenge. Mrs J Barratt feels OK. It has been challenging for Mrs S Osborne, as deputy. Wants to do what's best for children, and school: she has continued teaching her class half the time, and being headteacher half the time this week – which has been very challenging.

**When is Mrs C Turner due back?**

Mrs C Turner is due back after half term: is already wanting to do things remotely to help out.

It was **noted** how difficult is it to lose someone for a period in senior leadership. Mrs J Barratt and Mrs S Osborne were thanked for their efforts.

**GB/81/25 Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, set by governors**

*Review and embed the vision, ethos and strategy of the school reflected in the school improvement plan*

*Approve (or confirm arrangements to approve) the School Improvement Plan, as detailed in the scheme of delegation*

The meeting **FORMALLY APPROVED** the SIP objectives contained within the headteachers report.

It was **noted** that the rationale for the objectives is very clear.

**GB/82/25 Corporate Directors' reports**

***1. Recruitment and Selection Safer Working Documents 2025***

Clerk gave summary of following points in Corporate Director's report:

**Teacher's Pay Award September 2025 and related policy updates**

**School Teacher's Review Body 2026 (STRB) and School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD**) –

Gathering of evidence and make recommendations on future teacher pay and conditions. No additional funding will be provided for any pay awards.

**Employment Tribunal statistics**

- National ET claims up 32% (Jan–Mar 2025).
- 22% unfair dismissal, 14% breach of contract, 13% discrimination.
- Nottinghamshire schools not yet affected, but vigilance is key.

**School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB)**

- Proposal to reintroduce SSSNB from 2027–28 and create a national pay and conditions framework for support staff.

**HR Training – Autumn 2025 available via EMED**

- Topics cover a wide range of school-specific HR issues.

Clerk informed governors that they have all all recommended actions in hand.

***2. Summary of corporate director's report - Reduced timetable***

Clerk gave brief summary: informed governors that they are providing oversight and challenge on reduced timetable in the appropriate way: and are asking the suggested questions from report.

**GB/83/25 Safeguarding information for consideration and action:**

**Action**

*Assurance of statutory safeguarding arrangements in Nottinghamshire Schools, colleges, and independent providers*

*Safeguarding Children in Education: self-audit tool 2025/2026*

*Confirmation that all governors have read <u>all</u> of KCSiE 2025 (new governors must undertake safeguarding training as part of their induction and all governors must have refreshed their safeguarding knowledge each year)*

**ACTION -** All Governors to complete KCSiE declaration on GovernorHub **All govs**

Discussed that it was most important to read the summary of the changes. The changes are quite minor this year.
*Confirm new governors have undertaken safeguarding training as part of their induction, as required by KCSiE*

No new governors present.

*Confirm <u>all</u> governors have refreshed their safeguarding knowledge each year, as required by KCSiE*

Danielle sent Safeguarding Refresher Course link, earlier on in term.

**ACTION** – Mrs E Truman to share link with all governors on GovernorHub. **ET**

**ACTION -** Governors who didn't complete 3 yearly Safeguarding training in July – complete by next meeting. **CW, CJ, TW**

Discussed that this was important to keep central record up to date.

**GB/84/25 Communication received and updates**

*From Chair*

Information received from Governor Services, regarding the approval of Ms K Foale's LA Governor Application.
*From Headteacher*

None

*From Clerk - Governor Newsletter*

The clerk drew attention to the content of the first 2025 autumn term edition of the Nottinghamshire Governor e-newsletter and highlighted the following items:

**Launch of the 2025 model complaints policy –** policy to be adopted and <u>a new toolkit</u> is available on GovernorHub to support schools and governors at every stage.

- **Safeguarding – Welcome to the new SCIEO, Zain Iqbal**
- **HR updates – as per the directors' report**
- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 2025**.
- **The DfE new Writing Framework (2025)**
- **Improving School Attendance – View Your Education DATA (VYED)**
- **2025 DfE Changes to the Maintained Schools and Academies <u>Governance</u>**. **Effective Governance**

- **Strengthening Headteacher Appraisal with EM-Ed Support -** It is a statutory requirement for governing bodies to appoint an external adviser to support the Headteacher appraisal process. The East Midlands Education Support Service (EM-Ed) offers a comprehensive Headteacher Appraisal package tailored to support governing bodies.
- **Using AI in Education** - responsibilites of the governing board and DfE resources.
- **National Updates –** including: Free school meals eligibility extended • New procurement advice for governing boards • New DfE fraud reduction guidance published • DfE extends support for neurodivergent children in mainstream schools.
- **Ofsted Restructure for Inspection Teams**
- **Training for Governors and Trustees –** reminder of required governor training and there is free webinar training as part of your GovernorHub package.
- **Messages from the Nottinghamshire Association of Governors (NAGs) –** Date for Governor Conference – 6th March - 2 Free spaces, venue TBC.
- **Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme – updates.**

It was **noted** that the Governing Body had discussed items above i.e. change to Frameworks, Appraisal, OFSTED within the meeting or they were covered in papers providing to Governing Body.

**GB/85/25 Required monitoring reports from all link governors – (including Safeguarding, SEND, PP and link governors attached to school improvement priorities).**

None so far.
*Set governor Monitoring Dates*

Chris was thanked by the Governing Body for doing a lot of monitoring visits last year.

Governor link roles were reviewed , in relation to SIP objectives:

- Wider Curriculum – Chris.
- Transcription – Lisa G
- EYFS – Ruth
- My Happy Mind (PSHE Curriculum) – Emma T
  (Sessions on My Happy Mind take place every Monday and Tuesday morning).

It was **agreed** that dates would be set, for monitoring visits to take place in Autumn 2.

***Mrs C Watts left meeting at 19:02***

**GB/86/25 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account**

Large range of detailed questions submitted to the two headteachers in response to their report.

**Action**

Range of questions/challenges submitted prior to the meeting related to the policy reviews.
Close scrutiny and approval of the policies.

Challenge on monitoring requirements relating to deficit

Engagement in, and approval of the SIP.

Detailed discussion and challenge on staff questionnaire feedback

**GB/87/25** **Confirmation of dates for 2025-2026 to be agreed at the meeting in conjunction with the clerk**

The governing body

**agreed**

2nd Autumn term – 27 November 2025 at 5:30pm
1st Spring term – 22 January 2026 at 5:30pm
2nd Spring term – 12 March 2026 at 5:30pm
1st Summer term – 14 May 2026 at 5:30pm
2nd Summer term – 9 July 2026 at 5:30pm

**GB/88/25** **Determination of confidentiality of business**

It was

**resolved**

That there were 2 confidential items

**The meeting closed at 19:05**

Signed ..... (chair) Date .....

| Item | Action | Responsible |
|---|---|---|
| GB/39/25 | Re-contact LA re installation of extractor fan | ET |
| GB/63/25 | Undertake a review of website towards end of Autumn 2. | TW |
| GB/70/25 | Complete annual declaration on GovernorHub | All govs |
| GB/70/25 | Check what GovernorHub compliance report includes | Clerk - Complete |
| GB/79/25 | Confirm time for appraisal | JB |
| GB/83/25 | Complete KCSiE declaration on GovernorHub | All govs |
| GB/83/25 | Share link to safeguarding training on GovernorHub | ET |

| Back to | | | Action minutes |
|---|---|---|---|
| | GB/83/25 | Governors who didn't complete 3 yearly Safeguarding training in July – complete by next meeting. | CW, CJ, TW |