MINUTES OF MEETING

Nottinghamshire County Council

School:	**Trent Rylands Federation**
Meeting title:	**2nd Spring term meeting of the governing body**
Date and time:	**Thursday 26th March 2026 at 5.30 pm**
Location:	**At the school**

Membership ‘A’ denotes absence		
	A	Ms Lisa Griffiths (Co-chair**)**
		Mrs Deidre Bagley
	A	Mrs Emma Truman
		Mrs Sue Osborne
		Ms Kate Foale
		Mr Chris Jones **– from 5.45 pm**
		Mr Alistair McPherson
		Miss Michelle Gough
	A	Mrs Tracey Walker
		Mrs Lisa Shepherd (Vice-chair)
		Mr Samuel Williams (Co-chair)
		Ms Ruth Hall
		Mrs Charlotte Watts
		Mrs Kathryn Harby
		Mrs Catherine Turner– Headteacher – Beeston Rylands Junior School
		Mrs Janine Barratt – Headteacher – Trent Vale Infant School

In attendance Stuart Northedge (clerk to the governors)

The meeting was chaired by Mr S Williams.

GB/19/26 Apologies for absence **Action**

Apologies for absence were received from Tracey Walker, Emma Truman and Lisa Griffiths.

It was

resolved

that the governing body consent to these absences.

GB/20/26 Declaration of interest

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

GB/21/26 Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months

The clerk highlighted the following vacancies on the governing body:

There are currently no vacancies on the governing body.

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

Mrs Emma Truman – Co-opted – 30th November 2026

Action

The Headteacher at Beeston Rylands Junior School confirmed that Emma Truman had informed her that she didn't want to continue to be a governor for another term of office.

GB/22/26 Approval of minutes of the 1st spring term meeting and any additional special governing body meetings

The minutes of the 1st spring term meeting held on Thursday 22nd January 2026 having been previously circulated were confirmed and signed by the co-chair.

Review of actions

GB/94/25 - Provide 2025/26 ABIE to governors at next meeting.

Action completed.

GB/94/25 - Investigate availability of pots of money which TRF could bid for, for maintenance issues.

Action ongoing. The Headteacher at Trent Vale confirmed she had been in touch with Keepmoat with a view them supporting with the improvement of the school hall. The church has also been involved in the discussion. **CT/JB**

GB/06/26 - The Deputy Headteacher will respond to a question about whether Nursery and Reception EAL figures were lower.

Action completed. The Deputy Headteacher explained that there are a group of very young pupils in F2 that have early English acquisition. Some pupils also have low attendance due to cultural beliefs which mean they are kept off school with very minor illnesses. This often improves as the children get older. Visits to see relatives in home countries for 2 or 3 weeks also impacts. The pupils are closely tracked and are making good progress.

GB/14/26 - Governors agreed that Lisa Griffiths, Charlotte Watts and Chris Jones would be part of the initial working party for the Trent Vale Headteacher appointment and governors not present will also be given the opportunity to join. Lisa Griffiths will initiate and action this process.

Action completed.

Minutes from Headteacher Recruitment Meeting

The minutes of the Headteacher Recruitment Meeting having been previously circulated were approved and confirmed by governors.

GB/23/26 BRJS Health and Safety Audit

The BRJS Health and Safety Audit Report had been shared via Governor Hub in advance of the meeting.

The Headteacher explained that the report was thorough and that those undertaking the audit were pleased with the standard of health and safety at the school. There were some small actions with a timeline to complete them.

Question – a governor asked how long was the timeline for the actions to be completed?
The Headteacher confirmed that this was short and all would be completed quickly.

The work of Emma Truman on supporting and advising the school's on health and safety was recognised by governors.

GB/24/26 Holding executive leaders to account:

Summary of Headteacher's report

The Headteacher's had shared their detailed report via Governor Hub and governors had been asked to submit questions and challenge in advance of the meeting.

Chris Jones joined the meeting at 5.45 pm.

Question – a governor asked if planning consent was soon to be submitted for the new build?
The Headteacher confirmed that this would happen shortly and the designs were available in paper form to look at. The new designs are exciting but may see the school lose some storage space. There is a possibility of moving both office staff into the main office, which might free up some more space for storage.

The plans were then shared with governors for them to consider and view.

Question – a governor asked if there would be the possibility of an outdoor learning space?
The Headteacher confirmed that there could be and that the space could also be opened up to community groups.

The Headteacher added that the trees had already been cut back and felled in preparation for the work, due to restrictions later in the Spring around nesting birds and animals.

It is hoped that the work will start in late May, and it is expected to run into September. The school may have to adapt its available space while the work is taking place.

Question- a governor asked the Headteacher if she was happy with the plans?
The Headteacher confirmed that she was, but storage was an issue. In terms of pupils the new rooms won't be initially full, and the school will slowly work towards reaching its PAN.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Headteacher would upload the minutes of the meeting with developers and the LA to Governor Hub to enable governors to see them. **CT**

Governors also noted their ongoing concern that there still hadn't been a resolution to the issues around the kitchen at Trent Vale. The Headteacher at Trent Vale added that she felt long term the end result might be that the school no longer has a kitchen.

Question – a governor asked about the attendance ABiE and how 0.2% wasn't a meaningful amount and what would happen if you didn't achieve it?
The Headteacher at Trent Vale explained it was unclear what would happen and that the DfE were looking for progress over two years. The 4 schools that Trent Vale are compared to are not similar at all and aren't infant schools.

Both Headteacher's confirmed that they are working really hard on attendance and punctuality, and governors felt the good figures reflected this hard work.

In addition to these questions and challenges further questions were answered prior to the meeting by senior leaders, and the responses were provided to governors in written form. These included:-

BRJS Development

Question – a governor asked does this mean we have the potential to go above the PAN from this Autumn, or are there other considerations on this?
The Headteacher confirmed that going above PAN was a possibility. The school knows it is short of Year 3 pupils in September 2026, so admitting above the PAN of 50 in other years makes sense.

Question - a governor asked the school summer holidays seems very quick for this build? Are LA confident in the plan? Does consideration need to be given to managing a situation where building work is still ongoing at the start of autumn term?
The Headteacher explained that the school had been assured that the modular unit will be ready. The classroom conversions will go into September 2026, but the school will still have 6 classrooms available for use.

Question – a governor asked is the new unit going to be given a name?
The Headteacher explained that it wouldn't and the class would have a tree-based name like other classes.

Question – a governor asked is there any significant impact or risk as a result of the decision to delay the £5k maintenance works?
The Headteacher replied that there wasn't. The work has been delayed anyway due to a lack of parts and so the further delay has meant the school could take advantage of the work being done in the Easter holidays.

Question – a governor asked does the new unit at BRJS enable the Federation to say "yes" to pupils previously not coming to TV because of siblings not having a space at BRJS?
The Headteacher explained that hopefully this will be the case.

Finance - TV

Question – a governor asked what are the next steps to finalising the budget? Does there need to be a wider discussion about managing the deficit once numbers are finalised?
The Headteacher confirmed that the 2026-27 budget is currently in draft and based on lots of unknowns especially around pupil numbers and staff requirements. The position will be a lot clearer in May and will be a balancing act between reducing costs and maintaining the quality of education.

ABiE

Question – a governor asked with ABiE and attendance are you going to do anything differently than you already do?
The Headteacher's confirmed that the schools would continue to develop their practice in terms of monitoring attendance and liaising with parents to improve it.

Building/Maintenance

Question – a governor asked under the Emergency lighting repairs – what does DFC stand for?
The Headteacher explained that DFC stands for Devolved Formula Capital. The school receives approximately £6000 per year to use on ICT or building upgrades/projects. It helps keep larger expenditure out of the main (revenue) budget.

Question – a governor asked has an ecological impact assessment been made of the planned building work?
The Headteacher confirmed that the LA had sent someone to the school to complete an Ecological Impact Assessment. The extra land the school has along with the field ensures it is a green space for pupils.

GB/25/26 Overseeing Financial Performance - Financial reporting

Approval of

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) for 2025/2026

The Chair confirmed he had undertaken a benchmarking exercise using the DfE tool and had highlighted a couple of areas of high expenditure which included the costs of caretaking which had been discussed previously.

Governors agreed and approved the School's Financial Value Standard for 2025-26.

Year-end re-forecast and Draft Budget

The Chair highlighted that the budget for Trent Vale needed further work in the first half of the Summer Term.

The Headteacher at Trent Vale highlighted that the deficit was lower than expected in the current year and that the initial budget for 2026-27 had just taken a like for like approach, but there are savings that can be made, such as when a teaching assistant leaves. The pupil numbers aren't yet clear.

Once this information is available, the Headteacher explained that the school will definitely have a deficit budget but how large this is, isn't clear yet. Once the budget situation is clearer the school can look at options around reducing costs, such as staffing changes. The importance of maintaining the quality of teaching at the same time as reducing costs was also highlighted.

The Co-Chair added that it was important that the new Headteacher was involved in the longer-term decisions around reducing costs and staffing structures.

Question – a governor asked how parents in the new estate knew about the school?
The Headteacher at Trent Vale explained that she had leaflet dropped but that it might be worthwhile considering other options to promote the school ever further.

Governors then discussed the possible options for marketing the school and the advantages and disadvantages of using social media.

Question – a governor asked when the current LA Finance Officer who supported the school was leaving?
The Headteacher confirmed that this was at the end of the year and the LA would then appoint someone else to the role.

Services for Schools - Buy Back of NCC Services

The Co-Chair confirmed he had already discussed the buybacks with office staff and agreed most of them as they were in line with inflation.

However, the Co-Chair also highlighted the costs related to SIMs and the yearly increase in this.

The Headteacher at Trent Vale explained that the cost of SIMS had increased 3-fold, but the notification from the LA came too late and the school was already now locked into another 2 years of the contract before alternatives could be considered.

How the cost of SIMs compares to other platforms such as Arbor is unclear.

Question – a governor asked if SIMS was a better platform?
The Headteacher at Trent Vale explained it was a complicated platform with many features that might be able to be developed and used more effectively over time. The Deputy Headteacher also highlighted the high quality of support provided by SIMs.

The Chair suggested governors needed to find when the actual SIMs contract end date was, to consider if SIMS could be better utilised to create savings elsewhere and if the school could consider the cost of other alternatives such as Arbor at the end of the contract period.

Governors discussed this further and highlighted the lead time that would be needed anyway to look at such a big change in the school information management system.

The Headteacher also shared a response from the office staff which set out the due diligence they had carried out, once they were aware of the price rise.

Governors agreed to continue with SIMS but to action the 3 areas highlighted earlier by the Chair.

Governors agreed and approved the proposed buy back of services from Nottinghamshire County Council for 2026-27.

GB/26/26 Policies to be approved

Artificial Intelligence Policy
Drug Education and Incidents Policy
Fasting policy
Home School Liaison Policy
Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
Staff Induction Policy
Teaching and Learning Policy – BRJS
Teaching and Learning Policy – TV
Finance Policy

Action

Remote Learning Policy
Women's Refuge Policy

Curriculum Policies:
Art Policy
Computing Policy
DT Policy
Geography Policy
History Policy
Language Policy
Mathematics Policy
Music Policy
PE Policy
Science Policy

Governors had been allocated policies to review on behalf of the FGB in advance of the meeting and any queries or amendments proposed by governors will now be actioned by senior leaders.

Governors agreed and approved all of the above policies, once the amendments suggested had been undertaken.

GDPR Policy

Before this is agreed, the Deputy Headteacher and Alistair McPherson will discuss this in more depth, and the policy will be presented to governors again at the Summer 2 FGB. **SO/AMc**

GB/27/26 **Staff and Pupil Wellbeing**

The Headteacher at Trent Vale explained she had undertaken a supervision meeting with teaching assistants. This had shown that although the job was challenging, they enjoyed their work and the team they were part of.

Staff governors added that across both schools, staff wellbeing was good and everyone supported each other as a team. The ethos created by the senior leaders is positive, although there are some concerns around the Headteacher at Trent Vale retiring.

Details of the Happiness Hunt that pupils had led during lunchtime were also shared which had been an excellent activity.

Question – a governor asked if the Happiness Heroes were recruited from the Happy Minds programme?
Staff confirmed that they were and that they had been required to apply for their positions. The Happiness Heroes will receive certificates in assembly.

Question – a governor asked how the Happy Minds programme was impacting overall?
Chris Jones explained that his monitoring had highlighted a mixed view from pupils and that some older pupils were less keen on the activities provided. Staff will provide feedback to the Happy Mind Teams so that adaptations can be made to the programme moving forward.

Action

At Trent Vale, the programme is still very much in the early days of its introduction and across both schools the programme allows staff to alter the year group lessons they deliver with their classes.

The Headteacher explained that Happy Minds will incorporate the new sex education expectations from September 2026 which will be really valuable.

Question – a governor asked about Headteacher's wellbeing?
Both Headteacher's replied they were tired but well and looking forward to the Easter holidays.

GB/28/26 Confirm arrangements to review Child Protection and Safeguarding recording and reporting systems (CP confidential file audit)

The Headteachers confirmed that the audit had been completed with Lisa Shepherd on Thursday 26th February 2026.

GB/29/26 Communication received and updates

From Co-chairs

There were no further updates or communication to be shared by the Co-Chairs.

From headteacher

The Headteacher explained that the after-school provider at Trent Vale had asked to increase its numbers from 30 to 40. A meeting will take place with the provider to discuss this, and the Co-Chair will support this. **JB/SW**

From clerk - Governor Newsletter second spring term edition

The clerk gave details of the second Spring Term Governor Newsletter and in particular highlighted the following articles:-

- **Financial updates** – information around 2026-27 budget setting and submission of the SFVS.
- **Virtual school updates** – details of the duties now given to the schools and Ofsted judgements around inclusion.
- **Objectivity in Governance.**
- **Complaints Process** – details and a reminder of the governor role in this process.
- **National updates** – mobile phones in schools, Ofsted inspections of multi-academy trusts, SEND Reform, National Year of Reading 2026.
- **Holiday Activities and Food Programme –** it has been confirmed that this will run for a further 3 years.

GB/30/26 Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training audit and training requirements for 2026/2027

The training co-ordinator will share her report with governors via Governor Hub as she is unable to attend the meeting.

Action

Question – a governor asked if the school had signed up for Governor Learning and Development?
The Chair had confirmed that they had and that governors were free to book courses through this.

GB/31/26 General Data Protection Regulations

Review and confirm the appointment of the Data Protection Officer (DPO) and Senior Information and Risk Owner (SIRO)

Catherine Turner is the Senior Information and Risk Owner and Sue Osborne is the Data Protection Officer.

GB/32/26 Review of all recent governor monitoring visit reports in line with the 2025 Ofsted inspection framework (Safeguarding, SEND, PP and LAC plus link governors to School Improvement Priorities)

Chris Jones had completed a monitoring visit at both schools around pupil voice on 23rd January 2026. This focussed on My Happy Mind and wider curriculum learning.

Chris Jones also highlighted that as part of his visit, pupils had identified they didn't like the screen on the playground to the street. The Headteacher explained that this had been done for safeguarding reasons and this takes priority.

Question – a governor asked if pupils had been told why the screen was there?
The Headteacher explained that this was done initially but agreed to provide a reminder to pupils about the reasons for the installation. **CT**

GB/33/26 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account

Detailed challenge and questioning around the Headteacher's Report prior to the meeting.
Challenge and discussion about the impact of the new build.
Questioning around the finances and marketing of school places at Trent Vale.
Extensive monitoring visits and reports.
Detailed reviews of policies with amendments suggested and challenges made.

GB/34/26 Confirmation of dates for 2026/2027 to be agreed at the meeting in conjunction with the clerk

The governing body

agreed

1st Summer term – Thursday 14th May 2026 at 5:30pm
2nd Summer term - Thursday 9th July 2026 at 5:30pm

GB/35/26 Approval of INSET Days 2026-27

The Headteacher's highlighted the rationale around the proposed INSET Days for next year.

Action

These are Tuesday 1st September 2026, Wednesday 2nd September 2026, Friday 12th February 2027, Friday 28th May 2027 and Wednesday 28th July 2027.

Governors agreed and approved these INSET days.

GB/36/26 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

that parts of items GB/24/26 and GB/31/26 were confidential, but all other items and reports would be made available as necessary.

The meeting closed at 6.50 pm.

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