



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Trustees of the Academy Trust, held at Langtree School,
Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday, 5th February 2026 at 19.50.**

Present:

Deborah Allen (DA)	Christine Reeves (CRe)
Emma Ashley (EA)	Catherine Roche (CRo)
Simon Bamford (SB)	Hayley Scott (HS)
Dan Brooks (DB)	Jan Seal - Roberts (JSR)
Alan Dunstan (AD) – Chair of Trustees	Mark Taylor (MT)
Freya Garner (FG)	Clive Watts (CW)
Janet Haresnape (JH)	

Apologies with Consent:

Karen Brown (KB), Kathryn Foster (KF), Andy Lowe (AL)

In attendance:

Sarah Lonorgan (SL) – Clerk

Trustee questions, challenges, and support are shown in red italics.

1. Introduction

The Chair opened the meeting and formally welcomed Janet Haresnape as a new Trustee and Member of the Curriculum and Standards Committee. The meeting was declared quorate, and trustees were invited to propose any additional items for discussion under Any Other Business. Two items were tabled: Residents' Parking, raised by Simon Bamford, and Staff Morale, raised by the Chair. No declarations of material interest were made.

2. Minutes of the previous ATB meeting, 11th December 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2025 were approved as an accurate record, signed by the Chair and subsequently filed at the school. All actions arising from the previous meeting were reviewed and confirmed either as complete or incorporated within the current agenda.

Signed Date

3. Headteacher's Report:

The Headteacher presented an update covering school operations, educational performance, safeguarding, and enrichment activities.

Site and Premises

- The drama studio and nearby rooms remained closed following structural concerns. Specialist reports had been commissioned to support a bid for DfE emergency capital funding, and the work would subsequently be put out to tender.
- It was noted that a significant area of the school remained unavailable, impacting drama provision, staff facilities and some support services.
- Temporary operational arrangements were outlined, including the relocation of photocopiers, exams, IT and caretaking functions, and the school was closed to pupils on the final day of term to allow staff to reset spaces. Staff feedback indicated this had helped stabilise systems following disruption.
- ***Is there any risk to staff and pupils' health and safety as the fire door appears blocked?***
- The Headteacher clarified the fire evacuation arrangements. It was noted that, although one entrance appeared restricted, the door remained open and unlocked and continued to operate as a designated fire escape route. Staff had been appropriately briefed, and evacuation drills had been conducted in as realistic a manner as possible.
- Trustees acknowledged the ongoing uncertainty relating to aspects of the school estate and the potential operational impact, and noted the assurances provided regarding fire safety and evacuation procedures.

Admissions and Attendance:

- It was noted that in-year admissions and leavers remained low and manageable, with cohort numbers stable overall. Whole-school attendance was reported at 93.3%, placing Langtree within the top 20–30% of schools nationally, although a slight increase in unauthorised absence was observed.
- Trustees discussed the strategies that were in place to maintain strong attendance levels and further reduce persistent absence.

Behaviour and Safeguarding

- SB reported on emerging trends in student needs and behaviour. These included a reduction in suspensions compared with the previous year, a higher concentration of need within the current Year 8 cohort (noted as a 'bulge year' and potentially linked to COVID-affected cohorts), and an increasing number of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) presenting with complex and varied needs.
- Trustees discussed the importance of considering individual pupil needs alongside overall cohort numbers when assessing capacity and provision, particularly in relation to children in crises, which could happen in any location, not just deprived areas.
- **Action:** SB to speak to Sarah Burman to ensure that this concern was raised with the local health commissioner, Caroline Kelly to ensure Langtree pupils were supported when necessary
- It was noted that parental preference and local authority placement decisions could place additional pressure on the school, particularly where available capacity or suitability is limited.
- It was confirmed that a representative of the school would attend an upcoming access panel to present the school's position and provide appropriate challenges where assumptions regarding capacity or the ability to meet specific needs may not be realistic.
- Trustees acknowledged the improving behaviour trends and noted the continued focus on early identification and intervention.
- Safeguarding assurance was provided to the Trustees. It was noted that the Single Central Record was fully compliant; there were no outstanding safeguarding actions, bullying and harassment

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incidents remained low and were being managed promptly. Digital safeguarding remained an area of focus.

Staff Wellbeing

- Trustees acknowledged the impact of building disruption and behaviour challenges on staff morale.
- A Staff survey had been completed, and it was noted that the results would be reviewed at the next ATB meeting.
- **Can staff go home if they have a free period and live close to the school?** SB confirmed that this was permissible, and where possible, staff were taking advantage of the opportunity, but for many staff, this was not a possibility due to the distance of their homes from the school.
- Could the staff use the library when it is closed during the school day?
- **Action:** SB to understand whether this was possible and report back at the next ATB
- Staff numbers remained stable. It was noted that an apprenticeship teacher would undertake a temporary placement elsewhere with cover arrangements in place.

Standards and Outcomes

- SB reported on the use of FFT and other performance data tools to support more detailed analysis of outcomes. It was noted that FFT has, for the first time, incorporated results analysis directly into its platform, enabling closer interrogation of predicted versus actual performance.
- **Action:** SB to review the analysis and present the findings at the next ATB meeting.
- It was noted that English outcomes continued to be an area of focus, with attainment in English historically lower than in some other subjects.
- SB outlined the introduction of the English 2.0 GCSE for a targeted group of lower-attaining students. It was explained that this remains a full GCSE on the 9–1 scale but is structured to make questions more accessible, to improve engagement and support students to achieve grade 4+. The approach was intended to support different learning styles rather than reduce expectations or standards.
- Trustees sought clarification regarding the scope of this pathway. It was confirmed that the route applies only to a small, identified cohort (the lower set for language) and that higher-attaining students continue to follow the traditional GCSE pathway.
- The English department has also increased curriculum time for language and adapted schemes of work, including greater emphasis on creative writing, in response to outcomes.
- Performance in Travel & Tourism and certain other subjects was also highlighted as an area of focus following weaker outcomes last year. It was reported that targeted support and closer monitoring by SLT and subject leads are in place to secure improvement.
- Trustees noted the long-term implications for students who do not secure passes in English and Maths and discussed whether alternative or complementary pathways may be appropriate where this would better meet individual needs.

Health and Safety

- It was noted that the Health and Safety audit had been completed, and any resulting actions were placed under review. No material concerns were identified beyond the known issues relating to the drama studio works.

School Culture, Enrichment and Trips

- The Headteacher reported that whole-school life remained strong, referencing the successful whole-school production of *Elf! The Musical* and a broad programme of enrichment and community events.
- An extensive programme of educational trips, visits and activities had been completed, with further opportunities planned. Strong levels of participation were noted, together with the positive contribution of these activities to pupil engagement and wider school life.

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- The importance of clear and timely communication with parents was also emphasised, particularly where arrangements were affected by estate-related constraints or last-minute changes.

4. Committee Reports

a) Finance & General Purposes (EA)

- A summary of discussions from the Finance and General Purpose Committee was provided. The Committee had undertaken a detailed review of the drama studio works and the wider condition of the estate, considering both immediate operational maintenance requirements and longer-term strategic options.
 - It was recognised that the Trust continued to face significant financial pressures, particularly in relation to capital works, within a context of constrained and uncertain funding.
 - It was noted that incremental or short-term repairs alone may not provide a sustainable solution and that more fundamental strategic options for the estate and the Trust's wider organisational arrangements may need to be explored.
 - The Chair of Trustees confirmed that he had written to the Director of Property and Assets at Oxfordshire County Council to clarify the available parameters and potential routes forward, which could include consideration of alternative estate solutions, including relocation to a new site.
- **Action:** To continue developing a strategic estates plan, including the exploration of longer-term and more transformational options, and to report back to the Board at a future ATB. (AD)

b) Curriculum and Standards (JSR)

- The Committee received assurance that the curriculum remains broad and balanced, with strong practical and enrichment opportunities, including a well-established Design & Technology offer and a targeted Key Stage 4 pathway to support engagement and life skills development.
- Early review of Year 11 performance and mock outcomes identified English and Travel & Tourism as continued focus areas. Targeted interventions are in place and further data analysis will be reported at the next meeting.
- Educational visits and enrichment activities remain extensive. Strengthened planning and risk management processes have been embedded, although the administrative workload associated with trips was noted.
- It was noted that the Langtree debating team had recently placed 7 out of 60 teams in a recent event at Oxford, which was particularly impressive as they were the only State School and the team was composed only of pupils up to Year 11.
- It was noted that the recent Open Day at the School was a success. Detailed notes were shared with the Trustees on the outcomes of the visit.

c) Pastoral and Community (CRo)

- Trustees received an update on pastoral and safeguarding priorities, including staff wellbeing, attendance, behaviour management, bullying/cyberbullying, and volunteer safeguarding.
- It was noted that attendance, behaviour, and wider pastoral indicators continue to be monitored through established processes. A high volume of behaviour incidents and pastoral referrals had been recorded; work is ongoing to strengthen triage and ensure lower-level incidents were managed consistently at the Head of Year level.
- Bullying and cyberbullying remain under review. Targeted support is being introduced,

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including a new group intervention to support affected pupils and reinforce expectations. Trustees also recognised the value of wider enrichment and alternative opportunities (including options outside school where appropriate) to strengthen engagement for some pupils.

- Volunteer safeguarding arrangements were discussed. Trustees noted that digital safeguarding was an increasing area of focus. They agreed that work will continue in response to themes arising, with renewed emphasis on the digital aspect in the wider community. External input (such as from the voluntary organisation Nomad) may be invited into the school where beneficial.
- A pupil well-being survey has been completed; outcomes would be reviewed at the next meeting and considered alongside staff well-being priorities. Trustees also noted the school nurse's contribution and the benefit of consistent, experienced clinical support for pupils.

5. Trustee Updates

a) Changes in Link roles -

It was noted that Deborah Allen would assume responsibility for Pupil Premium from Catherine Roche, with immediate effect.

bi) Trustee Training –

HS provided an update on Trustee Training. It was noted that the Clerk would provide NGA access to the new Trustees, and a skills audit would be completed at the next ATB. **Action:** Clerk to provide NGA access to all Trustees

bii) Careers Update –

Trustees received an update on the school's Careers Benchmark evaluation tool. It was reported that the careers review was originally completed in November 2025.

It was noted that the updated Gatsby-style framework retains the original eight benchmarks but raises the standard, making it harder to achieve higher scores. The evaluation was completed with external support (Susannah Woods and Ian Wakefield). Trustees noted that the self-assessment had been undertaken robustly and realistically, with a deliberately self-critical approach rather than overstating impact.

A query was raised regarding a recorded score of zero against Benchmark 4. It was clarified that this did not indicate an absence of activity; rather, elements of career-related practice are occurring through teaching and curriculum delivery but are not being consistently captured, evidenced, or structured in a way that meets the revised benchmark criteria. Trustees noted that improved recording and evidence would be required to demonstrate compliance and progress.

Trustees also noted the wider relevance of curriculum breadth and enrichment opportunities to the careers and futures agenda, including engagement in less academic subjects and exposure to external speakers/activities (including debate-style experiences linked to politics, ethics, and sociology), even where these are not labelled explicitly as "careers".

c) Articles of Association Update –

The Trustees approved the Special Resolution for the update of our Articles of Association and Funding Agreements that were proposed by the Chair and shared with the Members.

d) Review of Trustee Open Day - CW reported on the recent Trustee Open Day, during which

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trustees received presentations on the Year 6–7 transition programme, the school’s metacognition approach and student voice.

Trustees noted that the transition programme was structured and comprehensive, with effective early information sharing, mentoring and induction activities. Feedback from pupils and parents had been positive and there was evidence that the programme supported belonging and engagement. Provision for vulnerable pupils was described as strong, and Trustees agreed to consider how support for higher-attaining pupils could be further strengthened.

CW confirmed that staff had outlined the introduction of metacognition as a whole-school teaching priority to develop pupils’ independent learning and self-regulation skills. Staff training had been implemented, and impact would be monitored through ongoing evaluation.

Student voice feedback was positive regarding teaching support, behaviour and the overall school culture, with some constructive suggestions made regarding study space, device access, and enrichment opportunities.

Trustees agreed that the Open Day had provided strong assurance regarding transition arrangements, curriculum development, and pupils’ experience of school.

e) **Governance Update:** The Clerk provided a governance and compliance update following an OCC governance briefing. Key emerging requirements were noted:

- Martyn’s Law (Protect Duty): planning for violent attack risk assessments and associated governance oversight, anticipated statutory requirement from 2027 for settings with over two hundred people present.
- Disability duties / Equality Act compliance: requirement for regular staff and governor training, supported by training logs, compliance records, and policy review evidence; anticipated increased prominence in inspection frameworks.
- Adoption and child data privacy: statutory school records must not be amended until a legal adoption order is confirmed; premature changes would constitute a safeguarding breach.
- Reasonable force and restraint (from April 2026): immediate incident recording, same-day parent notification where possible, and mandatory documentation of de-escalation strategies; increased scrutiny of disproportionate impact on vulnerable pupils, supported by training evidence and analysis.
- Safeguarding and crime/policing legislation: early indication of strengthened board-level duties for safeguarding and reporting oversight.
- Single Central Record (SCR): reinforced as a critical early Ofsted inspection focus; It was noted that the Langtree SCR was fully compliant.
- **Action:** Clerk to circulate a written governance/compliance note to trustees.
- **Action:** Committees to incorporate these emerging requirements into workplans, training logs, the annual planner and policy review schedules.

6. Approval of statutory policies

- The policies were approved as outlined in the agenda:
 - a) Reserves and Investment - approved
 - b) Equality, information, and Learning Report – approved
 - c) Supporting Students with Medical Conditions – approved
 - d) Anti-Bullying - approved

7. Any Other Business:

Complaints Process – Clerk Update

- The Clerk provided an update on the school's complaints process and advised that a Stage 3 complaints panel hearing was scheduled to take place in the coming weeks. Trustees noted that this would be the first Stage 3 panel for several years.
- It was reported that there has been a national increase in both the volume and escalation of complaints, particularly at Stages 2 and 3, as reflected through NGA and local governance networks. Trustees noted the potential implications for staff workload, cost, and leadership capacity.
- The staged complaints procedure was summarised for clarity. Stage 1 concerns are managed informally by the school, Stage 2 involves a formal investigation and independent review, and unresolved matters progress to a Stage 3 panel hearing. Where complaints relate to the Headteacher, Chair or Trustee Board, independent panel members are required.
- Trustees noted that panel hearings operate within tight statutory timescales and that prior involvement may limit trustee eligibility to participate. The need to broaden trustee capacity and training to support complaints and exclusion panels was therefore recognised.
- Trustees further acknowledged the increasing overlap between complaints, data protection, and subject access requests, and agreed that policies and procedures should be aligned to ensure clarity, consistency and proportionate administration while maintaining compliance.
- The Clerk confirmed that the complaints policy would be reviewed, considering the current case and wider trends, and that further trustee training would be explored to strengthen governance resilience.
- **Action:** P&C Committee to review the School Complaints Policy and associated procedures in March
- **Action:** Clerk to identify and recommend appropriate training for trustees to support complaints and exclusion panels.

Staff Wellbeing

- Trustees agreed to provide cakes and fruit for staff on 12 February as a gesture of appreciation, recognising the impact on staff facilities and wellbeing arising from reduced staffroom space due to ongoing structural issues on site.

Community Matters

- The Headteacher advised that a resident had raised concerns regarding parking outside the school and parking for student drop off and pick up. The matter was noted and would continue to be monitored. AD/SB agreed that they would respond to the complainant.
- **Action:** AD/SB to respond to the concerns about school parking.
- The meeting closed at 21.42.

8. Date of next ATB Meeting: 19th March 2026, 19.00

Action Items – Langtree ATB 5 February 2026

Agenda Item	Action Description	Responsible Person(s)	Status	Deadline/Notes
3	Raise concerns regarding SEND/EHCP placement pressures with the appropriate local authority /access panel and report back to the Trustees.	SB	New	Next ATB
3	Determine if the library could be used by the school staff when it is closed during the day.	SB	New	ASAP
3	Share the results and key findings from the staff and pupil wellbeing survey with Trustees.	SB	New	Next ATB
3	Present FFT analysis and outcomes review, including English and targeted subject interventions.	SB	New	Next ATB
4a	Continue developing a strategic estates plan, including exploration of longer-term and transformational options, and report back to the Board.	AD	New	Future ATB
5bi	Provide NGA access to all Trustees.	Clerk	New	Next ATB
5e	Circulate a written governance/compliance briefing note covering Martyn's Law, Equality duties, restraint recording, safeguarding legislation, and SCR expectations.	Clerk	New	14/02/2026
5e	Incorporate new statutory safeguarding and compliance requirements into committee workplans, training logs and policy review schedules.	Committee Chairs	New	Next ATB
7	Review the School Complaints Policy and associated procedures, ensuring alignment with data protection/SAR processes.	P&C Committee /Clerk	New	Next ATB
7	Recommend Complaints Training	Clerk	New	Next ATB
7	Provide cakes and treats for Feb 12	Trustees	New	Feb 12th 2026