



ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Monday 15th June 2026
 Time: 4.45pm
 Venue: Priestnall School

 Clerk: N Burgess
 Present: S Jhanji, R Howarth, E Cookson, M Farrar, T Gilbert, J Ledger, L Knowles and J Game (as an observer)

Action	Initials
Governors are asked to inform the Clerk of any changes to their register of business interests	All
Review engagement in Electives at the next meeting	RH
Update on SEND Link visit to school at the next meeting	LB
Governors are reminded to send any completed training certificates to the Clerk	All

Agenda – Part 1

Category	Item	Notes	Action
1	Governance Arrangements	Apologies	Apologies were received and accepted from L Burridge and C Jolleys
		AOB items	There were no other items of business to raise.
		Declarations of interest in any of the agenda items	There were no declarations of interest made in any of the agenda items.
		Register on Business Interests	Governors are asked to report any changes in their record to the Clerk.
		Minutes of previous meeting	Minutes of the meeting held 2 nd March 2026 were approved as a correct record of the meeting. <u>Matters arising:</u> ROBI changes had been made Link visits to school are in the process of being arranged SEND Link – visit to school is arranged Training is an agenda item for this meeting
		Membership: Recruitment	There were no updates to the membership of the committee for this meeting.

		Update/Succession Planning		
		Scheme of Delegation	There were no material changes to note to the Scheme of Delegation, which was currently being reviewed as part of the annual review process.	
		Trust Board updates	Governors received the report for the Trust Board meeting held in February 2026 and had no further questions.	

2	School Performance & Accountability	Head of School report	Governors reviewed the Head of School Report which was circulated prior to the meeting and questions were invited. <u>Behaviour</u> Governors were pleased to note the reduction in suspensions over the course of the year. RH reported there was a calm and settled feel in school and that in terms of exams the year 11 and year 9 students behaviour had been faultless. Governors were informed that for some students there were bespoke behaviour plans in place. Q – Is the trend typical or is there a spike at the start of the year? A – There is normally a calm start to the year, then there can be a spike around November time, there is no real pattern and one big incident can make a real difference. Governors were pleased to be able to review the breakdown by year group. Q – In terms of physical assault this seems high, is this a concern or is it the same for other schools? A – This is a culture we are trying to break. We do make a really big deal of physical assault, we set high expectations and have zero tolerance, it is non-negotiable. The numbers were increased by a big one-off incident at the start of the year. We also review social media as part of our investigations. Q – Are there any specific events which drive the spikes? A – This is something we can look at at a future meeting. We could look at the number of students, and also the reasons. Governors noted that there were blanket suspensions for vapes and that this number had therefore increased. Q – Is there a pattern in year groups? A – It tends to be more of a pattern in friendship groups. It is vital that we know the students well and have good relationships with them. Q – Is there any policy, in terms of sexual misconduct, of reporting to the Police? A- It is dependent on the threshold. Parents do report and we fully support. If it was a safeguarding issue we would always report.
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			<u>Attendance</u> Governors were pleased to note the positive trajectory and that persistent absence was decreasing. Q – In terms of the SDP specified target, how are you going to achieve in the next 12 months? A – Attendance is the first line of safeguarding. FSM attendance is a concern for us. Attendance is under constant review. We have recently recruited an Attendance Officer to daily call families and to able to support them, but to also challenge. Some students to have severe absence. It needs to be a collective responsibility and a cultural shift is needed. Students need to want to be here. Q – What is the national average for FSM attendance? A – 86% Q – How many students is this? A – It is 181 students. We are constantly working on attendance. The priority is now year 10 as they head into year 11. In terms of year 6 into 7 we will be having a specific target on attendance at a parent event. We will be able to review and address any patterns. There is lots of work to be done. It has also been a big year for in-year admissions. Q – If students were to join in year 10 now, how would their options work? A – We try our best but we cannot always accommodate. Governors noted the 3-year trend improvement and that work was still ongoing to improve attendance. Leaders informed that there had been year 11 Bootcamps held for GCSE to bolster attendance. Q – Were these successful? A – Yes, they were time intensive but worked well. Governors were pleased to note the work done and for the year 11 initiative. RH informed Governors that work was also being done around staff attendance as having cover staff in place is disheartening for the students. <u>Electives</u> Governors noted the increased number and range of clubs available to the students.	
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			The SDP target is for 100% of students to be involved in CC&R. Q – Is this purely Electives or others? How do we measure other engagement? A – We can look at this for the next meeting to see how to capture. For example, Apertura we record on Bromcom. RH commented she was happy with the offer of Electives for the students, but that there was a need to increase opportunities for Leadership and Service. Q – How do you engage the parents/carers? A – At the new Parents Evening in September we do a what you can expect from us presentation. This is done with House Team involvement and House Captains, Sports Captains and Prefects. We improve the offer across the school to engage the students. A recent example is at Laurus Live, there were over 100 students involved and a huge Laurus orchestra involving all schools, and this is something we need to grow at Priestnall. Q – How do you factor in what students do outside of school? A – We meet with every year 7 student in September and gauge their likes and interests. Q – The ski trip has not been offered recently, is there a reason? A – It will be launched again in the future and will run every other year. We had to pause to ensure that everything was in place for the trip to be able to run successfully. Q – In terms of trips, why is year 7 so low? A – We no longer offer the Menai trip in November of year 7. Instead, we have the year 8 Languages trips. This year we have around 200 students going to Paris and Barcelona. <u>Year 9 Options</u> Governors reviewed the option choices for the current year 9. • Language choices were to be celebrated as a number of students have opted to study a second language following their year 9 MFL	RH
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			GCSE • Separate Science numbers have increased • BTec Sport is taught in smaller groups • Geography numbers are lower than expected this year • Media has proved popular with students and there are 2 classes this year • Music numbers are low and this is historical. A new SL has been appointed for September • PE classes are full • RS are the largest numbers ever Governors had no further questions.	
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		School Development Plan The SDP plan is currently under review. The plan is currently at the end of year 2 of a 3-year plan. The plan will be RAG rated and priorities identified by SLT. <u>Academic Aspiration</u> Specific groups are monitored and support is put in place. All requests for support are done via EC. <u>Culture, Creativity and Rhetoric</u> Governors were informed that Oracy was now being rolled out to students. <u>Leadership and Service</u> There have been 53 students appointed, and shortlisting is taking place to appoint 2 Head Prefects. Q – Do the students self-nominate for the roles? A – Yes, it has been a total pleasure to review the phenomenal applications received and is a good way for us to engage with the students. Q – What is the role of a Prefect in school? A – It is part of the House Team and is under a specific Cornerstone. The Prefects to link and work together over the course of the year. We also need to work on developing community links and celebrating them. A good example good recent example of this is the Art Ambassadors recently visited a local care home and have met with residents and will be producing a piece of artwork for the residents room. Q – When do Prefects start? A – They already know if they have been appointed but they will start in September. It is possible we may engage the Prefects for some events prior to the end of the year. There is also a training day planned for Prefects at Didsbury High School. <u>Professional Learning – Staff</u> Professional Learning is well embedded with staff. Priestnall is the most represented school in the Maths Hub. Q-What are the numbers for staff engagement? A – All staff are involved. There is mandatory PL every Wednesday. We do not have the data for the voluntary PL but there is a wide offer to staff including Building Potential, Masters, Realising Potential and there are also courses available for aspiring Assistant Heads. There is also the NPQ suite of qualifications on offer.	
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			Q – When do you report back for the plan at the end of the 3 years, when is best to review? A – This will be done by Head of School and we are currently clarifying exactly when this will be. Governors had no further questions.	
3	Governor Monitoring	Finance update	Governors reviewed the Management Accounts for February 2026. Q – In terms of the income from facilities hire, does this reflect the usage? A – Yes it does. RH commented that the biggest concern is the agency staffing costs and that there has been some long-term absence cover required. RH had met with the Trust Director of Finance recently to plan the budget for the coming year. Governors were pleased to note the improved position from 3 years ago. Q – Is the facilities hire the sports facilities? A – Yes, word has got around that they are excellent facilities to hire.	

		Policies Governors <u>approved</u> the following policies: Attendance policy Uniform policy Behaviour policy Mobile Technology policy <u>Attendance policy</u> The Attendance policy has been reviewed and has minor changes. Q – In terms of the Attendance policy you reward if is is 100% attendance, but what about if it is a health issue, is this fair? A – We have reviewed the PP cohort and there have been small rewards. There was also a cinema reward trip and there was some flexibility to be able to adjust the invitations. Q – In terms of contacting home, is it more than one person and are the roles clear? A – All contact goes via the HOY. The only reason it would be another member of staff would be if the HOY escalated. Contact is recorded on a month by month tracker and actions are shown to avoid any duplications. <u>Uniform policy</u> The policy has been changed to reflect that coats cannot be worn in the school building and must be out of sight. Tights are compulsory up to May half term. Skirt length was discussed and the expectations around the length. Skirts can be no more than 2 inches above the knee. From September C codes will be issued for incorrect uniform or missing items where there is no note from parents/carers. Students will have to borrow items of uniform in school. The policy has also been amended to reflect the updated guidelines of only 3 branded items. This is now the House t-shirt, tie and blazer. All PE kit can now be unbranded. Governors noted that whilst the Uniform policy would be applied, there would be reasonable adjustments made for individual students where required. The policy will be introduced to students before the summer and will be implemented for September 2026.	
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			<u>Behaviour policy</u> The policy has been updated to include the C3 sanction for uniform infringements, and also C3 and C4 for PP&R. Leaders confirmed they are happy with the policy and that it works well. As part of Behaviour For Learning PP&R is compulsory. <u>Mobile Technology policy</u> The policy has been changed to reflect that from arrival in school at 8.25, phones must be switched off and out of sight in school bags. It is non-negotiable that phones must be switched off and must be kept in school bags and not on the students person.	
		Ensure curriculum policies are in line with statutory guidance	RH, as Head of School, confirmed that curriculum policies are in line with statutory guidance.	
		Safeguarding and SEND Link Governor updates	<u>SEND</u> L Burridge will give an update at the next meeting. <u>Safeguarding</u> MF has attended school and met with EC and LF around Ofsted preparation. A broad selection of case studies were reviewed to be able to see how the school has managed the needs of individual students. The visit had also included review of the pastoral structure and training, CPOMS recording and how this would work if there was no IT, how AP provision is monitored, and year 7 attendance, noting a 50% drop in persistent absence.	LB
		Link Governor updates	<u>Pupil Premium</u> LK has a visit to school planned in the week following this meeting. <u>CC&R</u> JL has a meeting planned for the start of the academic year. <u>Competition and Physical Endeavour</u> TG will be arranging a visit at the start of the academic year.	

4	Governor Development	Review Trust Training Plan	Clerk informed Governors that from September 2026 the four mandatory training modules would be completed between the AC1 and AC2 meetings, with a follow up agenda item at AC2.	
		Minute any training undertaken by Governors since the last meeting	Governors are reminded that should they complete any training to send their certificates to the Clerk for retention.	All
5	Community Engagement	Stakeholder engagement	RH informed Governors that the Eco Club had recently planted bulbs on the common. MF informed that he had recently been contacted by the Chair of AC at NBPS to see if there is an opportunity for the schools to work together. Governor suggestions and ideas for community engagement were welcomed. Community links with other schools were discussed. Dates of events where Governors are invited in to school will be circulated in due course.	
6	AOB		There were no other items of business to raise.	
7	Meeting Dates:	To note	Meeting dates will be circulated before the end of the academic year. Please inform the Clerk as far in advance as possible if you are unable to attend a meeting.	

Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes

Governors reviewed the Head of School report, including Behaviour, Attendance and U9 Options
School Development Plan was reviewed
Governors reviewed the Management Accounts
Governors approved 4 policies
Chair of the AC gave a verbal update on the Safeguarding Link visit to school
Governors reviewed stakeholder engagement

Meeting closed at 6.00pm



M Farrar
Chair of Academy Committee
28.09.2026

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