Ellingham & Woodton Primary Schools Federation

'To love our neighbour, enabling everyone to flourish and reach their full potential.'
Our inspiration comes from Luke 10:27

Full Governing Board Meeting

Thursday 16 July 2026 at 5.00pm
Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Present:
Diane Perry-Yates DPY (Chair of Governors)
Dawn Thomas DT (Executive Headteacher)
Alison Snelling AS
Julie Pickering JP
Terry Jones TJ
Rob Grimm RG

Apologies:
Vicky Wood VW (School Support Manager)

In Attendance:
Christopher Perry-Yates CPY (Governance Professional)

Item No.	Item and discussion	Owner	Target Date
1.	**Register of Attendance and Apologies** Apologies had been received from Vicky Wood. All other governors were present and accepted these apologies. The Governance Professional advised that the meeting was quorate.		
2.	**Declaration of pecuniary and business interests:** There were no new pecuniary or business interests declared.		
3.	**Curriculum Presentations:** ***Behaviour*** The Executive Headteacher advised that during the academic year both schools experienced increases in physical and verbal aggressive behaviour. A trauma informed approach was being undertaken to respond to the children's needs. All staff had trauma training and the Executive Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher were due to attend Trauma Informed School training. Governors were advised that the wider leadership had taken the lead in managing incidents working with parents, carers and external agencies. Families were worked with consistently, but outcomes varied depending on individual circumstances. There were suspensions made earlier in the year,		

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	and some parents had worked with the Federation, but others were not as supportive of the process. It was confirmed that the Federation was making effective use of the SEND and Inclusion Support line and supervision had been received by staff to support them with complex cases. Throughout all incidents, the safety of the children was the priority. Doors had needed to be locked on some occasions to maintain safety at times where children had become significantly dysregulated which was something new to the Federation. Appropriate measures had been taken to keep children safe. The increased frequency of incidents was impacting on staff wellbeing which had been evident from the wellbeing survey in March 2026. Q (RG): You mentioned the impact on staff wellbeing; how do you think the bad behaviour is impacting on other children? A: It is having an impact on their mental health, and we are supporting them with that as well as managing consequences. Staff CPD will focus on behaviour and behaviours for learning in September. We have worked on what is acceptable and not acceptable with children and the consequences. We have tried to break the myth that consequences were not always bad. We are also talking to children about their wellbeing and how we can support them with that. Q(DPY): Have you identified any trends within the behaviours? A: We can see trends. It has been mainly due to home circumstances and some children demonstrating these behaviours have joined us in-year and then left the school again. Q(DPY): Are all staff Step Up and Step On trained? A: We have all staff Step On trained, and a few key staff are Step Up trained. Q(DPY): Will we need to review the behaviour policy? A: Yes. This is scheduled for September. Q (TJ): Is there any evidence of some of the behaviour that is weather related? A: Yes, there is some that is linked to the hot weather, but not all. Q (JP): Will the change of the academic year and changing year groups help? A: It will have an impact. However, there are two children at both schools that impact on the behaviour significantly. They are working through specific trauma, and it will not be as simple for them. We are following the policies and suspending when needed as that is the only option when children and staff are being hurt.		

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Q(DPY): Picking up on the impact on the children in the classes; has the letter recently sent to parents about behaviour allayed their concerns?

A: In some ways it has exacerbated concerns, but it needed to go out. I have a handful of parents that are really concerned and I understand why, however, I have to follow the policies and procedures in place. For some children it may look like those who are poorly behaved are having time out, so we need to do more work on teaching about behaviour and the consequences. Children and parents are not going to see the implications and actions of any sanctions or consequences as this is private.

It was noted that next steps were for staff to receive training in adaptive teaching in September. At the start of the academic year the changes in DfE guidance relating to restraint will be in place. Refresher Step On training and Step Up training will also be undertaken.

Design Technology (DT)

The governing board received a verbal report from the DT Lead.

Governors were advised that the vision and long-term plan remained the same as previously. The new national curriculum from September 2028 may require changes to this. It was noted that a DT Day for the Federation was being considered for the next academic year. Structured conversations with pupils to capture pupil voice had been undertaken and would continue. An action from the previous year had been to ensure that DT was well resourced. This had not been possible due to budget constraints and induction hobs were required along with knives and chopping boards. Modifications to the nutshells was an ongoing process.

It was highlighted that book looks and pupil voice showed that children enjoyed cooking and Year 5/6 at both schools had enjoyed sewing. Presentation of books was variable and there were some gaps. There were some children who enjoyed DT more than other subjects. It was noted that assessment had been difficult due to the transfer from Pupil Asset to Arbor.

Next steps to use Arbor effectively, but essential cooking equipment and encourage teachers to teach what is in the nutshells.

The Executive Headteacher advised that staff were getting anecdotal feedback that the children were still using the skills that they had developed during DT and home.

Q(DPY): Do we have a budget for DT?

A: We only have class budgets so we will approach the PTA (Parent Teacher Association) for what we need. We have also put wish lists together on Amazon in the past which we will consider again.

Governors suggested considering utilising crowdfunding for DT resources.

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	ACTION: Executive Headteacher to investigate options for crowdfunding for DT and Music resources. Q (TJ): Do you have an active PTA? A: The PTA will be similar to the way they operate now. They are strong at both schools at the moment. They may pick up additional volunteers from amongst the parents of Reception Year children.	DT	30/09/26
4.	**Minutes of the previous meeting on 12 March 2026:** The minutes and Part 2 Confidential Minutes of the previous meeting on 12 March 2026 were reviewed. It was agreed that these were a true record, and they were signed by the Chair. **Proposed: DT Seconded: RG**		
5.	**Matters arising from the last meeting:** The actions from the previous meeting were reviewed. AP1: Arrange to take newer governors through the budgets. It was noted that this was outstanding. Action ongoing. AP2: Add Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR) to the Autumn 1 FGB agenda. It was agreed that this would be added to the agenda for the next meeting. Action ongoing. AP3: Circulate Part 2 Confidential Minutes to the governing board for approval. This action had been completed. Action closed. It was noted that Ali Snelling had agreed to remain as a co-opted governor despite leaving her role at the school. Governors recorded thanks to AS for her ongoing commitment.		
6.	**Chair's Actions:** There had been no Chairs Actions since the previous meeting.		
7.	**Executive Headteacher's report:** The governing board reviewed the Executive Headteacher's report. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes. Governors noted the pressure on the Federation leadership who had to analyse the SATs results due to the delay in production until the penultimate day of term.		

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Governors noted the staffing changes for the next academic year. The Executive Headteacher advised that she would not be teaching in the next academic year and was considering undertaking training for Forest Schools.

Q(DPY): At Ellingham the SEND number on roll is almost double the national average; how is support being managed?

A: The SENDCo has completed the costed Graduated Provision Map (GPM) for both schools which will significantly increase funding. There are also considerations for converting the third room at Ellingham to create a sensory room.

Q (TJ): Are there any thoughts as to why Ellingham has such high SEND numbers; is it because of the support you provide?

A: Both schools have been known as supportive and nurturing schools. There are a few professionals that have recommended us due to that. There is also an increase nationally in understanding what SEND is and an increase in diagnosis due to the Right to Choose.

Governors noted that there was more expectation on mainstream schools to support children with high level needs.

Q(DPY): Persistent Absence (PA) is higher than national average – are these the same children?

A: There are children who have had a lot of support, and we are struggling with that. AT Ellingham one child is in Year 6 and will be leaving the school. We have had a parent who has had meetings with us, had a court summons and fines. I don't know where else to go with that case other than continuing what we are doing.

Q(DPY): At Woodton p PA increased across the year, is there a specific reason?

A: We are still grappling with the new Management Information System (MIS), and I am not 100% sure this is accurate. It went from 2 to 5 pupils and then remained stable. We continue to support those families.

The Executive Headteacher advised that there had been two further suspensions at both schools since the report had been circulated. For those children showing persistent behaviour issues, the Federation had separate logs and consideration was being given to storing this into Arbor to allow for greater analysis.

Q (RG): Do you find that suspension has an impact?

A: Yes. The parents are being supportive and when we are thinking about wellbeing of pupils and staff it is a break for them too.

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	Governors commended the number of events that had been undertaken. The Chair of Governors updated the governing board on the recent Chairs Forum that she had attended. The highlights were discussed including the need for the Federation to develop a Risk Register. The Executive Headteacher advised that the PE and Sports Premium grant was being withdrawn during the next academic year. It was noted that this had been delayed until April 2027.		
8.	**Annual Safeguarding Report:** The governing board reviewed the Annual Safeguarding report. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes. It was agreed that the information within the report was very clear and governors had no questions. Governors were reminded of the need to read Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026 before the first meeting of the next academic year. **ACTION: All governors to read Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026 before the first autumn FGB meeting.**	All	08/09/26
9.	**Progress and Attainment including KS2 SATs:** The Executive Headteacher presented the KS2 SATs results for each school. These were as follows: : ***Ellingham*** Reading: 80% (Expected Standard (EXS)) & 47% (Greater Depth GDS) Writing: 60% (EXS) & 7% (GDS) Maths: 73% (EXS) & 53% (GDS) Combined: 60% (EXS) & 7% (GDS) VGPS: 80% (EXS) & 47% (GDS) Science: 73% (EXS) ***Woodton*** Reading: 83% (EXS) & 50% (GDS) Writing: 100% (EXS) & 0% (GDS) Maths: 83% (EXS) & 50% (GDS) Combined: 83% (EXS) & 0% (GDS) VGPS: 100% (EXS) & 33% (GDS) Science: 100% (EXS) Q (RG): Why is Writing at Ellingham worse than Woodton? A: It is due to the cohort. Out of the cohort one child only took one test and two did not take any tests. There was high level SEND support requirements in the cohort at Ellingham. Governors noted that the results for Writing at EXS at Ellingham had		

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	doubled from the previous year. There was still work to do, but the school was on the right trajectory. The Executive Headteacher advised that Ellingham had been moderated in the previous year so there was confidence in the assessment of writing. Q (RG): Why is the combined just the lowest? A: To be EXS in combined they have to be EXS in all three areas. There are some children with variable results. Governors commended the SATs results and congratulated the Executive Headteacher and staff for the improved and strong outcomes. It was highlighted that Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) achievement stood at 80% meeting Good Level of Development (GLD) at Ellingham and 71.4% meeting GLD at Woodton. 88.9% of children at Ellingham and 100% of children at Woodton had passed the phonics check. KS1 teacher assessments also showed improvements in achievement at both schools. The Executive Headteacher advised that the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Checks (MTC) results stood at 16.6 at Ellingham (below national average) and at 22.17 at Woodton (above average). This had been the first year that the teacher had delivered the MTC and plans were underway to improve the results by ensuring that children were secure in their times tables in earlier year groups as well as ensuring the teacher had support in the delivery of the check.		
10.	**School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP) Progress:** The governing board reviewed the SIDP. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes. Governors noted that good progress had been made. It was agreed to carry out a full review of progress in the autumn term once revised priorities had been set for 2026-27.		
11.	**Resources items:** ***Budget Revision 1 (BR1)*** The governing board reviewed BR1 for each school. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes. It was noted that the Ellingham budget showed a decreasing surplus, however there was a surplus in all three years. At Woodton it was noted that there was a surplus in year 1 and a deficit in years 2 and 3. The Executive Headteacher advised that there was consideration of revising the splits between the two schools for leadership expenditure and Graduated Provision Maps were being submitted to apply for additional SEND funding. The Executive Headteacher advised that this would make a significant impact and a clearer budget position would be known after BR2. Governors noted that Woodton was a financial risk with continuing deficit and that further action would be needed to reduce deficits.		

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	Q (TJ): Is there any news on the potential impact of the new housing development at Woodton? A: We are hopeful of some impact. Governors discussed the £66k that had been set aside in the capital funds for a third classroom at Woodton. It was agreed that this was a project that was no longer viable due to falling birth rates. Governors agreed that the Chair of Governors should write a further letter to NCC requesting permission to de-capitalise some of the funds set aside for the expansion project. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to adopt BR1 for Ellingham and Woodton. **Proposed: DPY Seconded: TJ** **All voted in favour with no abstentions.** ***Budget Control Report (BCR) and Capital BCR*** It was agreed that this was superseded by BR1. ***PE and Sports Premium report*** It was agreed to defer this to the next FGB meeting prior to submission of the strategy document. ***Topical Audit: Governance*** The governing board reviewed the Topical Audit and the prepared governance response. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes. Governors agreed with the prepared response to the audit. It was noted that the Federation already had the recommended actions in place. ***Topical Audit: Whistleblowing*** The governing board reviewed the Topical Audit on Whistleblowing. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes. It was agreed that the Chair of Governors would be the named governor and that the Chair of Governors email address should be added to the policy. The Executive Headteacher advised that the revised policy Weber submitted at the next meeting for approval.		
12.	**Sustainability and Climate Action Plan:** Governors discussed the work on the Sustainability and Climate Change Action Plan. The Executive Headteacher advised that she had started work on the plan with external support. It was agreed that Ali Snelling would become link governor for Sustainability and Climate Action Plan and progress would be reported to the governing board through the next academic year.		

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13.	**Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS):** It was agreed to continue responses to the SIAMS Inspection Questions (IQ) at each meeting in the next academic year.		
14.	**Policy reviews:** The governing board reviewed the following policies. Copies had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes. ***a) Finance Policy*** The Executive Headteacher advised that there were no major changes other than the removal of a clause about petty cash. ***b) Complaints Policy*** The Executive Headteacher advised that there were no changes. Governors suggested adding a section on vexatious complaints and a clause about the use of AI. **ACTION: Executive Headteacher to review the complaints policy to include vexatious complaints and use of AI to be submitted at the Autumn 2 FGB.** ***c) Exclusions Policy*** The Executive Headteacher advised that there were no changes. ***d) First Aid Policy*** The Executive Headteacher advised that there were no changes. ***e) Grievance Policy*** The Executive Headteacher advised that there were no changes. ***f) Recruitment and Selection Policy*** The Executive Headteacher advised that she had updated the policy but shortly after this had found that a new policy had been released. This would be presented for approval at the next meeting. ***g) Medical Needs Policy*** The Executive Headteacher advised that there were no changes. ***h) Intimate Care Policy*** The Executive Headteacher advised that there were no changes. ***i) RSE Policy*** The Executive Headteacher advised that this was a model policy from Jigsaw. The policies listed above were approved and adopted *en bloc* with the exception of the Recruitment and Selection Policy. **Proposed: DPY Seconded: AS** **All voted in favour with no abstentions.**	DT	30/09/26

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15.	**Governor CPD:** TJ advised that he had undertaken NGA training in Taking the Chair. JP and DPY advised that they had attended Budget Revision 1. DPY advised that she had attended the LA Chairs Forum.		
16.	**Governor Monitoring reports:** The governing board reviewed the monitoring reports. Copies had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes. Monitoring had been undertaken in: • GDPR • Premises • Single Central Record Q(DPY): When dates of birth were lost in the Single Central Record (SCR), was this a data breach or user error? A: This was user error. I am confident that it was deleted and did not go anywhere else. Q (JP): Has all the data been reinstated? A: Yes. Governors asked for confirmation of the ICT backup procedures in use across the Federation. It was agreed that the Executive Headteacher should seek assurances of what backup systems were in place. **ACTION: Executive Headteacher to investigate what backup facilities were in place for IT systems.**	DT	30/09/26
17.	**Items deemed confidential:** There were no items deemed confidential.		
18.	**Reflection: How have our discussions today enabled the children and staff to flourish and reach their full potential:** • Reviewed the strong SATs results. • Approved Budget Revision 1. • Secured the continuation of a governor. • Agreed that there was a small but strong governing board focused on the children and staff.		
19.	**Date of next meeting:** 8 October 2026 at 5pm, Woodton Primary.		

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Meeting closed at 7.07pm

Action log:

Item No.	Action Description	Owner	Target Date
c/f	Arrange to take newer governors through the budgets.	VW	17/07/26
c/f	Add IDSR to the Autumn 1 FGB agenda.	CPY	01/10/26

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