



# Northern Arch

## LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Hurworth School

Local Governing Body Meeting Minutes

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 4.30 pm, Hurworth School

### MINUTES

Present (Governors)	Martin Stand (Chair), Aylsa Nugent, Sam McGuire, Marcus Dempsey, Cath Lawrence, Louise McCann and Peter Snowden.
In attendance	Tim Fisher: Chief Executive Officer Glen Hart: Chief Financial Officer Stuart Rawle: Deputy Head Teacher Tracy Minshull: Assistant Head Kelly Davidson: Assistant Head Laura Hawksby: Governance and Policy Officer

Item	Description of discussion	Action
	<b>PART A: Procedural items</b>	
1.	<p><b><u>Election of Chair</u></b></p> <p>The Governance &amp; Policy Officer opened the meeting. Nominations were sought and received to elect a Chair to serve until the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2026/27.</p> <p>Governors <b>RESOLVED</b> that Martin Stand be appointed Chair to serve until the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2026/27.</p> <p><i>(Note: Governor Martin Stand in the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.)</i></p>	Governance & Policy Officer
2.	<p><b><u>Election of Vice Chair</u></b></p> <p>Nominations were sought and received to elect a Vice Chair to serve until the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2026/27.</p> <p>Governors <b>RESOLVED</b> that Peter Snowden be appointed Vice Chair to serve until the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2026/27.</p>	Governance & Policy Officer
3.	<p><b><u>Welcome, Introductions and confirmation quorum present</u></b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting, including Governor Peter Snowden for whom this was his first meeting of the Local Governing Body and Stuart Rawle (Deputy Head Teacher).</p> <p>It was confirmed that a quorum was present.</p>	

Registered office address  
Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, Vane Terrace, Darlington, DL3 7AU:  
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denotes support and challenge provided by Governors

4.	<p><b><u>Apologies for absence and their acceptance</u></b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Governor Tracy Metcalfe, Governor Victoria Stone and Rachel Sommerville (Head Teacher).</p>	
5.	<p><b><u>Notification of items of urgent other business</u></b></p> <p>None</p>	
6.	<p><b><u>Declaration of Personal and Pecuniary Interests</u></b></p> <p>None</p>	
7.	<p><b><u>Safeguarding Training Local Context</u></b></p> <p>The Assistant Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead (KD) provided safeguarding training to the Local Governing Body, focusing on the local context.</p> <p>She advised that within Darlington the highest safeguarding concern was currently domestic abuse. In relation to safeguarding at Hurworth School, she advised that there has been a significant increase in Early Help involvement, an increase in support required for pupils' mental health and online safety concerns.</p> <p>Students within the School are educated on key aspects of safeguarding and how to keep students safe runs throughout the School's IGNITE programme. Safeguarding assemblies have been held with all year groups the first week back in September, including a mental health awareness assembly in October.</p> <p>CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) continued to be the application used by the school for monitoring child protection, safeguarding and welfare issues.</p>	
8.	<p><b><u>Membership Document</u></b></p> <p>The current Membership document was noted for information.</p>	
9.	<p><b><u>Approval of minutes/review of actions/matters arising – Hurworth School Local Governing Body 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025</u></b></p> <p>Draft Minutes of Hurworth School Local Governing Body held on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025 had been shared with the Local Governing Body prior to the meeting, a copy of which is held on file.</p> <p>All actions had been completed and there were no matters arising.</p> <p>Governors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting of the Hurworth School Local Governing Body held on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025 were confirmed as an accurate record and should be signed by the Chair.</p>	<p><b>Chair/ Governance &amp; Policy Officer</b></p>

PART B: Business Items for Discussion	
10.	<p><b><u>Chair's Report</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>action taken</u> – no new updates</li> <li>• <u>correspondence</u> – no new updates.</li> </ul>
11.	<p><b><u>Head Teacher's Report</u></b></p> <p>The Deputy Head Teacher (Stuart Rawle) reported upon the Head Teacher's report, a copy of which is retained on file.</p> <p>Areas of discussion from the Head Teacher's report included:</p> <p><b><u>Attendance</u></b></p> <p>Attendance was noted to be above the secondary school national average. Governors asked how does the school evidence that students are happy and wish to attend school? The Deputy Head Teacher advised the school triangulates the attendance data with listening to students through student voice and staff talk to students within lessons and obtain their views.</p> <p><b><u>Suspension, Behaviour &amp; Choices</u></b></p> <p>Governors were pleased to note that following the implementation of the new Choices behaviour philosophy, suspensions had begun to reduce in comparison with last year's data. Governors asked how are students rewarded in the school to encourage a culture of high expectations and praise which helps the pupils to thrive? The Deputy Head Teacher advised the school reinforces the positives and rewards are given via for example star student awards, certificates, post cards home, parents/carers are made aware of positive behaviour and achievements.</p> <p><b><u>Safeguarding</u></b></p> <p>Governors noted since the beginning of the Autumn Term there has been an increase in safeguarding concerns including operation encompass, strategy meetings, MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) enquiries, increased number of open Early Help cases and the numbers of Looked after Children has increased in the school. This was noted to be in line with similar safeguarding issues identified across Darlington borough.</p> <p><b><u>Attainment &amp; Progress and GCSE Analysis 2025</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that at the point of reporting to Governors data for 2025 had yet to be validated, however from provisional results Hurworth continued to outperform the Local Authority averages, with its Attainment 8 score. The performance of disadvantaged students was also notably stronger, reflecting the school's commitment to raising outcomes for all learners. Results had dipped in all areas in comparison to the last academic year; however the 2024 cohort was a particularly high-achieving year group, achieving the highest Attainment 8 and Progress 8 scores that the school had ever secured. Governors were pleased to note there had been improved prediction accuracy on final results, leading to more reliable predictions. Areas for</p>

	<p>development included outcomes for combined science and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) outcomes.</p> <p><u>Risk Register</u></p> <p>Further to minute 9a. (Hurworth School Local Governing Body – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025) Governors noted that the current Hurworth Risk Register had been reviewed further since the last meeting, by the Chair and two other Governors. Pupil numbers remained the biggest risk for the school. <i>Governors requested further information from the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) regarding second preferences and admissions for 2026/27? The CFO advised that he would obtain this information and that it would be forwarded via email to Governors on the Local Governing Body.</i></p> <p>After careful consideration Governors <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the Hurworth Risk Register.</p> <p><u>Improvement Plan</u></p> <p>The Deputy Head Teacher reported upon, and the Governors noted the Hurworth School Improvement Plan 2025-2028. The three priority areas are: improving the life chances and outcomes, equip all to be agents of change and betterment and influencing leadership at all levels.</p> <p><i>Governors requested feedback at the next meeting on how the personal development IGNITE programme was progressing.</i></p> <p><u>Finance Update</u></p> <p>Governors considered the Management Accounts up to the end of September 2025. It was noted that income to date is higher than the budget, which was mainly due to an insurance claim relating to a burst water pipe in the entrance way, all other income is budgeted to be in line with the current forecast. For the reporting period up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025, teaching staff had received the uplift in salaries of 4% and support staff had received an increase of 3.2%, back dated to 1st September 2025. It was noted that Hurworth Schools currently had no reserves.</p> <p><i>Governors asked if there are any scales of economy achievable by working as a Partnership? The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) advised yes, the Partnership looks at consolidation of contracts and efficiencies.</i></p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) advised that the mandate for the Parent Teacher's Association Account only has the authorized signatories of employees that are no longer employed at the school. The CFO requested that they and the Head Teacher be added to the mandate and that the previous employees were removed.</p> <p>Governors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the CFO and Head Teacher of Hurworth School be added to the bank mandate with immediate effect and old employees removed.</p>	<p>CFO</p> <p>Head Teacher</p> <p>CFO</p>
12.	<p><b><u>Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 25-26</u></b></p> <p>The Deputy Head Teacher advised that the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement was currently being reviewed and updated by senior leadership and would be forwarded to</p>	

	<p>the Chair and Vice Chair of the Local Governing Body for any suggested amendments.</p> <p>The Pupil Premium Strategy Statement would then be forwarded to Directors for approval by the Standards Committee.</p>	<b>Governance &amp; Policy Officer</b>
13.	<p><b><u>Music Development Plan</u></b></p> <p>Governors noted the music development plan for Hurworth School for the academic year 2025-26. A copy of the plan would be placed on the Academy's website.</p> <p>The music plan is developed each year, taking into consideration any changes to the National Curriculum. The School aims to provide as much inclusive practical music for as many students as possible.</p>	
14.	<p><b><u>Chief Executive Officers' Update Report November 2025</u></b></p> <p>Governors noted the Chief Executive Officers (CEO) Autumn term report. It was noted learning environments at both secondary academies have benefitted from significant investments over recent months. The new post of Head of Operations had commenced in November 2025. Pay agreements had been reached for all sections of staff in the Trust.</p>	
15.	<p><b><u>Policies:</u></b></p> <p><b>Trust approved policies Summer Term 2025 were noted for information:</b></p> <p>Risk Management Policy, Procurement Policy and Health &amp; Safety Statement of Intent and Capability Policy (Schools).</p> <p><b><u>Hurworth School Policies Autumn Term 2025:</u></b></p> <p><b>i. Hurworth School Local Governing Body to review:</b></p> <p>The following policies were reviewed by the Local Governing Body.</p> <p>Choices/Behaviour Policy, Anti Bullying Policy (Schools), Attendance Policy, Child Protection &amp; Procedures Policy, SEND Information Report September 2025 and SEND Policy.</p> <p>The Local Governing Body had no additions to add to the policies which would now be forwarded to the Standards Committee for approval in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation</p> <p><b>ii. Approval by Hurworth School Local Governing Body:</b></p> <p>After careful consideration Governors <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the Careers Guidance, Careers Provider Access Policy, First Aid and Supporting with Medical Conditions Policy and RSHE Policy.</p>	<b>Governance &amp; Policy Officer</b>

16.	<p><b><u>Special Interest Governors</u></b></p> <p>The Governance &amp; Policy Officer would send out prior to the next meeting information to Governors regarding how to make contact with their staff links and further information regarding their governance monitoring role.</p> <p>It was noted that Governor Louise McCann (Personal Development) and Aylsa Nugent (Disadvantaged/SEND) had conducted recent visits.</p>	Governance & Policy Officer
<b><u>Part C: Standing Items</u></b>		
17.	<p><b><u>Trust Scheme of Delegation</u></b></p> <p>The current Board approved Scheme of Delegation was noted by the Local Governing Body.</p>	
18.	<p><b><u>Feedback from the Governance Development Event</u></b></p> <p>Governors advised that they had found the Governance Development Event held on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2025 to have been a helpful and informative event.</p>	
<b><u>Part D: Concluding Items</u></b>		
19.	<p><b><u>Approval of documents for inspection</u></b></p> <p>Governors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the agenda, approved minutes and supporting documents be made available for public inspection with the exception of information concerning identifiable pupils and/or teachers/staff.</p>	
20.	<p><b>Next meetings 2025/26 Academic Year:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday 18th March 2026</li> <li>• Monday 15th June 2026</li> </ul>	
<b>The meeting concluded at 6.10 pm</b>		

### Action Log

1.	Appointment of Chair	Governance & Policy Officer
2.	Appointment of Vice Chair	Governance & Policy Officer
9.	Signed minutes – 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Governance & Policy Officer
11.	Risk Register- Further information regarding second preferences and admissions for 2026/27 via email	CFO
	Improvement Plan – report back to Governors on the how the personal development IGNITE programme was progressing.	Head Teacher
	Mandate for the Parent Teacher Associations Account – the CFO and Head Teacher to be added.	CFO

12.	Pupil Premium Strategy Statement to be forwarded to the Directors' Standards Committee for approval	Governance & Policy Officer
15.	Policies forward to the Standards Committee for approval following LGB review	Governance & Policy Officer
16.	Special Interest Governors – send out to Governors information on how to make contact with their staff links and further information regarding their governance monitoring role.	Governance & Policy Officer

These minutes were approved by the Local Governing Body of Hurworth School as follows:

on: 18.3.26 date

Signature: 

Print Name: PETER SANDERSON (VICE CHAIR)

APPROVED

