



# Northern Arch

## LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Standards Committee

held at The Rydal Academy, Rydal Road, Darlington.

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December

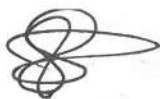
2025 at 4.30 pm MINUTES

Directors present:	Zoe Beach, Iain Clyde and Tim Fisher (Chief Executive Officer).
In attendance	Jon Tait: Executive Director of Education Nikki Wade: Head of Operations Marcus Dickinson: Partnership Safeguarding Lead Laura Hawksby: Governance & Policy Officer

Item	Description of discussion	Action
	<b>PART A: Procedural items</b>	
1.	<b><u>Welcome, Introductions and confirmation quorum present</u></b>  The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and introductions were provided. It was confirmed that a quorum was present.	
2.	<b><u>Apologies for absence and their acceptance</u></b>  Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Tarryn Lloyd Payne and Graham Wynn.	
3.	<b><u>Notification of items of urgent other business</u></b>  None	
4.	<b><u>Declaration of Personal and Pecuniary Interests</u></b>  None	
5.	<b><u>Approval of minutes/review of actions/matters arising – Standards Committee 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025</u></b>  Draft Minutes of the Standards Committee held on the 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2025 had been shared with Directors prior to the meeting, a copy of which is held on file.  All actions had been completed.	

Registered office address  
Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, Vane Terrace, Darlington, DL3 7AU:  
Company Registration Number 07533271  
Page 1 of 5

denotes support and challenge provided by Governors



	<p>Directors <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes of the Standards Committee held on the 25<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>
<p><b>PART B: Business Items for Discussion</b></p>		
<p><b>Standards</b></p>		
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Partnership Dashboards</u></b></p> <p>The Executive Director of Education (EDE) provided a report on progress regarding the Partnership's Dashboard. Work was also progressing on setting up a Partnership safeguarding dashboard, assessment dashboard and academy level dashboard.</p> <p>A live demonstration of the dashboard was provided at the meeting which allowed for Directors' greater scrutiny and provided an opportunity for discussion.</p> <p>Directors questioned how the overall attendance figure for primary schools was calculated? The EDE advised it was taken as the average figure from the primary schools within the Partnership.</p> <p>Directors asked if it was possible for the percentage figures contained in the dashboard to be interrogated to ascertain actual number of pupils? The EDE advised that that was correct.</p> <p>Directors asked if it was possible from data in the dashboard to drill down and see for example the number of repeat suspensions? The EDE confirmed this was correct.</p> <p>Directors requested, if possible, that the schools are kept on the same side of the page all the way through the dashboard, to help analysis.</p> <p>Directors suggested in the future it would be helpful to have information presented in the data dashboard on Admission numbers.</p> <p>Directors advised that they found the data dashboard to be very accessible and very useful for comparison purposes.</p>	<p>EDE</p> <p>EDE</p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Partnership Safeguarding</u></b></p> <p>The Partnership Safeguarding Lead presented to Directors an overview of his approach to his new role and his vision for the future of cross partnership safeguarding. He advised that he had visited the Schools and the College in the Partnership. A sample report of the Partnership Lead's' recent visit to Hurworth School was attached to the papers for Directors' information. He advised that within each academy in the Partnership there is a high level of strong safeguarding. The academies have been able to share experience and data between themselves analysing for any trends and checking that the provision is meeting current needs.</p> <p>Directors asked how often the visits to the academies in the Partnership would be carried out by the Partnership Safeguarding Lead? The Safeguarding Lead advised</p>	



	<p>that it was his intention to carry out the visits half termly, however he would also be led by the Academies.</p> <p>Directors enquired what else the Partnership could do to support the Safeguarding Lead in his role? He advised that there was no additional support required at present.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<p><b><u>Partnership SEND – for discussion</u></b></p> <p>The Chief Executive Officer asked Directors if they would like a lead staff SEND (Special educational Need and Disabilities) role within the Partnership? Directors agreed that it would be a good idea to develop a staff partnership lead for SEND and that the role title should be changed to Partnership Lead for Inclusion.</p>	<b>CEO</b>
	<b>Strategy</b>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b><u>Partnership Support for Academy Improvement</u></b></p> <p>Further to Minute 6 (Standards Committee 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025) as requested by Directors a partnership support for Academy improvement table had been duly rag rated to highlight the priorities for support required from the Partnership and progress made. All areas have been completed, are ongoing or work has begun.</p> <p>The Executive Director of Education (EDE) provided at the meeting footage of professional coaching within the Partnership. This was currently being piloted at Longfield Academy, however, would be rolled out to the other academies in the Partnership. It was hoped that bank of exemplar coaching clips would be created to be shared with staff within the Partnership. Directors asked if the EDE would be training other members of staff to be trainers? He confirmed this was correct.</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<p><b><u>Local Governing Bodies – update</u></b></p> <p>The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reported upon 'Next Generation Governance' which had been discussed at the Northern Arch Partnership Development event held on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2025 and how this could be embedded into the Local Governing Bodies (LGB's) in the Partnership. The CEO provided feedback on the latest round of LGB meetings held in the Autumn term. It was agreed that the LGB's form a vital bridge between the Board of Directors and the academies, providing insight into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by their communities. The main areas of focus for LGB's included: Standards, SEND, Safeguarding and Stakeholder Engagement.</p> <p>Recommendations on how to support the Local Governing Bodies further included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Heads/Principal to prepare succinct papers that are easily digestible and encourage discussion and scrutiny, leading to impact.</li> <li>• Provide guidelines for LGB agendas and papers.</li> <li>• Provide the same infographics to LGBs that are used with the Standards Committee.</li> <li>• Support Chairs with ways to encourage discussion and questioning from Governors.</li> <li>• Provide governors training to encourage curiosity, confidence and maximise the rewards for being a Governor.</li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the Strategy Alignment Group to support Chairs</li> <li>• Review approaches to stakeholder voice and engagement</li> <li>• Share good practice</li> </ul>	
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Policies:</b></p> <p>The following Pupil Premium Strategy Statements for the Schools in the Partnership were considered and <b>RESOLVED</b> to be approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Rydal Academy Pupil Premium Strategy Statement</li> <li>• Mowden Schools Pupil Premium Strategy Statement</li> <li>• Longfield Academy Pupil Premium Strategy Statement</li> <li>• Hurworth School Pupil Premium Strategy Statement</li> </ul> <p>The Pupil Premium statements would be placed on the relevant schools websites.</p> <p>Directors noted that the following policies were reviewed by each academy's LGB and approved by the Standards Committee outside of their meeting in December 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Behaviour/ Anti Bullying/ Child on Child Abuse</li> <li>• Safeguarding &amp; Child Protection</li> <li>• SEND Policy and Report</li> </ul> <p>Directors noted that the following policies were approved by each academy's LGB in November 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Careers Programme</li> <li>• PE &amp; Sport Premium</li> <li>• Relationships &amp; Sex Education &amp; Health Education</li> <li>• Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Governance &amp; Policy Officer</b></p>
<p><b><u>Part C: Concluding Items</u></b></p>		
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Approval of documents for inspection</u></b></p> <p>Directors <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>	

<b>13.</b>	<b><u>Date and time of future meetings</u></b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Board of Directors – Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 5.00 pm</li> <li>• Standards Committee – Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 4.30 pm</li> <li>• Standards Committee – Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 4.30 pm</li> </ul>	
	<b>The meeting concluded at 6.15 pm</b>	

### Action Log

<b>5.</b>	Signed Minutes – 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2025 by the Chair	Governance & Policy Officer/Chair
<b>6.</b>	Partnership Dashboards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools kept at the same side of the pages of the data dashboard</li> <li>• Information presented in the data dashboard on Admission Numbers</li> </ul>	EDE
<b>8.</b>	Role of Partnership Lead of Inclusion to be created	CEO
<b>11.</b>	Pupil Premium Statements to be placed on the relevant Schools' website	Governance & Policy Officer

These minutes were approved by the Standards Committee, as follows:

Signed by: (Chair) \_\_\_\_\_

On: (date) \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

