

MINUTES OF MEETING

School: Newlands Primary School
Meeting title: Spring term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Monday 23rd March 2026 at 4:30pm
Location: At the school

Membership

'A' denotes absence

Mrs A Castledine
Miss J Salmon
Miss C Salmon
Mr G Peake
Ms K Elliot
A Mrs M Matthews
Mr Colin Sawers
Mrs Clare Dobb
A Caroline Houston
Gina Evans

In attendance Mrs J Kirkwood (clerk to the governors)

GB/01/26 Apologies for absence Action

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Matthews who was unwell.

It was

resolved

that the governing body consent to this absence.

A warm welcome was extended to Mrs Evans, the newly elected Parent Governor.

All governors introduced themselves.

Although unable to attend the meeting, another newly elected Parent Governor, Mrs Houston, was also welcomed to the board.

The clerk agreed to notify governor services.

Clerk

GB/02/26 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

It was reported that Miss J Salmon and Miss C Salmon are related.

Miss J Salmon, Mrs Matthews and Ms K Elliott are employed at the school.

Miss C Salmon is a Supply Teacher, although she does not work at Newlands School.

Mr Sawers declared that he undertakes casual clerking for governor services.

GB/03/26 Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months (confirm completion of DBS and section 128 for new governors)

The clerk informed the meeting that Mr Karim had resigned on **2nd February 2026** due to work commitments.

The clerk reported the following current vacancies on the governing body:

- 2 x Co-opted Governors

The clerk also noted that the following governors are nearing the end of their 4-year term of office:

- Chelsea Salmon – 28th March 2026
- Karen Elliott – 17th July 2026
- Jill Salmon – 23rd September 2026

Ms Salmon confirmed she was happy to continue in her role. Governors expressed their support for her continued service, and she was duly re-elected.

The clerk agreed to notify governor services.

Clerk

Election of a Second Vice Chair

A proposal was put forward to elect a second Vice Chair to support continuity and stability within the school.

It was proposed that:

- One Vice Chair, Mr Peake, would chair the Finance Committee.
- The second Vice Chair would chair the Standards Committee.
- Mr Sawers would chair the Full Governing Body.

Mr Sawers proposed that Mrs Dobb be appointed as the second Vice Chair.

All governors **agreed**.

Mrs Dobb was duly appointed as Second Vice Chair.

GB/04/26 Approval of minutes of autumn term meetings and any additional special governing body meetings

The minutes of the autumn term FGB meeting of **Monday 15th December 2025** were approved and signed by Mr Sawers.

All actions had been completed and discussed at the Committee meeting.

Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

The spring term meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee & Strategic Development Committee took place on **2nd February 2026**

Minutes are available to view on Governorhub.

Mrs Castledine reported that an action had arisen from Pupil Voice monitoring carried out by Mrs Dobb. The monitoring indicated that pupils would like an 'Always Award.' This award has now been implemented and has been well received by the pupils.

Q: What is the Always Award?

A: The award is based on pupil voice and recognises children who consistently "always do the right thing," as these pupils often do not receive specific recognition for their ongoing positive behaviour.

GB/05/25

Holding executive leaders to account:

Governors were referred to the Headteacher's report, which was uploaded to Governorhub prior to the meeting. The following questions were raised:

Q: Attendance for the spring term was looking good? 96.1%

A: Towards the end of the autumn term, the last few weeks were awful with illness; on some days there were only 15 pupils in a class. It has never been this bad. Seventy-two letters were sent home at Christmas regarding attendance with parents responding well.

Q: How is attendance calculated?

A: 95% is the full-year figure, with 96.1% for the spring term. Both the full year and the current term are monitored. The school knows the reasons behind the drop and have addressed these with parents. Attendance is now just above national, which is positive.

Q: Can you tell us more about the Physical interventions and where this has been necessary, staff training?

A: It is rare that physical intervention is needed; three instances is considered a lot. Initially, all staff received MAPPA training; however, current guidance is "don't touch a child unless for safety reasons." If a child requires specific intervention due to their needs, bespoke training is provided. Currently, one pupil can be volatile, and another has a tendency to kick other pupils; in this case, the intervention is simply holding the pupil's shin. Although this is not restraint, it still involves touch and is therefore recorded. All instances are logged and parents informed.

Q: Is there just one staff member trained to support the child?

A: There hasn't been any formal additional training; this was a one-off incident. If it reoccurs, the NCC team will be contacted and training requested.

Q: Have you done any positive handling?

A: Yes. Training is reviewed every year. The school follows the NCC policy, and staff receive positive handling training every September. Staff are also reminded that safeguarding applies to them as well as pupils, so efforts are made to ensure staff are not dealing with situations alone.

Q: The cyber bullying incident, was this in or out of school?

A: Out of school. Pupils have no access to digital platforms in school and are not allowed phones. The school has put significant work into this area, but once pupils are outside school, it is beyond the school's control.

A discussion was held around the dangers of digital media and the level of pupil exposure.

Q: Regarding staff training and cyber security who can I talk to, to gain a greater understanding of what the school are doing?

A: Mrs Underwood, who is attending relevant training, will be the best contact and have to most up to date information which will be disseminated to staff. Mr Peake agreed to arrange to meet Mrs Underwood.

GP

Q: SEND 41 children, is this high?

A: Numbers have previously been higher. There is a large group in Year 3, but as the pupils progress, the school works to close gaps in cognition and learning, resulting in fewer identified needs by Year 6.

Q: Exclusion – do we need to be concerned that the child might be at risk of permanent exclusion?

A: Two months ago, there was a risk of several repeated incidents; however,

things have since been calm. Many outside agencies are involved and support is in place. The school has responded quickly. There is currently no risk of repeat incidents.

Staffing and staff absence: the whole school had 106 days missed, with 59 days accounted for by teachers. A discussion was held about absences due to caring for a dependent, the impact of this on absence figures, and the cost. The LA policy provides up to 5 days for this type of absence for teaching staff if needed.

Q: Do you have staff who take the 5 days and then switch to sickness?

A: Staff are honest, though at times staff members report that their partner cannot take time off due to being self-employed. This does create cost implications for the school, and it is a difficult balance as the school does not want staff to feel pressured to lie.

Q: Can you award paid leave after the 5 days at the HT's discretion?

A: Yes, the policy states that we can do.

Q: Are there Occupational Therapy services that the NCC provide?

A: Yes, and the new insurance provides physical and mental health support.

Q: Does three occasions of sickness within a 12-month period trigger attendance management processes?

A: There is an attendance management plan which is followed. The school is transparent with staff so that they understand the financial implications on the school.

Governors requested that staff absence continue to be monitored and that consideration be given to messaging to staff.
Data will be shared after half term.

GB/06/26

Overseeing Financial Performance - Financial reporting

Approval of School Budget

See confidential items:

Governors **approved** the budget.

Services for Schools – Buy-Back of NCC Services

Mr Peake commented on the significant increase in the HR package which is up 16%, the others were around a 3–4% increase which is expected due to inflation. He added that overall costs were up around £400.

Governors were informed that, as the school was approaching audit, the school had enquired about the cost of clerking all six meetings. If the school proceeds with full clerking during the audit period, this would incur an additional cost of £900.

Q: Training package - are we using it? There seems to be more available through GovernorHub. Worth dropping the training?

A: Will look into this and drop the training package.

Q: Swimming scheme - where a private provider brings a private pool onto the school site, have we considered this?

A: Visited Berry Hill to view the scheme. LA advised that from an insurance perspective it was not worthwhile.

Governors **agreed not to** purchase the Governor Learning and Development package.

Governors **agreed** to increase the clerking package to six meetings per year. A discussion was held regarding moving to a circle model.

Q: Expression of interest for the ASC – will this offer financial income for the school?

A: Looking at using an external provider, which poses less risk to the school. Breakfast Club is currently free and funded by the school. The school has signed up to a scheme where, if over 40% of pupils are PP, funding is provided.

GB/07/26 Update on appraisal process for Headteacher and staff including an update on the wellbeing of the Headteacher and staff.

A mid-year review for the headteacher is currently underway, conducted internally by Mr Sawers and Mr Peake.

Staff appraisals take place at the beginning of each term.

All staff have three targets, aligned with:

- Headteacher targets
- The School Development Plan (SDP)

Pupil progress meetings also form part of the appraisal process.

Current whole-school appraisal targets are:

- Writing
- Monitoring
- Disadvantaged pupils

Actions are tracked using a red/amber/green system.

Mrs Castledine undertakes appraisals with Ms Elliott and Mrs Matthews, who are then responsible for conducting teacher appraisals. Ms Elliott also carries out the Teaching Assistant appraisals.

Teaching Assistants have their own targets, including those relating to communication and interaction.

They also work with identified target children, ensuring engagement and support for those pupils.

These reviews are expected to be completed by the end of the week.

Q: How is staff wellbeing?

A: Mrs G Salmon has not been in to see anyone recently. Ms Elliott is the Staff Wellbeing Governor who reported that all staff are currently waiting for Ofsted; staff feel prepared and are keen for the inspection to take place.

GB/08/26 Confirm arrangements to review Child Protection and Safeguarding recording and reporting systems (CP confidential file audit)

The governors were informed that the internal CP confidential file audit has been completed. The audit is recorded on an Excel-based system, which produces a clear action plan. Ms J Salmon has reviewed the document and has formally signed it off.

A small number of actions require minor adjustments.

Q: There appears to be one amber with no action against it?

A: This was an error within the document. There is nothing outstanding, however the cell will not turn green.

The school would like to undertake pupil voice work with pupils prior to their transition to secondary school.

Q: Do the secondaries offer extra transition for pupils that might need it?

A: Yes. They do offer additional transition support. There were some communication issues last year, so the school hopes this year will be smoother. Secondary schools are offering three days of transition, with extra sessions for SEND pupils, during which the primary school accompanies them.

GB/09/26

Corporate Directors Report

School Attendance Update – Nottinghamshire

Post-pandemic, both overall and persistent absence rates rose sharply nationally and locally. Nottinghamshire's rates are slowly improving but remain above pre-pandemic levels. In 2024/25, overall absence was 6.4% (≈2.51M sessions), authorised absence 4.2%, with 18,253 persistent absentees and 2,514 severe cases (≈2.3%). Live data for Dec 2025 shows severe absence at 1.6%. The government is introducing Attendance Baseline Improvement Expectations (ABIE)—minimum improvement targets tailored to each school—piloting in 2025/26 and rolling out in 2026/27. Schools can track ABIE via DfE's View Your Education Data (VYED) platform, which also provides benchmarking and similar-school comparisons. Local authorities must hold Targeting Support Meetings to agree plans for severely/persistently absent pupils. Nottinghamshire began these in 2024/25 but uptake needs improvement.

Additional support includes the RISE Attendance and Behaviour Hubs, and a new DfE attendance campaign promoting school's social and emotional benefits through local stories and health advice.

Actions for governors ·

- Governors to familiarise themselves with the Attendance Baseline Improvement Expectations (ABIE) for their school and what actions are being taken to achieve the target
- Governors to check that their schools have access the Targeting Support meeting with a member of the Education and Attendance Team within the local authority.
- Consider with Senior leaders whether your school would benefit from the support available through the RISE Attendance and Behaviour Hubs programme.

Q: Are you finding families are going to home education?

A: No, there were a couple after Covid, although no requests for a couple of years.

Governors noted the Corporate Directors Report.

Attendance – Term-Time Holidays and Fines

The school discussed a small number of cases involving poor attendance where decisions need to be made regarding term-time holidays. This has been discussed previously, and governors had decided not to issue fines.

The workload associated with this process is significant.

The school previously stopped issuing fines primarily due to safeguarding concerns, as some parents were providing false information to avoid the fine.

Examples included families taking four days' holiday and then reporting the child as ill, requiring the school to request proof.

Q: Are John T Rice fining?

A: Yes.

It was noted that, historically, issuing fines did not improve attendance and families continued to take holidays regardless.

Mr Sawers noted that the decision not to fine may be viewed negatively by Ofsted. He added that safety and wellbeing are more important, and that family time often strained by stress is valuable.

It was also noted that nearly every Year 3 child has not been in a swimming pool and is petrified, which raises broader concerns about opportunities and experiences outside school.

Q: Could we look at grouping INSET days together?

A: This would be difficult, as parents may not be able to take leave at the same time, and it would not align with John T Rice or Garibaldi, making coordination challenging.

A case was noted where a family had taken two weeks in the autumn term and another week this term.

Q: Do you know if Samuel Barlow fine?

A: Yes, I think they do.

Governors discussed the importance of making any policy change at an appropriate time, agreeing that a new approach should not be introduced part-way through the year.

Q: What's the extra work involved?

A:

- Rejecting the holiday request
- Writing to both parents
- Submitting the case to NCC

Q: What is the number of children who have taken term time holidays?

- **2024–25:** 95 children
- **2025–26:** 49 children

Following a lengthy discussion, governors noted that this represents a significant number of pupils, and agreed to implement fining from September 2026.

Q: Do we need to alert those joining from John T Rice?

A: Yes.

GB/10/26

Communication received and updates

- **From the Chair**

The Chair updated governors on the Education White Paper relating to academisation, noting the expectation that all schools will eventually academise.

It was also highlighted that Local Authorities may form their own Multi-Academy Trusts alongside existing Trusts.

With Local Government Reorganisation, the LA is expected to shrink further, resulting in fewer staff available to support schools.

- **From the Headteacher**

Nothing to report.

- **From the Clerk**

- The Clerk shared the Governor Newsletter – Spring Term (editions 1 and 2).

Mr Sawers mentioned the complaints article contained within the newsletter.

GB/11/26

Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training audit and training requirements for 2026/2027

Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training audit and training requirements for 2026/2027.

Governors noted the following training:

Mrs Dobb 24th January 2026

- Safeguarding for governance
- Induction for maintained school governors

- Prevent
- Send Link Governor

Mrs Dobb - Pupil Premium – 23rd December

Mrs G Salmon was asked to complete the Safeguarding Link Governor training which is on the Key, please action asap.

GS

- Data Protection – Mr Peake 23rd March 2026
- IT Security – Mr Peake 23rd March 2026

Mrs C Salmon has completed the following training:

- Anti racism in schools
- PDA
- Prevent
- 6 stages of crisis
- Triggers in children

All were encouraged to update their training logs on Governorhub.

All Govs

GB/12/26 General Data Protection Regulations

Review and confirm the appointment of the Data Protection Officer (DPO) and Senior Information and Risk Owner (SIRO)

The Governing Body reviewed and confirmed the following appointments:

- Data Protection Officer (DPO): Mrs Coupe.
- Senior Information and Risk Owner (SIRO): Mrs Castledine
- GDPR Link Governor: Mr Peake, provided an update at the last meeting.

GB/13/26 Review of all recent governor monitoring visit reports in line with the 2025 Ofsted inspection framework (Safeguarding, SEND, PP and LAC plus link governors to School Improvement Priorities).

The following monitoring activities were reported:

- **Health & Safety Audit – Spring Term**
Conducted by Mr Peake. Report has been uploaded to GovernorHub.
- **Curriculum and Assessment Visit**
Completed by Mr Sawers.
- **Inclusion and Disadvantaged (PP/LAC)**
Completed by Mrs Dobb, with the report already written.
- **GDPR and IT Monitoring**
Mr Peake has completed the visit and needs to write up the report.
- **Safeguarding – Confidential File Audit and SCR Check**
Completed by Mrs G Salmon, who needs to write up the report.
- **Attendance Monitoring**
Scheduled for the first week after Easter, to be completed by Ms C Salmon.
- **Writing Monitoring**
Writing - a monitoring visit still needs to be completed.

GP

GS

CS

- **Behaviour Monitoring**
Scheduled for after Easter, to be completed by Mrs C. Salmon and Mrs. Matthews.

CS & MM

- **Pupil Voice**
Scheduled for the first week back after Easter, to be completed by Mrs Dobb.

CD

It was noted that Mrs Evans will take on a link role in due course.

GB/14/26 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account

Evidence of Governing Body Impact (Brief)

- Approved budget and key financial decisions, ensuring stability.
- Strengthened safeguarding through review of confidential file audit and SCR checks.
- Conducted a wide range of monitoring visits (H&S, curriculum, attendance, behaviour, inclusion, GDPR).
- Supported pupil voice improvements, including implementation of the *Always Award*.
- Reviewed appraisal processes and staff wellbeing, ensuring alignment with school priorities.
- Agreed to reinstate term-time holiday fining from Sept 2026 to improve attendance.
- Ensured governors completed relevant training to strengthen governance capacity.

Evidence of Holding Leaders to Account (Brief)

- Challenged leaders on attendance figures, illness impact, and calculation methods.
- Questioned physical intervention, training, logging, and safeguarding compliance.
- Probed staff absence data, policy application, and financial implications.
- Scrutinised budget assumptions, pupil numbers, PAN limits and risks.
- Challenged leaders on cyberbullying, digital safety and secondary transition.
- Queried progress on SEND, exclusions, behaviour and appraisal outcomes.
- Followed up on outstanding monitoring reports and safeguarding actions.

GB/15/26 Confirmation of dates for 2025-2026 to be agreed at the meeting in conjunction with the clerk

The governing body **agreed** the following dates for the Spring term:

- Committees – 18th May 4.30pm
- FGM – Monday 20th July 2026

The governing body **agreed** the following dates for the 26-27 academic year:

- 12th October 2026 - 4.30pm
- 14th December 2026 - 4.30pm
- 8th February 2027 - 4.30pm
- 22nd March 2027 – 4.30pm
- 24th May 2027 – 4.30pm
- 19th July 2027 – 4.30pm

GB/16/26 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was
Resolved

That GB/06/26, membership details and the HT report be confidential.
The meeting closed at 6:25pm.

Signed C. J. S. (chair) Date 18/5/26

School Display