



**ARNSIDE NATIONAL
CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL
CHURCH HILL
ARNSIDE
CARNFORTH
LANCS
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**ARNSIDE NATIONAL SCHOOL IS AN ACADEMY
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Minutes of Arnside National C of E School Governing Board Meeting (GBM)

held Tuesday 25 November 2025 at 5.00pm

Key: highlighted areas in yellow = action point highlighted areas in blue = impact measure highlighted areas in green = question

Present:

Mrs Catherine Firth, Mrs Carla Hartropp, Mrs Janice Lee, Mrs Jane Madeley, Reverend Andrew Norman, Mr Ian Service, Mr Nick Sharp Headteacher, Mrs Gillian Singleton, Mrs Lynnae Taylor, Mrs Tracey Taylor Chair of Governors, Revd Hannah Wallace.

In attendance:

Mrs Sue Glendinning Governance Professional to the Governing Board

GBM 53/25 Welcome

Mrs Taylor welcomed governors to the meeting and invited Revd Wallace to open the meeting in prayer. Mrs Jane Madeley was welcomed to her first governing board meeting, and governors were invited to introduce themselves.

GBM 54/25 To receive apologies for absence

No apologies were received as all governors were present, therefore, the meeting was declared quorate with 11 governors present.

GBM 55/25 Declaration of conflict of interest in agenda items

Mr Sharp, related to staff member.

Nil else declared.

GBM 56/25 To receive the audited accounts from Ian Thompson of Saint & Co Auditors

Mrs Taylor welcomed Mr Ian Johnson, Auditor from Saint & Co to present the audited accounts.

Governors were issued with the audited accounts document, to which Mr Johnson spoke.

Governors were informed that the DfE has now replaced the ESFA.

The accountant conducting the audit, reads the school information but makes no comment on the information documented during the review process.

School is a limited company, so the profit and loss margins are examined.

The restricted fixed asset fund relates to the school property and looks at depreciation. As such, £46k adjustment has been made, with £40k profit made this financial year.

There has been a transfer of £32k from the general funds to the fixed asset fund.

Work on the outdoor area to improve conditions for the pupils has upgraded the property.

The grant made for staff pensions arrived in October 2025, so is not accounted for in the accounts for 2024-25.

The school funds still balance with money held in reserve.

The pension fund, which for all academies when they began, was in deficit. The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) holds more assets than liabilities; therefore, there are sufficient funds to cover staff pensions. This is due to the stock market shares having performed well over the last few years.

Authorised by Chair: *T. Taylor*

Date: 3 March 2026

GBM 57/25 Governor questions to the auditor

Governors were asked if there were any questions on the audited accounts.

As there were none, the letters of assurance were signed by the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher. The accounts will be submitted to the DfE by 31 December 2025.

Governors then received the management report and were informed that if the DfE receive a management report which contains no recommendations, it indicates that the accountants have not carried out a thorough review of the school's accounts.

Medium	Monthly Management Accounts	Accounts are not prepared on a monthly basis and supplied to management as recommended by the AFH. There is a "must" in the Academies Financial Handbook to prepare management accounts every month. As a result, management might not be aware of financial issues in time to deal with them accordingly.	Implement a formal process to produce and review management accounts every month, ensuring they are shared with the accounting officer, principal and trustees as required by the AFH.
	Publication of Annual Accounts on Website	The 2024 audited accounts were not visible on the academy's website. This is a 'must' requirement of the Academies Accounts Direction and AFH.	Upload the 2024 and future years' financial statements to the school website within the statutory deadline.
Low	GAG Carry Forward Restriction	The academy remains close to the 12% carry forward restriction in its original funding agreement. This limit can be formally removed or varied by a Deed of Variation agreed with the ESFA.	Contact the ESFA via their online enquiry form to request and complete a Deed of Variation removing or revising the 12% carry forward limit. This will allow greater flexibility in managing reserves.
	Internal Financial Scrutiny – Limited Scope	This is a "must." You have continued to have an internal financial review by a governor. This year you also had a "light touch" review by the business manager from another school who undertook the non-financial review. You should have a full financial review by a suitably qualified/experienced external person.	Arrange for a suitably qualified/experienced external person to undertake the required financial scrutiny.

Governors' response to the above recommendations were as follows:

Medium risk:

- Monthly management accounting does not occur as the school bursar visits every half term, to request a monthly visit would incur additional unreasonable costs, as the bursar has a round 150-mile journey to school, as they are not locally based.
- Addressed as accounts are now on school website.

Q: Attention has been brought to the financial handbook "MUST". Who else looks at this?

A: DfE will review the management letter, but how they follow up is up to them.

Governor response: As there is very little movement in the school budget, the checks and balances carried out between the HT, SBM and School Bursar are adequate and sufficient to ensure financial probity. All responses are ratified at the annual general meeting.

The suggestion to seek a deed of variation was rejected by governors as given the budget demands over the next three years, the 12% carry forward will be required to cover increased costs.

School access Jo Harmer from Dallam School to act as the external financial scrutineer; therefore, this recommendation already occurs, and governors are satisfied that there is sufficient external scrutiny of the school finances.

Mr Johnson was thanked for his report and management account letter.

Mr Sharp, Mrs Reid and Mrs Evans were thanked for keeping the school finances balanced and under constant scrutiny.

Mr Johnson left the meeting.

Authorised by Chair: *T. Taylor*

Date: 3 March 2026

GBM 58/25 To receive the minutes of the previous meeting held 16 September 2025

The minutes were received and agreed to be a true and accurate account of the meeting, proposed by Mr Service seconded by Revd Wallace, duly signed by the chair.

GBM 59/25 Action points progress

GBM 45/25: Governors to complete the skills audit: Mrs Lee to complete. **ACTION ONGOING**

GBM 45/25: Mrs Glendinning to notify school of any potential skills gaps. COMPLETED

GBM 45/25: Mrs Glendinning to contact Diocese about PCC foundation governor vacancy nomination for an update on progress appointing the nominee. COMPLETED

There remains a foundation vacancy, which is being managed.

The LA vacancy has been filled by Mr Adam Bramley. Awaiting confirmation of nomination from the LA.

GBM 46/25: SCR check by Revd A B Norman. COMPLETED

GBM 46/25: Communication format to be reviewed by Mr Sharp. All diary updates have been completed; parental communications have improved. **COMPLETED**

GBM 47/25: Companies House verification. Governors were reminded that it is now a statutory action for all members to register with companies house using biometric verification.

GBM 47/25: Mrs Taylor to sign as bank signatory for Cumberland Building Society account. COMPLETED

GBM 50/25: Accessibility Plan to be updated. This action has been completed, with a new monitoring form issued, which fits in with the new Ofsted framework. **COMPLETED**

GBM 60/25 Headteachers report

This was distributed to governors prior to the meeting.

Pupil attendance is 95.89.

The dip in attendance was explained to governors, the factors being that there are 3 pupils in school whose attendance is poor, with 1 pupil verging on nonattendance, with 2 others following closely towards the same scenario. These pupils bring the attendance rate down. There has also been an outbreak of norovirus, which has decimated some year groups.

Governors were informed that a member of staff who had experienced long term sick leave has now returned to work.

One member of staff has suffered a family bereavement so has been granted compassionate leave from work.

The Diocese suggested that school access the information supplied by Anti – bullying and Anti Racism Cumbria to share with parents to address the various issues dealt with by the organisation. Out of 100 parents school received feedback from 3 parents, who expressed concern about the material that had been shared.

These concerns related to the political standing relating to how was this material funded, what qualifications did the organisation / individuals have and how did they liaise with school?

This has opened an interesting dialogue, between parents and school which is ongoing.

Q: Were the parents questions based upon knowledge or were they anecdotal?

A: One asked for statistics on racism in Cumbria, one stated they found the material too politically charged.

Q: Did you see the parents face to face or were the questions asked via the parents' communication link?

Authorised by Chair: *T. Taylor*

Date: 3 March 2026

A: One parent came into school to discuss their concern the others communicated via email.

A formal application has been made for a Year 3 pupil to receive a part time timetable. School are liaising with the attendance officer to enable this to happen.

The issue with invoicing by Orian has been resolved. Mrs Evans School Bursar has created a code to record their invoices.

School are currently finalising two CIF bids for the roof £100,000, and a bid for replacement heating for the stand-alone heaters and piping for £340,000.

School will need to make a contribution towards these CIF bids; however, the focus is the roof, and school would rather pay towards the roof to ensure the building is watertight. The DfE will manage the CIF bids. The suggestion was made that a three-year budget review is carried out to ensure that school do not face a major budget deficit in coming years.

All electrical testing has been carried out on equipment in school, fire equipment testing has also been completed, and the school alarms have also undergone testing.

The front door closing mechanism that was causing concern has been adjusted and the situation of the door closing either too quickly or too slowly has been rectified.

School received the recent FOANS report, which has been circulated to governors. Mrs Lynnae Taylor has been elected as chair of the group. Thanks were expressed to FOANS for the fundraising they carry out for school's benefit.

Mr Sharp was thanked for his report.

GBM 61/25 Governance

a) To receive committee minutes

The committee minutes have been received and the contents noted.

b) To receive Governor monitoring reports

Governor monitoring reports received have been circulated for information sharing upon receipt.

c) Governor vacancy update

There is still one foundation vacancy, which Reverend Norman is attending to.

d) Governor e-training

Governors were reminded that it is an annual requirement for governors to complete their safeguarding, prevent and cyber security training and submit their certificates to Mrs Glendinning for filing.

e) Ofsted framework update

Mrs Glendinning attended training in the new Ofsted framework and the impact on schools and governance. The training materials have been circulated to all governors.

GBM 62/25 Safeguarding matters

The single central record has been reviewed again by the safeguarding governor.

No safeguarding concerns to report.

GBM 63/25 Policy review

Attendance policy

Behaviour policy

Data protection policy

First aid in school policy

Health and safety policy

SEND policy

} policies approved, proposed by Mrs Lee seconded by Mrs Firth.

GBM 64/25 Chair's report

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There was nothing further to report additional to agenda items.

Mrs Taylor thanked the headteacher and staff for their continuing work and commitment to school.

GBM 65/25 Items deemed confidential

There was one confidential item, on staff appraisal, which is minuted separately.

Mrs Hartropp and Mr Sharp left the meeting at this point at 6.05pm.

The meeting remained quorate.

GBM 66/25 Date of next meeting to Tuesday 3 March 2026 at 5.00pm

Mr Sharp rejoined the meeting.

Mr Sharp was presented by Revd Wallace on behalf of St James PCC, with a Fair Trade Food Hamper for the school staff room, as a thank you for the staff's hard work throughout the year.

Mr Sharp expressed his thanks on behalf of the staff for this very kind gesture.

Trustees were reminded that the AGM will take place on 3 December 2025 at 5.00pm.

Governors were thanked for their attendance and continued support. The meeting was closed in prayer by Revd Norman at 6.15pm.

Authorised by Chair: *T. Taylor*

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