

**MINUTES OF THE
Meeting of Black Firs Primary School Local
Governing Board (LGB)**

Date: Thursday 29th January 2026

<p>Governors in attendance: Jonathon Barlow-Bailey (JB-B) Vice Chair – arrived at 16:40pm Cheryl Glover (CG) Emma Perriman-Rabone (EP-R) Acting Chair in SM-S Absence Rachael Nuttall (RN) Rob Sigley (RS)</p>	<p>Apologies: Shazma Mahmood-Shakoor (SM-S) Chair Josh Cammiss (JC) Kathryn Fowler (KF) Rupert Gorden (RG)</p> <p>Others in attendance: Anna Jones (AJ) Headteacher (HT) Jen Harrison (JH) Deputy Head (DH) Adam Millington (AM) Staff Observer Sian Wilkinson (SW) Clerk Sue Pomeroy (SP) Clerk</p>
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ITEM NO.		ACTION
1.	<p>Welcome, Quoracy, Apologies and Declarations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice Chair EP-R acting as Chair in the absence of SM-S • Apologies received from SM-S, JC, KF and RG. • JB-B arrived at 16:40pm. • There were no declarations of interest. 	
2.	<p>Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising</p> <p>a) Minutes from the last LGB were approved – 9th October 2026</p> <p>b) Matters Arising were reviewed and the following actions are now complete and can be closed: item no. 5.0, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6, 15, 15.1. 5.1 relating to the Governor monitoring schedule will remain open.</p>	
3.	<p>Membership Update</p> <p>a) New Governor RG has his DBS in progress, AJ to keep the LGB updated on progress</p> <p>b) EP-R term of office as appointed Governor is due to expire 31.08.26, EP-R expressed that she wishes to continue as Governor on the LGB.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to communicate EP-R term of office/express wishes to continue as VC to the Trust</p>	Action Clerk
Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities		
4.	<p>School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Self Evaluation (SEF):</p> <p>SEF: Governors received the SEF update which included the following highlights:</p> <p>Quality of Education – Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction of integrated phonics, writing, spelling and reading schemes has had a positive impact on pupil attainment. • Data outcomes show 80% of pupils achieved the Year 1 Phonics standard, and 68% met the Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM) standard at KS2 in Summer 2025. 	

- School has been invited to join English Hub and will receive funding to improve phonics results.
- AM is leading the RADY programme to support disadvantaged pupils

Behaviour and Attitudes – Good

- Attendance, SEND provision, Family Support, ELSA, and Speech & Language interventions continue to provide strong support for pupils.
- Lunchtime sports coaches have successfully engaged pupils who would not traditionally take part in physical activity.

Personal Development – Good

- A Personal Development overview is shared at each SIV meeting.
- The school achieved a successful SCIES audit in Summer 2025.
- Rights Respecting Schools work is being further developed this year.

Leadership & Management – Good

- Leadership of SEND continues to strengthen; from January 2026, Headteacher AJ will also take on the role of SENCO temporarily until September 2026.
- Three TLRs have been implemented to support: raising attainment for disadvantaged pupils, development of foundation subject curriculum leadership, and adoptive teaching strategies.
- A new Writing Lead has been appointed to work alongside the Reading Lead.
- The Deputy Headteacher continues to lead EYFS, with 73% of pupils achieving GLD in Summer 2025.

SIP Priorities

Governors **noted** and **endorsed** the progress made against the School Improvement Plan (SIP) priorities for 2025–2026:

- Writing: Ongoing development and refinement of the writing curriculum.
- Reading Fluency: Continued focus on improving reading fluency through the implementation of Ready Steady Phonics and Ready Steady Read.
- SEND Provision: Curriculum adaptations are being strengthened to meet the diverse needs of pupils with SEND.
- Behaviour and Conduct: High expectations for behaviour and conduct are consistently upheld across the school.
- Attendance: Barriers to attendance are being reduced through targeted support for pupils requiring SEMH interventions.
- Personal Development: Opportunities for personal development are being enhanced and embedded within the curriculum.
- Subject Leadership: Development of subject coordination continues to progress across all curriculum areas.
- Early Years Provision: Introduction of the new 2-year-old offer, scheduled to commence in January 2026.
- HT AJ to revise and tighten targets with links to the RADY programme with impact results to be shared at the next LGB.

Governors **questioned** how well the CPOMs platform is working when communicating to relevant multi-agency partners due to being locked to the SENCO, AJ confirmed CPOMs is

**Action
AJ**

	<p>working well for the school although SEND concerns need to be locked to the child and not the school to ensure the concerns follow the child if they change provision.</p> <p>Staffing Update</p> <p>In addition to the above, the Headteacher (AJ) provided an update on staffing changes since the previous LGB meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Pre-school Teacher has been appointed. • The Headteacher (AJ) will act as SENDCo from January to September 2026. • A vacancy remains for the Attendance and Family Support Worker role. • The Headteacher (AJ) and the Office Manager continue to cover responsibilities associated with the Small Business Manager (SBM) role. • There is a vacancy for an EYFS Teaching Assistant. • A new SEN Teaching Assistant has been appointed to meet the needs of pupils with EHCPs. • A new TA for one-day per week has been appointed • Congratulations were extended to a BFS staff member who has successfully completed their NPQSL, and to the Headteacher (AJ) for completing her Level 7 Leadership Postgraduate Apprenticeship. <p>Governors noted that writing outcomes are lower, the Headteacher (AJ) highlighted that is a trend across the Trust primary schools and there is a focus on transitions with consideration to early interventions to support those pupils.</p> <p>Governors expressed significant concern regarding the breadth of responsibilities currently being undertaken by the Headteacher (AJ), which include the roles of SENDCo, DSL and the statutory obligations of the SBM role. Governors noted that this level of workload is unsustainable and poses a risk to the Headteacher’s wellbeing. They also highlighted the potential negative impact on pupils and the quality of support provided, should these combined responsibilities remain unaddressed. Governors requested that their concerns are highlighted to the Trust by the Clerk.</p> <p>In response, the Headteacher (AJ) is mindful that this will be difficult to cover all roles, however this has been highlighted with TLP HR and Financing. The Headteacher (AJ) also highlighted that Deputy Headteacher (JH) is acting DDSL and has been released 1 day per week for leadership in support.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to communicate Governor concerns to the Trust to highlight the importance of support for teachers and staff along with the recruitment for the roles of SENDCo, DSL and SBM.</p>	Action Clerk
Quality of Education		
5.	<p>Admissions & Pupil Numbers</p> <p>Key highlights included within the HT report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DfE change request to amend statutory age from 3-11 to 2-11 has been approved due to the 2-year-old provision • 15 new 2-year-old places are available from January 2026 • Chesire East Early Years Fund support has enabled new installation of kitchen, improvements to pathway, installation of gate intercom for the pre-school building • 372 pupils enrolled within the school including pre-school and nursery 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 119 applications received in total for Reception places in September 2026, with 42 first choice preferences. This excludes EHCP and applications from Staffordshire. <p>Governors praised the new 2-year-old provision.</p>	
6.	<p>Curriculum Update</p> <p>Key highlights included within the HT report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reception - 74% met GLD Phonics - Y1 80% met or exceeded pass mark, Y2 overall 93% met or exceeded pass mark following retakes Multiplication Check – Y4, 45% scored 100% KS2 Teacher Assessments – writing 72% expected and science 85% expected KS2 SATs – 68% overall RWM <p>Governors praised that the data from KS2 listed BFS as 2nd out of 11 local primary schools for meeting expected standard at the end of KS2 last year. Alongside reception pupils achieving above local, regional and national % at GLD in summer 2025.</p>	
7.	<p>Pupil Performance</p> <p>Pupil performance data was included within the HT report and in the above section of Curriculum update.</p>	
8.	<p>Link Governor Monitoring</p> <p>The Chair of Governors SM-S has completed a safeguarding link Governor monitoring visit on 2nd of October 2025 and the 19th of December 2025; both visits have been recorded and uploaded to Governor Hub.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the proposed monitoring schedule and provided amendments to be incorporated before being published.</p>	
9.	<p>Pupil Premium</p> <p>a) The Pupil Premium Strategy Statement is to be uploaded to the school website, Headteacher (AJ) to confirm once complete, deadline 31.12.25 has now passed and has been delayed to due to resource challenges outlined above.</p> <p>ACTION: Headteacher (AJ) to upload Pupil Premium Strategy Statement to school website</p>	<p>Action AJ</p>
Personal Development		
10.	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Key highlights included within the HT report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole-school attendance currently stands at 96.4%, which is above the national average. A recent attendance and monitoring visit from Cheshire East provided positive feedback, particularly recognising the school’s proactive approach and the support offered to families. The new TLP attendance tracker is now being used alongside INSIGHT to strengthen the monitoring of attendance for vulnerable pupils. 	
11.	<p>Rewards and Behaviour</p> <p>Key highlights included within the HT report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have been no exclusions, no suspensions, no pupils on part-time timetables, and no recorded physical interventions, racial incidents, or bullying incidents. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour feedback from the SCIES review in May 2025 was positive. <p>Governors questioned whether there had been any further instances of the use of racist language from a pupil. Headteacher confirmed no and informed the Governors that the school were working with outside agencies to address local and national issues.</p>	
12.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Key highlights included within the HT report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair, SM-S, has completed two Link Governor monitoring visits, conducted in October and December 2025. Deputy Headteacher JH is DDSL and will be taking on the attendance lead role whilst HT AJ is acting SENCO to share responsibilities until the vacant role is filled. 	
13.	<p>Welfare and Wellbeing – Students</p> <p>Key highlights included within the HT report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headteacher AJ will assume the role of Acting SENCO until September 2026, working closely with an increasing number of families to support and prepare Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessments. A range of interventions and support continues to be offered, including ELSA, play therapy, family support, speech and language therapy, lunchtime club, and sports coaching. AM continues to lead the RADY project, supporting staff in raising awareness of vulnerable pupils, with JH focusing on staff training and evaluating the impact of interventions. 	
14.	<p>Welfare and Wellbeing – Staff</p> <p>Key highlights included within the HT report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff absences and vacancies is having an impact on staff welfare and wellbeing, with staff being required to undertake additional responsibilities, including SENCO, DSL, and SBM duties. The Headteacher highlighted the effect of ongoing building repairs on staff wellbeing, noting that the roof works have taken significantly longer than anticipated. This has resulted in disruption to classrooms and changes to timetables for affected staff. <p>Governors emphasised the importance of prioritising staff welfare and wellbeing, recognising the additional pressure on Headteacher AJ, who is currently covering multiple roles, and acknowledging the consequent impact on both her wellbeing and the level of support available to pupils.</p> <p>Governors also raised the recent negative feedback on social media regarding a temporary teacher. The Headteacher AJ updated the Governors and expressed the situation had recently calmed. With the support of Governors, the school expressed the requirement to publish a communication policy to address such concerns. The discussion extended to consequences for parents of exclusion from school premises given the severity of threats and abuse being received towards teachers. Governors fully support a zero-tolerance approach to any threatening or abusive behaviour directed at staff.</p> <p>ACTION: Headteacher (AJ) to manage the creation/publish a communication policy</p>	<p>Action AJ</p>
Local Matters & Stakeholder Engagement		

15.	<p>Policies</p> <p>The following policies were reviewed by the LGB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Admissions – 27/28 consultation due completion, available on the website b) Attendance c) Supporting pupils with medical conditions in school <p>Governors acknowledged the Trust First Aid Policy and noted the school’s registration with The Circuit, supporting the British Heart Foundation as part of the national defibrillation network. Governors raised questions regarding access to the defibrillator outside of school hours. AJ confirmed that this would need to be reviewed, as access is currently restricted due to the device being located within the school building.</p>	
16.	<p>Governor Training Update</p> <p>Clerk reminded all Governors to ensure their Governance training is up to date and uploaded to Governor Hub.</p> <p>Governors referenced the Spring term Directors Report that shared opportunities for governor training. The Clerk advised that these need to be paid for by the school. Governors dismissed requesting funding for the additional training opportunities from Cheshire East Council given the financial challenges at the school and desire not to increase this burden on staff.</p>	
17.	<p>Stakeholder Engagement – Parents / Carers</p> <p>Key highlights included within the HT report:</p> <p>School received a visit from author Josh Lacey for KS2 pupils on 26.01.26, an author of historical adventure series Time Travel Twins. The author led a school assembly and then conducted a workshop for 30 pupils across Yr 3, 4, 5 and 6.</p> <p>Governors raised concerns from parents/carers to be discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late decision to close the school due to adverse weather when other schools in the Congleton area had announced school closures a day earlier. This posed additional challenges for parents and added burden to teachers to set work to be done at home. AJ advised that this was a TLP decision that also impacted Congleton High School. • The new playground is only suitable for infants and not juniors and has already been damaged. AJ informed governors that they had to wait for a certain tool to fix the playground which arrived and it has now been fixed. The playground is smaller but was purchased against the available budget. • On-going construction work concerns and school closure due to power outage. AJ confirmed that the power outage was caused due to electrical issues in the school. To make this safe, the school had to be closed for one-day. Longer-term improvements will need to be considered as the electrics have not been upgraded since the school was built. Localised flooding around the school is caused by the drainage coming internally and not outwardly but this cannot be rectified whilst pupils are onsite. The drainage survey is overdue. • Cancellation of the choir performing at the Christmas Lights switch-on and not performing at local care homes. AJ noted this was due to limited resource within the school and that this was a disappointing decision. The school choir will be attending Young Voices at Manchester in February. 	
18.	<p>Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community</p> <p>Key highlights included within the HT report:</p>	

	The school has joined the White Ribbon Charity to campaign against gender-based violence	
19.	<p>Communication – to Trust</p> <p>Governors highlighted the following communications to the Trust:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors requested that decisions regarding weather-related school closures be made at school level rather than through the Trust, to prevent delays. • Governors also asked that the Trust review the number of roles and responsibilities currently being undertaken by Headteacher AJ, as this workload will likely impact staff welfare and wellbeing and poses additional risk to the school. • Governors enquired whether there has been any feedback from the TLP staff survey and whether a further staff survey is planned. • Governors requested the Trust consider and reintroduce the “well-being day” for staff <p>ACTION: Clerk to communicate Governor feedback to the Trust</p>	Action Clerk
20.	<p>Communication – from Trust</p> <p>a) Feedback from Education, Standards and Performance Committee</p> <p>b) Governance matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ofsted Training – Governor Hub, The Key – 27.11.25 ➤ Governance Conference Saturday 25th April 2026 	
21.	<p>AOB</p> <p>No AOB was declared.</p>	

Meeting closed 18:40pm

These minutes were co-created with copilot AI

ACTIONS:

Item No.	Action Details	Owner
3b.	Clerk to communicate EP-R term of office/express wishes to continue as VC to the Trust	Clerk
4.	HT AJ to revise and tighten targets with links to the RADY programme with impact results to be shared at the next LGB.	HT
4.	Clerk to communicate Governor concerns to the Trust to highlight the importance of recruitment for the roles of SENDCo, DSL and SBM.	Clerk
5.1	Governor link monitoring schedule - Governors have reviewed the proposed monitoring schedule and provided amendments to be incorporated before being published.	HT
9.	Headteacher (AJ) to upload Pupil Premium Strategy Statement to school website	HT
14.	Headteacher (AJ) to manage the creation/publish a communication policy	HT
19.	Clerk to communicate Governor feedback to the Trust	Clerk