



Meeting of Castle Primary School

Local Governing Board (LGB)

Date: Thursday 10th July 2025 at Dove Bank Primary School

Governors in attendance:	Alex Canning	(AC)	Chair of Dove Bank Primary School
	Tom Bourne	(TB)	Appointed Governor
	Anthony Roche	(AR)	Appointed Governor
	David Weaver	(DW)	Appointed Governor
	Gemma Plant	(GP)	Appointed Governor
	Jess Trevers	(JT)	Appointed Governor
Others in attendance:	Sally Dakin	(SD)	Headteacher
	Sarah Lomas		Clerk
Apologies:	Tom Pear	(TP)	Chair of Castle Primary School
	Allan Howells	(AH)	Director of Quality, TLP

Part One Minutes – Non-Confidential Business

The meeting commenced at 4:32pm.

ITEM NO.		ACTION
	GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	
1.	Welcome, Quoracy, Apologies and Declarations The meeting was opened by the Chair, who welcomed all attendees. Quoracy was confirmed. Apologies were received and accepted from TP and AH. No new declarations of interest were made by members present. A proposal was raised to explore the possibility of consolidating governance platforms by using a single Governor Hub for both Castle and Dove Bank schools. This would aim to streamline communication, document sharing, and administrative processes across the two schools. ACTION: Clerk to consult with AH regarding the feasibility and implications of this shared platform approach.	Clerk
2.	AOB There were no items of AOB tabled for discussion.	
3.	Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising The minutes from the previous Local Governing Board meeting held on 1st May 2025 were confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings. Governors approved the minutes. ACTION: Upload the approved minutes to Governor Hub and mark as signed. The joint action log from the previous meeting was also reviewed. Progress was noted on several items, with outstanding actions to be carried forward where necessary.	Clerk
4.	Membership update a) The Board discussed current and upcoming changes to its membership. It was formally noted that DW would be stepping down from his appointed governor role effective 31st August 2025. The Board expressed sincere thanks for his service and acknowledged his offer to continue supporting the school if needed during the transition.	

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	<p>Additionally, GE's removal from the Board was confirmed as of 30th June 2025.</p> <p>Three new governors have been formally appointed to the Board commencing 01.09.25. Two have been appointed as parent governors at Castle and appointed governors at Dove Bank. The remaining governor will be an appointed governor on both Boards. Among the new governors, one brings educational expertise, and the other candidates are community members with a strong interest in supporting the schools.</p> <p>The Board undertook a detailed discussion on the allocation of link governor roles for the upcoming academic year. These roles are critical in ensuring focused oversight on key strategic areas.</p> <p>Castle School: Priorities include strengthening the teaching of core subjects (particularly writing and maths), improving behaviour, and enhancing enrichment opportunities. There is also a focus on fostering joint working between the two schools to reduce costs and improve consistency.</p> <p>Confirmed Link Roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TB: Sustainability – TB noted that cyber security is becoming a significant area of focus in other Trusts, and this will be explored further. • AR: Personal Development, including oversight of Pupil Premium strategy and impact. • JT: Safeguarding – JT expressed willingness to continue in this role but flagged potential constraints due to work commitments. • AC: SEND – AC will take over from David, with a handover to be arranged. • GP and a new governor (Jade Mullock): Curriculum – to support curriculum development and monitoring across both schools. • EYFS: This role remains vacant and will be addressed in the next meeting. <p>ACTION: Confirm the two-week window for link governor visits for the 2025–26 academic year.</p> <p>ACTION: Add the EYFS link role to the September LGB agenda for discussion and assignment.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
	Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities	
5.	<p>Castle – Review of SIP Impact 2024–25</p> <p>a) The Board reviewed the progress made against the School Improvement Plan (SIP) for Castle.</p> <p>Behaviour and Attitudes:</p> <p>Q: How were pupil leaders elected?</p> <p>A: Pupils wrote and delivered speeches to their peers, followed by a democratic vote. While this method was used for the current ambassadorial roles, future elections may adopt a different approach to ensure broader representation and inclusivity.</p> <p>Q: Have there been changes to school logistics?</p> <p>A: Yes. A new entrance has been opened to improve flow and reduce congestion. EYFS and KS1 pupils now enter from the rear of the building, while KS2 pupils use the front entrance. This has led to a noticeably calmer start to the day. Additionally, Year 3/4</p>	

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	<p>classrooms have been relocated closer to coat storage and toilets, reducing transition time and improving efficiency.</p> <p>Q: How is enrichment being managed, and what is the outlook for next year? A: Enrichment remains a challenge due to the part-time nature of many staff roles. The school is reviewing the 1265 directed time calculations to determine how enrichment can be incorporated. External providers may be engaged to support delivery where internal capacity is limited.</p> <p>c) The SIP priorities for both schools are currently being finalised and will be confirmed during the INSET day scheduled for the day after the meeting. The Headteacher Performance Management Panel (HTPMP) met on 8th July 2025 to support this process.</p>	
	EDUCATION	
6.	<p>Pupil Numbers</p> <p>a) The current pupil numbers were shared and noted. No significant changes were reported, but ongoing monitoring will continue to ensure class sizes and staffing remain appropriate.</p>	
7.	<p>Attendance</p> <p>a) Castle: The latest attendance data was presented. It was noted that the attendance picture has shifted, with a noticeable increase in absences due to holidays and illness. While some absences had clear and legitimate reasons, others were unauthorised and lacked genuine justification. The school is aiming to allocate staff time specifically to monitor and track attendance more rigorously. This will include issuing formal correspondence and engaging with families to address persistent absence.</p> <p>A key issue identified was that attendance-related paperwork had not previously been sent to the Local Authority (LA), meaning that parents had not received formal deterrent letters. This has undermined the school's ability to emphasise the importance of attendance and the consequences of non-compliance. The Trust has made it clear that all schools are expected to adopt a consistent approach to attendance management.</p> <p>Q: Has this new approach been communicated to parents? A: Not yet. The school plans to communicate this carefully, ensuring that the message also highlights the importance of punctuality alongside attendance.</p>	
8.	<p>Rewards and Behaviour</p> <p>a) The Board received the latest data on behaviour, including suspensions and exclusions. While specific figures were not shared in the meeting, the data will be used to inform ongoing behaviour strategies and interventions.</p>	
9.	<p>Progress and Attainment</p> <p>The Board received a detailed update on progress and attainment across key stages, with a breakdown by pupil groups including Pupil Premium, SEND, disadvantaged pupils, and gender.</p> <p>a) Early Years: 12 pupils in the cohort, with 83% achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD), which is above the national average. Phonics: 83% pass rate among 6 pupils.</p>	

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	<p>Multiplication Tables Check (MTC): 20% pass rate, significantly below the national average of 38%.</p> <p>Key Stage 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: 50% at expected standard, with 31% achieving greater depth. Writing: 88% at expected standard, but 0% at greater depth. Maths: 75% at expected standard, 0% at greater depth. <p>Q: Is the lack of greater depth (GD) attainment due to the curriculum not sufficiently challenging higher-attaining pupils?</p> <p>A: Yes. The school is addressing this by introducing additional resources and staff training, including planning support using the White Rose Maths scheme.</p> <p><i>JT left the meeting at 5:15pm.</i></p>	
10.	<p>Link Governor Monitoring</p> <p>The Board noted recent link governor visits from JT and AC on safeguarding and AR on personal development. These visits provided valuable insights into their respective areas of responsibility.</p> <p>DW and Greer Amison, Dove Bank SENCO, also conducted a joint analysis of the growing number of SEND pupils at Dove Bank. This analysis is expected to inform projected outcomes for future cohorts and support early planning.</p>	
11.	<p>Pupil Premium</p> <p>Castle & Dove Bank – Review of Pupil Premium Spending (2024–25)</p> <p>The Board discussed the impact of Pupil Premium funding. A full assessment of the 2024–25 spending is scheduled for the summer, with a report to be presented in the autumn term.</p> <p>Q: Is there value in conducting link governor work around demographics as part of the Personal Development (PD) remit?</p> <p>A: Yes, this would be a valuable addition.</p> <p>ACTION: Organise a link governor visit focused on disadvantaged pupils and contextual data at Castle.</p> <p>The Board also discussed the importance of gathering parent and staff voice to inform future planning. While this has not yet been completed, it remains a priority.</p> <p>Q: Is parent engagement different across the two schools?</p> <p>A: Yes. Engagement has historically been managed differently, particularly at Castle, where expectations are still evolving.</p> <p>ACTION: Conduct parent and staff voice surveys in the autumn term.</p> <p>ACTION: GP and SD to meet to develop specific, targeted questions for the parent survey.</p> <p>ACTION: Consider using iPads at parents' evening to collect responses efficiently</p>	<p>AR</p> <p>SD GP/SD SD</p>
	WELFARE	
12.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Additional safeguarding training originally planned for the INSET day has been postponed to September. Updated guidance via CPOMS is expected shortly. The delay ensures that</p>	

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	<p>staff receive the most current and comprehensive information once the new guidance is finalised.</p> <p>AC conducted a pupil voice activity with children from Year 2 and above as part of a recent link visit. Pupils were articulate and confident in discussing how they stay safe both in and out of school. The visit was described as positive, with a broad range of pupils participating.</p> <p>Governors commented on how encouraging it was to read the pupils' responses and see their understanding of safeguarding concepts.</p>	
13.	<p>Welfare and Wellbeing – Students</p> <p>Updates were received from both schools. While no specific concerns were raised, wellbeing remains a key focus area, particularly in light of the high SEND numbers and the demands on staff.</p>	
14.	<p>Welfare and Wellbeing – Staff</p> <p>Staff wellbeing was also discussed. Governors asked about Greer Amison's role for September which the school confirmed would be finalised at the forthcoming performance management meeting.</p> <p>Governors noted the importance of being mindful of Greer's workload with the dual SENCO role. There was also a suggestion that a potential ECT could take on PE from Greer in a supported capacity to help distribute responsibilities.</p>	
	LOCAL MATTERS & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	
15.	<p>Local Policy Approval</p> <p>There were no policies to be reviewed at this meeting.</p>	
16.	<p>Governor Training Update</p> <p>a) There was no feedback to receive on governor training at this meeting. b) Governors acknowledged receipt of the skills audit results.</p>	
17.	<p>Stakeholder Engagement – Parents / Carers</p> <p>Governors noted the recently established PTA at Castle and suggested collaboration between Dove Bank and Castle PTAs to foster a stronger sense of community.</p> <p>It was also agreed that future events would be shared with governors in advance. ACTION: Share community PTA events with governors in advance.</p>	SD
18.	<p>Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community</p> <p>Engagement with the wider community continues to be a priority. No specific updates were shared, but governors are encouraged to support local initiatives and events.</p>	
19.	<p>Communication – to Trust</p> <p>Q: Is there a plan to update devices running Windows 10? A: An audit has been completed across all schools. ACTION: SD to follow up with the Trust to ensure that obsolete devices are replaced.</p>	SD
20.	<p>Communication – from Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The results of the recent EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) survey were shared prior to the meeting. 	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">AC attended the recent Chair's Forum and reported that feedback from the Governor Conference was very positive. There was a strong focus on improving induction for new governors, with plans for a centralised training course under consideration.Encouragingly, the Trust now has more governors than last year, which was seen as a positive development. <p>ACTION: Issue summary of minutes to the Trust.</p>	Clerk
21.	<p>AOB</p> <p>Governors thanked SD and all the staff for all their hard work throughout the course of the year.</p>	

The meeting closed at 5:45pm.