



Local Governing Board to The Learning Partnership



**KNUTSFORD ACADEMY LGB
MINUTES – Part I**

Date: Monday 29th September 2025 at 4:00pm

Present:

Mrs D. Nicholl-Timmins - Chair (DNT)
Mrs D. Baines (DB)
Mrs A. Sennett (AS), left at 6:14 pm
Mrs A. Stott (AST), left at 5:50 pm

Apologies:

None

Absent

None

In attendance:

Mrs K. Key (KKY) - Headteacher
Mrs A. Thatcher - (ATR) Deputy Headteacher
Mr C Leigh (CLH) - Assistant Headteacher
Mr C. Parr - (CPR) - Assistant Headteacher
Mrs H. Weigh-Williams (HWH) - Assistant Headteacher
Ms Lucy Mason (LMN)-Head of Art and Design Faculty-
left after item 2.

Chris Brooks, potential new governor, observing.

Clerk: Mrs S. Pomeroy

Administration

1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy

Deborah Nicoll-Timmins was confirmed as the Chair of the LGB for a period of one year, or until the first meeting of the LGB in the autumn term 2026.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed it was quorate. There were no apologies to receive. Chris Brooks was welcomed as an observer at the meeting. He is considering joining the LGB in January 2026. There were no additional Declarations of Interest made with the business of the meeting.

All papers and policies referred to had been uploaded to Governor Hub (GH) prior to the meeting, unless otherwise stated.

2. Presentation from Head of Faculties-Art and Design

LMN had brought examples of student’s work from Key Stage 3 and GCSE for governors to view. She also shared a PowerPoint presentation with governors on the Key Stage 3 Art and Design Curriculum and highlighted the following points:

- Art and Design cover Art, Graphics, Textiles and 3D design.
- Key Stage 3 is important as it provides the foundation for GCSE and A Level courses.
- The curriculum is broad; it is aligned with the National Curriculum, but the school has enhanced it to deliver beyond what is expected and to provide an ambitious curriculum.
- The curriculum encompasses practical skills, theoretical knowledge and disciplinary knowledge.
- There is a cohesive, consistent approach across the Key Stage.

- A visual sequencing map was shared for Years 7-9. It requires further refinement but is used to highlight any gaps.
- Examples of progression through portraits and textiles were shared.
- Cultural capital is woven throughout the curriculum. Opportunities are provided for residential trips, gallery visits, competitions and a school-based fashion show.
- Diversity in the curriculum is promoted, and the students study a wide range of artists.
- Art and design are not just about making; literacy has a significant impact. Students are taught to question, reflect and articulate ideas. Homework has been reviewed to include literacy activities. Students have produced zines to share with each other. There are also active reading boards in the classrooms.
- Highlights since June 2025:
 - Malawi project
 - New Scheme of Work
 - Fish painting
 - Trust Art exhibition where eight KA students won awards
 - KA exhibition
 - Local Knutsford painting competition where a KA student won a prize
 - Application for Artsmark finalised
 - Students had achieved a good set of results, and the cohort in 2025-26 was the largest ever.
 - Positive comments from the moderator were shared with governors.

Governors requested details on the Artsmark award. LMN informed them that it is a quality mark awarded by the Arts Council England to schools which demonstrate an exceptional commitment to creativity.

Governors commented on the high quality of the work they had seen and asked how the school could publicise this. LMN responded that course work cannot be publicised until after October half term. The school has discussed producing postcards and selling students' work and using social media to publicise it. Governors discussed how this could be linked to work with former alumni on LinkedIn.

DNT thanked LMN for her presentation.

LMN left the meeting following her presentation.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

Governors approved the minutes of the LGB meeting held on 7th July 2025 as an accurate record.

Matters Arising:

There were no actions from the previous meeting.

4. Membership Update

- a) It was noted that there are now five vacancies on the LGB following the resignations of David Walton and David Baxendale on 31.08.25. Governors discussed attracting potential candidates from industry and from former students at the school. KKY had sent letters to business links but had not received a response. A message had also been sent to parents asking them to let their contacts know that the school was looking for non-parent governors to join the LGB. The clerk would forward DfE guidance on governor recruitment.

ACTION

- b) There are no terms of office due to expire before the next meeting.

5. Declarations and Confirmations

- a) Declarations of interest

- b) KCSiE 2025
- c) Nolan Principles
- d) Nolan Principles
- e) Code of Conduct
- f) Vision and Values

It was confirmed that declarations and confirmations were generally up to date. DNT to confirm that she has read KCSiE 2025. **ACTION**

6. Governor Link Roles and Monitoring Schedule

- a) Safeguarding-Deborah Nicholl-Timmins
- b) SEND-Andrea Sennett
- c) Careers-Andrea Stott
- d) School Improvement Priorities/Quality of Education- Deborah Nicholl-Timmins
- e) Sixth Form-Vacancy
- f) Behaviour-Davinia Baines

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities

7. School Improvement Plan and Self Evaluation

a) Interim leadership structure and responsibilities: Slides 4-9 Headteacher's Report

KKY outlined the changes to the leadership structure and responsibilities since Jon Lawes (Senior Deputy Headteacher) left the school at the end of 2024-25. Areas in red indicate where SLT and ESLT members have taken on his responsibilities.

Governors expressed concern regarding the fact that the Senior Deputy Head position had not been filled and asked whether the current model was sustainable. **KKY explained** that the school has good middle leaders and there is capacity in the interim to absorb the extra responsibilities. The Trust has been very supportive and weekly finance meetings are held. The financial position will improve next year due to lagged funding. The school is in a good position as it is full in Year 7, the reputation of the school is strong and sixth form numbers are high. The SLT can manage in the short term with the present structure. **Governors requested** that their concerns regarding the non-replacement of the Senior Deputy Headteacher be passed on to the Trust. **ACTION**

b) Summary of 2024-25 progress

This item had been addressed at the LGB in July 2025.

c) Approval of priorities 2025-26: Slides 19 and 20

The priorities for 2025-26 for Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development and Leadership and Management are set out on these slides. Governors approved the priorities.

Quality of Education

8. Report on exam results-CSS and KA: Slides 10-13 Headteacher's Report

KKY explained that from this year no more students will be admitted to CSS. The URN will be moved to a new facility, and the Trust is in consultation with the DfE regarding this.

KS4 headline data Knutsford All: English and Maths

- Slide 10 shows 3-year trends for the school, and national data 2025.
- The school achieved strong results.
- Top performing subjects were Further Maths, Finance, Textiles, Business, Art, History, Tourism and Media.
- Areas for development are Child Development and Music. Child Development would not be offered next year. Music had seen lots of staffing changes and the department is being renewed.
- Subjects highlighted in yellow had received support from the Laurus Trust and those in green had undergone deep dive reviews by ATR. All had made improvements.

- Progress 8 had improved from +0.05 in 2023 to +0.68 in 2025, the best results ever for the school.
- The P8 gap for PP had reduced from 0.67 in 2024 to 0.3 in 2025.
- The P8 gap for SEND had reduced from 1.34 in 2024 to 0.3 in 2025.

Key Stage 5 headline data

- The average A level grade was B- last year and C+ in 2025. The most able students had chosen to attend Sir John Deane Sixth Form College, and this cohort had been lower prior attaining. The Average point score from GCSE was 5.58. Value Added was +0.12 so the students had made good progress.
- Slide 16 highlighted the sixth form top achievers.
- The ALPS data shows that the school had retained an overall score of 3 this year which is in the top 25% of the ALPS national data. Three years ago, this had been 7.
- Areas to develop are Religious Studies, French, Media Studies, History and Computer Science. The first two subjects were a “blip” this year. The remaining subjects are showing a trend. ATR will work with the Heads of Department and monitor throughout the year. History had performed well at GCSE but there is more work to do at A Level. A development plan is in place and support provided from the Laurus Trust. Media was also stronger at GCSE. There were issues with the moderator bringing grades down on non-exam assessment (NEA). The department had also been affected by staff absence. CPR is teaching A Level Media this year.

Governors challenged on why two arts subjects are at the top of the leader board and two are ranked as 6 and whether the department works together to share good practice. **ATR stated** that the department does work collaboratively. Photography (ranked 6) is a distinct subject and is offered only at Key Stage 5, so some students are completely new to it. It is also marked very harshly. The school is considering offering it at Key Stage 4.

Governors questioned why Religious Studies had dropped from 2 last year to 7 this year. ATR explained that two students had accounted for this drop. They had been tracking at ALPS 2. There were a small number of entries, so these two pupils had a significant impact. The Head of Department is currently analysing the exam papers and reviewing how pupils were tracked and assessments moderated.

9. Student Destinations -CSS and KA: Slides 21-22

CPR provided an update:

- A focus area is to recruit more internal students into the sixth form. In 2025, 44% of Year 11 students stayed on into the sixth form.
- Year 13 destinations present a steady picture with 71% going to university, 16% securing apprenticeships and 13% choosing a gap year.

Governors questioned whether group sizes at A Level is an issue, and whether any students had been lost because of the school not running some courses due to low numbers. **KKY informed** them that one student had chosen a different provision. The school is in discussion with the Trust on the optimal group size at A Level which is viable financially and still allows the school to offer a wide range of courses to attract students.

CPR added that the starting point is understanding what courses the students want and then working from there to develop the offer.

Governors asked whether it would be possible to harness technology to offer courses across the Trust. **KKY stated** that sixth form provision is a focus area for the Trust this year and this idea is worthy of consideration.

Governors noted that there is an increased demand for apprenticeships. AST would forward information on apprenticeship events. **ACTION**

10. Admission and Pupil Numbers -CPR: Slide 22

CPR provided an update:

- 231 pupils were admitted into Year 7 against a PAN of 230.
- An open evening is being held this week and Year 6 tours have started.
- The demographic of the school is changing with 80% of pupils now coming from the local area.

- There are 151 pupils in Year 12 and 155 in Year 13. This is the largest sixth form the school has ever had.

11. SEND Report-CLH: Slide 23

CLH provided an update:

- The slide provides comparative data. The number of pupils with SEND is relatively stable. There is a higher number of EHCPs in Year 10. The number of EHCPs has declined from 50 to 33 over three years.
- CLH clarified that “SEN E” indicates that a pupil has an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and “Sen K” indicates that pupils receive internal support from the school.

Welfare

12. Attendance-CLH: Slide 23

CLH provided an update:

- Last year the focus had been on PP students in Year 10.
- Attendance is 0.6% higher than at this point last year.
- The school has worked hard to ensure a good start to the year.
- There was an issue with students being on holiday during the first three days of the term, especially in Year 8.
- The Attendance Strategy is fully in place.
- Overall attendance for September 2025: 95.8%.

13. Rewards and Behaviour-HWH: Slides 25-32

HWH provided an update:

- It has been a positive start to the year.
- The school has moved from Satchel One to Arbor.
- As a result, policies and procedures for Behaviour and Rewards have been reviewed. Praise points have been added into Arbor so they will feature on a student’s profile.
- Uniform remains a focus for the year. The emphasis is on talking to students and changing the culture, particularly around skirt length.
- Half termly reviews of high-profile students will take place led by the Head of Year with input from SEND, Student Support and Behaviour Teams.
- Slide 27 lists the range of Awards available to the pupils.
- The Behaviour Pathway has been reviewed (shown on slides 29 and 30.) All behaviour incidents now have a value of 1 point. The aim is to reduce the number of low-level detentions.

Governors asked whether incidents are counted over a calendar week or on a rolling programme. **HWH clarified** that it is on a rolling week and that staff do not know how many behaviour points have already been issued to an individual student.

Governors commented on the good behaviour and positive attitude in school which contributes to the strong pupil outcomes.

AST left the meeting at 5:50 pm.

DB would monitor the use of the Reset room over the year as part of her link role monitoring visits. **ACTION**

14. Safeguarding: CLH Paper 14

- This paper details the staff training, numbers of referrals and counselling services available to students.
- All safeguarding procedures are in place at the start of the new school year.
- The number of students requiring mental health support continues to increase.
- Some safeguarding cases were closed by social care over the summer holidays 2025 and the school is monitoring these cases and will escalate if necessary.

15. Welfare and Wellbeing- Students: CLH Slide 34

- The focus at the start of the year has been on re-engaging with students and their families.
- A SEND Live Marketplace event was held in conjunction with eth Cheshire Family Hub. 50 people attended.

- The school has submitted an application for the Young Carers Award at silver level and is hoping to achieve gold.

Governors challenged whether the school had the capacity to offer the support required by the students. CLH responded that two of the counselling services are full and that there are difficulties with the Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) programme, but the school is still engaged. The school also has its own staff trained to deliver programmes such as Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA).

16. Welfare and Wellbeing- Staff: HWH Slide 35

- This slide shows the range of staff wellbeing activities.

Governors asked whether staff morale is high due to the strong results achieved in the summer 2025. HWH responded that this was the case, but it had been a busy start to the new school year and staff recognise that there is still work to do to drive further improvements in the school.

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

17. Local Policy Approval

- Suspension and Exclusion
- Behaviour Policy
- Uniform and Appearance
- Mobile Phone

- *Post meeting note: the Clerk confirmed that the above policies had been uploaded to Governor Hub prior to the meeting.*

Governors approved the policies, subject to minor amendments which DB and DNT would forward. **ACTION**

Governors **noted** the Trust policy.

- Governor Allowances Policy

18. Governor Training Update:

- The Trust requires governors to complete Prevent and Safeguarding training at induction and then renew every two years. AS to complete Prevent training and AST to complete Safeguarding and Prevent training.

ACTION

19. Governor Biographies-Governors were reminded to complete their biography for publication on the school website.

20. Stakeholder Engagement -Wider Community

a) Parent Partnership Award

CLH is engaged with this, and a development plan is in place. The award is concerned with helping school to work in partnership with all parents and carers, leading to improved outcomes in all aspects of school life.

b) Admissions Consultation

Consultation is ongoing to include Lower Peover as a feeder school.

21. Communication- to Trust:

- DNT informed governors that she has contacted the Director of Secondary regarding developing the Careers programme at the school.
- Governors would like to meet KR.

AS left the meeting at 6:14 pm.

22. Communication- from Trust:

Training for governors would be provided on analysing pupil performance data and on the new Ofsted Framework.

23. AOB

The meeting closed 6:16 pm.

LGB meeting dates 2025-26:

Monday 26th January 2026

Monday 18th May 2026

Monday 29th June 2026

All meetings to take place in school at 4:00 pm

Apologies to the Clerk via Governor Hub or email to spomeroy@tlptrust.com

Summary of actions

Agenda item	Action	Assigned to	Deadline
From the meeting held on 29.09.25			
4	To forward DfE guidance on recruiting governors Recruiting governors and academy trustees: resources - GOV.UK	Clerk	Sep-25
5	To confirm reading of KCSiE 2025	DNT	Oct-25
9	To forward information on apprenticeship events.	Andrea Stott	Oct-25
13	To monitor use of the Reset room over the year.	DB/HWH	Ongoing
17	To check that the 4 policies listed on the agenda for review had been uploaded to Governor Hub. To forward minor amendments to HWH regarding the policies.	Clerk BD/DNT	Sep-25- checked 30.09.25. All there. Note put on G Hub for governors.
18	To complete governor training and update training record on Governor Hub: <ul style="list-style-type: none">AS to complete Prevent trainingAST to complete Safeguarding training and Prevent training	AS/AST clerk (emailed reminder 15.10.25)	Oct-25