The Learning Partnership

Leighton Academy
PART 1 Minutes – AUTUMN 2026

Date: Thursday 8th October 2026 at 4:30pm in school

Governors present:	**In attendance:**
Rachael Dean (RD) – Chair	Samantha Thompson (ST) - Headteacher
Nicola Kay (NK) – Vice Chair	Nicholas Jones (NJ) – Staff
Carl Lambert (CL)	Marie Speake (MS) – Staff
Darren Locke (DL)	
Michelle Noble (MN)- (items 1-6 only)	
Apologies:	**Clerk:**
Jackie Beeston (JB)	Allan Howells – TLP Clerk

Governance and Administration

1. Welcome, Quoracy, Apologies and Declarations

RD opened the meeting and confirmed with the clerk that the meeting was quorate. Apologies were received and accepted from JB.

a) Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

Governors unanimously **agreed** that:

- Rachael to continue as Chair of the Local Governing Board.
- Nicola to continue as Vice Chair.

Governors thanked both for their ongoing commitment and leadership.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

a) Minutes from the meeting held on 2nd July 2026 These were approved subject to one factual amendment that related to KS2 outcomes data.

b) To review the action log from previous meeting(s).

Governors reviewed progress against outstanding actions. Discussion included:

- Safeguarding governor training arrangements.
- Cyber security training completion.
- DBS re-check arrangements.
- Publication of the Chair's End of Year Report.
- Distribution of end-of-year attainment information.

All actions were either completed or incorporated into agenda items.

The Board received and noted the Chair's report summarising governance activity during the summer term.

3. Membership update

It was noted that Helen Holland (HH) had recently resigned as a governor due to work commitments. The Board expressed their sincere thanks to HH for her active contribution as a governor.

Governors **challenged** whether the Board's membership sufficiently reflected the diversity of the school community. The discussion focused on:

- Increasing diversity of skills, experience and background.
- Encouraging applications from under-represented groups.
- Ensuring recruitment processes remain inclusive and accessible.

The importance of community representation rather than solely educational or professional expertise. Assurance was provided that diversity remains a Trust-wide priority and that targeted approaches to recruitment were being explored.

4. Declarations and Confirmations

Individual governors confirmed their annual declaration and confirmations.

- Declarations of Interest.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education requirements.
- Code of Conduct.

The Clerk agreed to update Governorhub where any had not yet been recorded.

Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities:

5. SEF and SIP

The Headteacher presented the updated SEF and School Improvement Plan. Governors noted that the school's context had altered significantly following new housing developments in the local area, resulting in increased pupil admissions and a substantial increase in safeguarding demand.

The SIP included a number of thematic school improvement priorities. However, the Head confirmed that document was formatted (in green text) to highlight the four key strategic priorities for 2026-27. These were confirmed as:

- Inclusion and adaptive teaching.
- Achievement- KS2 reading outcomes.
- Attendance and behaviour.
- Implementation of the Teaching and Learning Policy.

School improvement review activity undertaken during the autumn term was also reported, including reviews of spelling, Early Years provision and Year 1 transition arrangements.

Governor **challenged** and sought assurance on:

- The impact of increased safeguarding demand on staff capacity.
- Whether leadership structures remained sustainable.
- How pupil performance information had informed school improvement priorities.
- Whether curriculum developments were affecting breadth and balance.

The Head explained that safeguarding caseloads had increased significantly and that staffing deployment had been adjusted accordingly. Governors received assurance that appropriate systems remained in place, although capacity pressures continued to be monitored carefully.

Governors were satisfied that improvement priorities were evidence-based and aligned to pupil outcome data.

Quality of Education :

6. Admission and Pupil Numbers

The Board received an update on pupil numbers across all year groups. Governors noted:

- Strong nursery admissions.
- Continuing growth in pupil mobility.
- Increased in-year applications associated with local housing developments.
- Pressure on capacity in certain year groups.

Governors **questioned**:

- Future capacity implications of local housing growth.
- The impact of increasing pupil mobility.
- Management of oversubscription in Key Stage 2.
- Implications for staffing, SEND provision and safeguarding resources.

Leaders provided assurance that admissions continued to be monitored closely and that capacity planning remained under review.

Governors **recommended** that the Head should ensure that class-sizes should in KS2 not exceed 32, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and must not exceed 34 unless directed to do so by the Trust or as a result of an admissions appeal.

7. Inclusion Strategy

Governors received an update on development of the Inclusion Strategy. They were informed that work had commenced with Cheshire East to develop a comprehensive inclusion framework covering SEND and wider vulnerability factors. They were also advised that the strategy will be published before 31 December 2026.

Governors **sought assurance** regarding:

- Effective use of SEND and inclusion funding.
- How vulnerable groups would be monitored.
- Alignment with pupil premium provision.

Governors were assured that the strategy would improve transparency regarding resource allocation and impact.

ACTION: The Head was asked to share the Share pupil premium equity/enrichment tracker with governors.

8. Curriculum Update

The headteacher's report provided a detailed update. Leaders reported on significant curriculum developments including:

- Ready Steady Read.
- Ready Steady Spell.
- White Rose Mathematics.
- Teaching and Learning Policy implementation.

Early monitoring demonstrated positive implementation and strong staff engagement.

Governors **questioned** whether increased focus on core subjects could impact curriculum breadth. The Headteacher confirmed that curriculum entitlement remained broad and balanced, with improvements focused on raising standards whilst maintaining wider curriculum provision.

9. Pupil Performance

Governors reviewed statutory assessment outcomes from 2025-26. The discussion focused on:

- EYFS outcomes.
- Phonics.
- Multiplication Tables Check.
- KS2 attainment and progress.
- Performance of vulnerable groups.

Governors noted improvements, particularly in Early Years, which had informed future improvement planning.

Governors **challenged** data anomalies identified within documentation and **sought clarification** regarding **comparative** performance. Leaders acknowledged minor reporting error in the paper (a value of -0.9 should read as -0.09 on Page 3 of the HT report relating to SIP targets) and confirmed this would be corrected. Governors were satisfied that leaders demonstrated strong understanding of pupil performance and evidence-based improvement planning.

Governors **challenged** whether the school is receiving sufficient support from the Trust and the Head confirmed that they were, which was done mainly through school improvement visits.
Governors were also assured that the school improvement team's visits to the school were and would provide appropriate operational oversight of the schools performance, and that they School Improvement record of visit (prepared by the Director of Primary) would highlight any concerns that needed to be shared with the Governors so that they could have oversight assurance. The School Improvement team were scheduling governor training workshops on pupil performance data (including the IDSR) in the autumn term which would further support governors discharged their delegated responsibilities.

ACTION: The Head was asked to upload Year 1 review report to GovernorHub.

10. Link Governor Monitoring
It was agreed that the link governors roles for 26-27 would be :

- EFYS- RD/JB
- Behaviour & Personal Development- RD
- Quality of Education- MN/DL/CL
- SEND – DL/JB
- Safeguarding and Attendance – NK/DL

ACTION: The Chair to work with the Headteacher to develop a schedule for governor monitoring visits through Spring Term 2027

11. Vision and Values:
Governors noted that the Trust Values had been updated, and that Headteachers had been instructed that the school would have to adopt these from September 2027. Across the 2026-27 academic year heads would work with pupils and other stakeholders to transition to the new values. It was expected that historical values would continue to feature, going forward, possible reflected as school behaviours.

Personal Development and Welfare

12. Attendance
Governors received attendance outcomes for 2025-26 and current attendance data for 2026-27. The Board noted attendance had improved significantly and was close to national averages.
Governors explored:

- Drivers of improved attendance.
- Management of persistent absence.
- Support for vulnerable families.
- Use of translated communications where appropriate to support parental engagement for EAL families.

The Head explained the impact of :

- Raising Attendance Plans.
- Increased parental engagement.
- Home visits.
- Earlier intervention.

Governors were assured that attendance remained a key strategic priority.

13. Rewards and Behaviour

Governors noted that no exclusions or Suspensions had occurred to date in 2026-27. Governors also reviewed behaviour information on restrictive interventions and racist incidents. Leaders explained that interventions primarily involved supporting dysregulated pupils safely. Governors were **satisfied** that incidents were managed appropriately and proportionately.

14. Safeguarding

The Board received the safeguarding report. Governors noted:

- An increase in safeguarding caseload from 33 to 42 cases.
- Increased referrals and information requests from external agencies.
- Ongoing compliance with safeguarding requirements.
- Positive outcomes from safeguarding monitoring.

Governors **challenged**:

- Staff wellbeing implications arising from increased safeguarding demand.
- Adequacy of professional supervision arrangements.
- Capacity within pastoral teams.
- Training compliance.

Assurance was provided that:

- Supervision arrangements were established and being strengthened.
- Training compliance remained high.

ACTION: Additional guidance will be produced to clarify support available to safeguarding staff.

Governors received assurance that safeguarding remained effective.

15. Welfare and wellbeing – students

Student wellbeing was considered through governor questions on:

- Access to wellbeing support.
- Reception cohort transition.
- Internal year-group transitions.
- Secondary transition arrangements.

Governors explored whether sufficient information was transferred to secondary schools to support successful pupil transition. Leaders emphasised the extensive information shared with receiving schools and highlighted the complexity of coordinating arrangements across multiple secondary settings. Governors agreed that transition remains an important area of focus.

16. Welfare and wellbeing – staff

Governors received an update on staff wellbeing. Governors questioned:

- Support available to pastoral staff managing complex cases.
- Recruitment challenges affecting support staff.
- Reliance on agency teaching assistants.

Leaders reported ongoing recruitment difficulties nationally but confirmed that agency arrangements were being used effectively where necessary. Governors were satisfied that staff wellbeing continued to be monitored closely.

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

17. Policies

17a) Governors approved the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy update
- Allergy Policy

17b) Governors received and noted the following Trust-wide documents

- EDI policy
- Complaints procedures
- Mobile phone policy developments.

The clerk provided feedback and lessons learned on the successful implementation of phone pouches in Trust Secondary schools. The clerk confirmed that the updated EDI polices now included objectives that related to pupil and staff. The clerk also confirmed that the amendments to the complaints' procedure did not amount to any material change.

18. Governor Training Update

The Clerk detailed recommended training for governors:

- NGA KCSIE 2026
- NGA Prevent Training – unless completed in last 12 months
- Pupil performance data (IDSR) training sessions:
  19/11 Wheelock 4.30-5.30
  8/12 UTC 4.30-5.30

19. Stakeholder Engagement –

a) Parents/Carers

Governors received an update regarding parental engagement activities.
Governors received updates for the Autumn term:

- Meet the Teacher events.
- Parent evenings.
- Parent feedback.

b) Wider Community

The Board also discussed significant concerns regarding traffic and parking issues around the school site.
Governors **questioned**:

- Impact of local housing developments.
- Traffic management risks.
- Community concerns.
- School responses to complaints and enquiries.

Governors were assured that school leaders continued to work proactively with local agencies and community stakeholders including the local councillor and work from the school council.

20. Communications to the Central Team

- Summer 26 – feedback to ESP committee
- Summary report Summer term 26
- Members visits and training Summer 26

(all presented by the Chair)

21. Communication from the Central Team

Governors welcomed the CEO's Start of the Year Welcome" video plus feedback as detailed on Chair's forum report 8.7.26 presented by Chair.

22. AOB

Governors noted the Ofsted preparation materials that had been shared.
Members were encouraged to familiarise themselves with key governance and inspection documentation.

The Headteacher informed governors that arrangements for Headteacher maternity leave cover were being finalised and would be communicated once approved. The meeting closed at 18:37.
Date and time of next meeting: 4th February 2027 at 4:30pm

Minutes approved: …… Date:……