

Minutes of a Meeting of Daven Primary School

Local Governing Board (LGB)

Date: Thursday 15th May 2025 at 3pm

Governors in attendance:	Mark Hill	(MH)	Chair of Governors
	John Mollard	(JM)	Appointed Governor
	Glen Williams	(GW)	Appointed Governor
Others in attendance:	Gemma Moffatt	(GM)	Acting Headteacher
	Allan Howells	(AH)	Director of Quality, TLP
	Sarah Lomas	(SL)	Clerk
Apologies:	Angela Gillespie	(AG)	Appointed Governor
	David Whitewright	(DW)	Appointed Governor
	Rob Moreton	(RM)	Appointed Governor

Part One – Non-Confidential Business

Meeting commenced at 3:05pm.

ITEM NO.		ACTION
	GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	
1.	<p>Welcome, Quoracy, Apologies and Declarations</p> <p>Governors were welcomed to the meeting. The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from the following governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AG DW RM <p>The following declarations were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GW is a governor at Eaton Bank Academy. <p>There were no conflicts of interest with the business of the meeting raised by governors.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising</p> <p>a) The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 February 2025 were reviewed. Governors agreed that the minutes were a true and accurate reflection of the meeting and formally approved them.</p> <p>ACTION: Upload a copy of the final minutes and mark them as signed.</p> <p>b) The action log was reviewed in detail, with updates provided on each outstanding item.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Rewards: It was noted that the idea of implementing a staff rewards system is not currently being pursued. Instead, the school is planning to conduct a “staff voice” activity in Summer Term 2 to gather feedback and insights from staff. <p>Q: Is this because staff feel they do not have a voice?</p>	Clerk

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	<p>A: No, this is part of best practice. There has been some instability in staffing, and the leadership team wants to ensure that staff have a clear and supportive channel to express their thoughts and feelings.</p> <p>Comment: This was acknowledged as a healthy and proactive step.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics Assessment Data: This has been included in the Headteacher's report. • Target Circulation: Targets have been shared through the HT report. • Contact with SG and JM: This has been completed. • Link Monitoring Schedule: Governors discussed the difficulty in coordinating link visits due to availability. It was suggested that each link governor write directly to the school or clerk to arrange visits. JM proposed waiting until the Headteacher returns to ensure she has ownership of the schedule. MH emphasized the importance of having a plan in place regardless. AH suggested setting a fixed two-week window for all link visits to streamline the process. JM agreed to conduct an Early Years visit and provide an overview. <p>ACTION: Meet with Headteacher in early July to put a schedule together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 5 TAs Covering PPA: GM reported that other headteachers in the Trust also use Grade 5 TAs to cover PPA, although most now rely on HLTAs for the majority of this work. <p>Q: Are we legally covered?</p> <p>A: Grade 6 is generally seen as the appropriate level for this responsibility. While Grade 5 or even Grade 4 staff may be used, it's important to understand the implications and ensure compliance.</p> <p>ACTION: Raise an HR query with the Trust regarding the use of Grade 5 staff to cover PPA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Survey and Trip Feedback: Work is underway to gather feedback. The Headteacher is expected to lead this upon her return. <p>ACTION: Circulate link on complaints training.</p> <p>ACTION: Follow up with DW on safeguarding.</p> <p>ACTION: Update training records for GW's recent safeguarding training on Gov Hub.</p>	<p>MH</p> <p>GM</p> <p>Clerk Clerk Clerk</p>
3.	<p>Membership update</p> <p>a) The Board reviewed the current membership and noted two vacancies for parent governors. Efforts are ongoing to identify suitable candidates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One potential candidate is no longer eligible as their child is moving schools. <p>ACTION: Contact AG regarding any potential contacts.</p> <p>ACTION: Pick up with Headteacher on her return to revisit potential candidates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JM offered to liaise with a local headteacher who may be a good fit for an appointed governor role. The Board discussed the value of bringing in someone with strong skills and community ties, even if they are external to the school. <p>ACTION: JM to liaise with the potential contact.</p>	<p>MH MH</p> <p>JM</p>
	STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND PROGRESS AGAINST PRIORITIES	
4.	<p>a) The Headteacher provided an update on progress against the SIP. It was acknowledged that delivery has been challenging due to staffing issues, including a teacher on maternity leave and the use of supply staff in Years 2 and 3/4.</p>	

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	<p><u>Quality of Education</u></p> <p>The school is transitioning to a new writing scheme, “Pathways for Writing,” which is already in use in other Trust schools. This change was made to improve consistency and provide structure for staff.</p> <p>Q: In terms of the different approaches and methods of teaching, what is the basis for choosing what to implement?</p> <p>A: Initially, the school used “Talk for Writing,” which is not a formal scheme. CPD was provided on planning, but results were inconsistent across year groups. Due to time constraints and the need for greater consistency, the decision was made to adopt “Pathways,” which has shown positive results in other schools. The scheme also offers high-quality texts and structured planning support. The Trust’s literacy lead has provided training and will continue to support staff with one-to-one planning sessions and follow-ups in July.</p> <p><u>Leadership and Management</u></p> <p>The Board discussed the ongoing development of middle leadership within the school. It was noted that capacity has been limited, particularly as the school’s ECT is only in their second year. However, the Trust is planning to deliver training for both middle and subject leaders, which should help build leadership capacity.</p> <p>Q: Do you know when the training will take place?</p> <p>A: Not yet. It was discussed at the last Headteachers’ meeting, but no dates have been confirmed.</p> <p>Governors agreed that once the Headteacher returns, there should be a more detailed discussion about how to adapt the current leadership structure. There was a sense that the school is juggling multiple initiatives, and it may be necessary to take a step back and reassess the overall approach.</p> <p>Early Years:</p> <p>The nursery has now been formally integrated since the last meeting. The EY lead, is working closely with Sally Earle from the Trust to develop the curriculum in this area.</p> <p>b) Ofsted Preparedness – The SEF (Self-Evaluation Form) has not changed since the last review. While steps have been taken towards improvement, the current assessment remains accurate.</p> <p>In terms of Leadership and Management, the school has identified actions to strengthen governance. Leadership remains turbulent but is expected to stabilise with the Headteacher’s return.</p> <p>Q: Are you still getting support from the Trust in your role as Acting Head?</p> <p>A: Yes. We receive clear actions from Lise following her visits, and these are being</p>	

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	<p>implemented. The school is definitely making progress and is clear on what needs to be done.</p> <p>It was noted that there had been interviews in school for the Deputy Head role earlier today.</p> <p>AH reminded the Board that responsibility for appointments lies with the Trust's executive functions, not the Governing Board. While governors may be involved in Headteacher appointments, other roles are managed centrally.</p> <p>JM expressed concern that governors were not informed about the Deputy Head appointment process. There was a shared view that communication from the Trust could be improved.</p> <p>ACTION: Communicate to the Trust the need for improved communication around key appointments.</p> <p>AH referenced the Chair's Forum, where similar concerns about communication had been raised. This was seen as a good example of where communication improvements could enhance governance. Governors agreed that it is difficult to be accountable for Leadership and Management if they are not fully informed about staffing decisions.</p>	AH
	EDUCATION	
5.	<p>Pupil Numbers</p> <p>The school currently has 139 pupils on roll. There have been some recent leavers, including two children moving to specialist provision, others relocating out of the area, and two children whose parents moved them due to staffing disruptions. MH confirmed awareness of these cases.</p>	
6.	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Governors were shown attendance data for the end of the Spring Term. It was noted that attendance in The Hive had dropped due to a part-time timetable. In Year 6 medical needs had also impacted the figures.</p> <p>Governors discussed whether it was possible to generate attendance data excluding long-term absences to better understand the school's performance. The school confirmed that this analysis had taken place and presented a table showing different reasons for absence. Lateness and medical appointments were highlighted as key issues.</p> <p>Governor Comment: This breakdown is useful as it helps identify areas where the school can make an impact, even if some factors are beyond its control.</p> <p>Q: Are any of the suspensions approaching 15 days in a term?</p> <p>A: No, none are near the 15-day threshold.</p> <p>Governors discussed the use of part-time timetables and the importance of monitoring their duration. While operational decisions rest with the school, prolonged use may require governor oversight.</p>	

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	<p>Q: Could we have data on how long pupils have been on part-time timetables and when they are expected to return to full-time? A: Yes, this can be provided. The aim is always to use part-time timetables for the minimum time necessary, although in some cases they are used longer-term for behaviour management. ACTION: Provide data on the number of part time timetables in place and their duration.</p> <p>Q: Is communication with parents about attendance done regularly? A: Yes. Attendance is addressed in newsletters, and families of persistent absentees are contacted regularly.</p> <p>Governors agreed that multiple strategies are needed to address lateness and that targeting parents through various communication channels is essential.</p>	GM
7.	<p>Rewards and Behaviour</p> <p>The Acting Headteacher presented the latest behaviour data, highlighting that 59.5 days have been lost to suspensions so far this academic year, involving 13 children. This represents a slight improvement compared to the same point last year, when 17 children had been suspended. It was noted that 7 of the suspensions in the spring term involved children based in The Hive or Orange Room, both of which support pupils with additional needs.</p> <p>There have been no formally recorded incidents of bullying, although a concern was raised in Year 3/4, which has experienced the most staffing turbulence. In response, the school has undertaken additional work with pupils to clarify the definition of bullying, ensuring that children understand the difference between isolated incidents and sustained, targeted behaviour.</p> <p>Governors shared experiences from other settings, noting that misunderstandings about what constitutes bullying can have a significant impact on both pupils and parents. AH recommended reviewing the school's behaviour policy to ensure that it includes a clear and accessible definition of bullying.</p> <p>ACTION: Review the behaviour policy to ensure it includes appropriate and clear information on bullying.</p> <p>MH reported that during a recent School Council meeting, pupils were asked whether they felt safe in school. Some of the responses were concerning, prompting further discussion.</p> <p>Q: Is there any education provided to children and parents about bullying? A: Yes. GM confirmed that he had spoken directly with the children involved in the Year 3/4 incidents. These involved name-calling, which was documented and addressed, but did not meet the threshold for bullying. Both sets of parents were informed, and the school has maintained open communication. Parents have generally been supportive and appreciative of the transparency.</p>	GM

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	<p>Governors acknowledged that while individual incidents are being handled appropriately, there may be a broader piece of work needed to educate and empower parents about bullying and behaviour expectations.</p> <p>The school continues to implement strategies to improve behaviour. Lesson observations indicate that low-level behaviour is being addressed consistently in line with the behaviour policy. The achievement points system remains in place and is well received by pupils.</p> <p>Q: Are the children still valuing the points system? A: Yes, definitely. Pupils are proud of their achievements, and the system continues to motivate them.</p> <p>Governors noted that the behaviour of older pupils is particularly impressive. MH, who has conducted several visits, observed that the majority of pupils are respectful and engage positively during his visits. The school's values are being embedded well, with stability and consistency seen as key to continued improvement.</p> <p>The school is also tracking behaviour focus children—those who had 10 or more behaviour points at the end of the half term. Encouragingly, 8 out of 10 of these pupils reduced their behaviour points in Spring 1, indicating that interventions are having a positive impact.</p>	
8.	<p>To receive an update on progress and attainment including groups (pupil premium, SEND, disadvantaged, gender)</p> <p>The Acting Headteacher presented the end of Spring Term data, focusing on Year 6 teacher assessments and mock SATs results. There has been a notable improvement between December and March, which governors welcomed.</p> <p>Q: Did this cohort have a particularly turbulent Year 5? A: Yes. There were several staffing changes, which led to a low starting point in Year 6. However, the current Year 6 teacher has done a fantastic job in accelerating progress.</p> <p>GW added that some of the Year 6 pupils also attend a local youth club, where staff have observed a marked improvement in their confidence and engagement.</p> <p>Year 1 Phonics Data: As of April 2025, 38% of pupils passed the mock phonics screening, with 65% on track to meet the expected standard by the end of the year.</p> <p>Group Data Highlights: Pupil Premium (PP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant improvement in Reading in Year 1 and Reception. <p>SEND:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 4 out of 7 year groups, the attainment gap for SEND pupils is narrowing, though this remains an area for continued focus. 	

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	<p>Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements noted in all year groups, though further analysis is needed to ensure consistency across groups. <p>Governors acknowledged the progress made and the clear impact of targeted teaching and support strategies.</p>	
9.	<p>Link Governor Monitoring</p> <p>a) Attendance Monitoring (JM)</p> <p>JM reported on a recent attendance monitoring visit. The school is clearly prioritising attendance and has implemented a range of strategies. GM was well-prepared and able to provide detailed data and responses to all questions. JM also spoke with pupils, who expressed positive views about school—particularly in classes with consistent staffing.</p> <p>The impact of staffing instability in lower Key Stage 2 was evident. Plans are in place for children requiring alternative provision. One child currently at Cornerstones remains on roll, which affects attendance figures.</p> <p>There has been a 50% improvement in persistent absenteeism since January, which governors praised as a significant achievement. The school is now focusing on the remaining 15 children who are at risk of becoming persistent absentees.</p> <p>Discussion Point: How can the school further improve attendance among the hardest-to-reach pupils? Governors agreed that the school is taking the right steps and can clearly demonstrate impact to Ofsted.</p>	
10.	<p>Pupil Premium</p> <p>a) The Board reviewed the impact of Pupil Premium funding. The data presented showed notable improvements in reading outcomes for PP pupils in both Year 1 and Reception. These gains suggest that the interventions funded through the Pupil Premium are having a positive effect.</p> <p>Governors agreed that continued monitoring is essential to ensure that funding is being used effectively and that the gap continues to narrow, particularly in writing and for SEND pupils.</p>	
	WELFARE	
11.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>a) Governors were informed that an update on the current safeguarding caseload would be circulated to governors following the meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: Circulate safeguarding caseload update post-meeting.</p> <p>b) The school recently underwent a SCiES safeguarding review, with MH meeting Local Authority representatives to discuss findings. The only comment raised was regarding governor familiarity with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE). Governors confirmed they had read Part 2, which is the statutory section relevant to their role. While Governor Hub records indicate full document access, statutory responsibility lies with Part 2.</p> <p>ACTION: Governors to review the governance section of the SCiES report.</p>	<p>GM</p> <p>All govs</p>

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	c) All governors confirmed they had received and read the filtering and monitoring information circulated prior to the meeting.	
12.	<p>Welfare and Wellbeing – Students</p> <p>Two pupils are currently on part-time timetables, both of whom are in school-based alternative provision. The school is working closely with families and social care to support these pupils.</p> <p>Q: How long has the longest pupil been on a part-time timetable? A: Since March.</p> <p>The school acknowledged the difficulty in securing external alternative provision, noting that while the current arrangements are not ideal, it is better for pupils to be in school and engaged than out of education entirely. One pupil was identified as a school-based avoider.</p> <p>Q: How frequently are part-time timetables reviewed? A: They are reviewed monthly, with ongoing communication with parents throughout.</p> <p>Additional wellbeing initiatives being implemented include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Safe, Cope Well programme, with impact assessment underway. • ELSA sessions for targeted pupil groups. • Extra staff on playgrounds to model positive play and conflict resolution. • Internet safety talks delivered to pupils. • SAS Squad breakfast club showing positive results. <p>A recent pupil voice survey revealed that 40% of pupils felt there wasn't enough support for children struggling with feelings. The survey was anonymous, which limited follow-up; governors agreed that future surveys should allow for more targeted responses.</p> <p>The Orange Room continues to support Reception pupils requiring alternative provision. One child has secured a specialist placement for September, while another family prefers their child to remain in school. There are currently 25 EHCPs across the school.</p> <p>Q: Are EHCPs easier or harder to secure now? A: If the evidence is strong, the school are fairly confident they will be approved.</p> <p>Q: Will the nursery help with earlier identification? A: Yes, and this process is already underway.</p> <p>Q: Are we able to cope as a school and meet the needs outlined in EHCPs? A: Yes, although it is challenging. The Orange Room was essential. For example, there are five pupils with EHCPs in Year 6, and their needs are being met. Where needs exceed our capacity, we apply for a change of placement and work with multi-agency partners.</p> <p>Q: Is the Local Authority heavily involved or more hands-off? A: They become involved for change-of-place reviews and attend regular meetings.</p>	

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	<p>Q: Are they responsive to the school's needs? A: Processes are slower and can be challenging.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged the significant impact of supporting such a high number of pupils with additional needs. While the school is doing an excellent job, there is a need to ensure it does not become perceived as the default setting for high-needs placements. Staff deserve recognition for their work, and the financial implications must be considered.</p> <p>It was agreed that the social context of the school should be clearly communicated to Ofsted, especially in relation to staff wellbeing. GM noted that this was a key reason for establishing the AP settings.</p>	
13.	<p>Welfare and Wellbeing – Staff Staff wellbeing was discussed under Item 12 above in relation to the impact of supporting pupils with significant additional needs in a mainstream setting.</p>	
14.	<p>Part 2 Staffing Update A staffing update was provided under Part 2 of this meeting.</p>	
	LOCAL MATTERS & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	
15.	<p>Local Policy Approval</p> <p>a) Intimate Care Policy - The school has introduced an Intimate Care Policy, prompted by the needs arising from the nursery provision. Q: Did the school have a previous policy? A: No, this is a new development linked to the nursery.</p> <p>b) Uniform Policy - Governors reviewed the Uniform Policy and raised the following questions: Q: Where is non-compliance addressed in terms of sanctions? A: Achievement points are awarded for wearing correct uniform.</p> <p>Q: Is compliance generally good, and is the policy sufficient? A: Yes. Most pupils comply, and positive reinforcement is used. The school context is important, as some families face challenges. Wearing correct uniform contributes to pupils being school-ready.</p> <p>Governors approved the policies a) and b) listed above.</p> <p>Governors raised concerns about some pupils not being prepared for school in terms of toileting and other readiness factors. Q: Is action being taken to support families in preparing children for school? A: There has been a push on reducing dummy use due to its impact on speech and language. Further support may be needed, and it was suggested that the school contact Leighton Academy for advice. ACTION: Contact Leighton about potential work to support school readiness.</p>	GM
16.	<p>Governor Training Update There were no training items to report at this meeting.</p>	

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17.	<p>Stakeholder Engagement – Parents / Carers</p> <p>The school continues to build strong relationships with families through a range of activities which most recently include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cake sales • PTA initiatives • Tuck Shop Fridays • World Book Day events • Upcoming parent survey • Governor meet-and-greet on 6th June (MH to attend) <p>Governors thanked DW for his work on the Peace Garden, which has been well received.</p>	
18.	<p>Stakeholder Engagement – Wider Community</p> <p>The school has successfully applied to Congleton Rotary Club, receiving £700 for sensory resources. A Tesco token application is also underway.</p> <p>The Air Cadets (230 Squadron) visited on a Saturday to help tidy the polytunnel.</p> <p>Governors discussed sustainability of the garden area, noting that previous efforts had fallen into disrepair. The Rotary Club has expressed interest in using and maintaining the polytunnel, which should help ensure its longevity. Vale Juniors are also supporting this initiative.</p> <p>Weed suppression materials are being laid to support maintenance.</p> <p>MH and his daughter were thanked for organising SATs breakfast supplies, and MH also selected winners for the Easter egg competition.</p> <p>The Swimathon was well supported by parents, with pupils performing impressively.</p>	
19.	<p>Part 2 – Vale Juniors Update</p> <p>The FA recently visited the site and expressed strong support for the school's long-term vision of developing an all-weather pitch. Funding has already been provided to Vale Juniors, and an additional £3–4k from the Mayor's Trust is available.</p> <p>Plans are underway for the school to participate in a Vale Juniors football tournament. Discussions are ongoing with James Routs, Director of Estates at TLP, regarding a licence to occupy, allowing Vale Juniors to use one of the school's standalone classrooms as a head office.</p> <p>Q: Are there plans to celebrate the school's 100-year anniversary? A: Yes, celebrations are being planned for Autumn 2025 when the Headteacher returns. Although the building stone reads 1925, records suggest the school opened in Easter 1926. The Deputy Mayor has expressed interest in participating.</p>	

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	Governors agreed that it is important to honour the school's history while celebrating its future, and to involve pupils and families in the process.	
20.	Communication – to Trust Governors noted that several items discussed during the meeting should be communicated to the Trust, particularly around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key appointments and communication • Financial and wellbeing implications of high-needs provision 	
21.	Communication – from Trust a) Equality and Diversity Survey – Survey results are now available on the Trust website. Governors were encouraged to reflect on how diversity is understood and supported within the school community. The Trust is receptive to ideas and suggestions. Additional items highlighted included: Trust Conference Scheduled for Saturday 14th June . JM provided advance apologies to the event. Skills Audit Governors were reminded to complete the skills audit.	
22.	AOB There were no other items of business tabled for discussion during the meeting.	

Meeting closed at 5pm.