

## Moorland Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

Meeting minutes  
**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025**  
 Held online via Microsoft 'Teams'

### Attended:

**Chair-** Oliver Heathman

**Parent Governors-** Lynda Cooper (Hennock)  
 Charlotte Vicary-Ward (Bearnese)  
 Anne- Marie Lewis (Wolborough)  
 Kate Bairstow (Widecombe-in-the-Moor)

**Foundation Governor-** Richard Nutbeam (Wolborough)

**Academy Headteacher-** Kat Williams (Ilington)

### In attendance:

**CEO-** Rachael Sharpe

**Governance Professional-** Charlotte Roe

**Minutes:** Nicol Bush (Clerk to the Totnes and Moorland Hub)

No	Item	Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome and apologies</b>            The meeting opened with a welcome to Governors. The Chair introduced the new Parent Governor for Widecombe- Kate Bairstowe and the Chair invited Governors to introduce themselves.            Apologies were received and <b>accepted</b> from R.Stamp</p>	
2.	<p><b>Declarations of interest</b>            There were no declarations of interest brought to the meeting.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Approval of meeting minutes from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025</b>            The minutes were <b>approved</b> as a true record and were signed accordingly.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Matters arising from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 (not on the agenda)</b>  <b>4.1 Governors to review the responses to the questions raised at the previous LAC and confirm if any supplementary questions.</b> - There were no questions raised by the Moorland LAC autumn 1 meeting.  <b>4.2 CEO to confirm the discussion of Staff Governor vacancy at the recent AH meeting-</b> This was discussed under item 6. Clerk update. The CEO said she would add the call for a Staff Governor in this week's CEO update.</p> <p><b>ACTION- CEO to request for Staff Governors in the CEO update.</b></p>	CEO
5.	<p><b>CEO update</b>  <b>5.1 CEO to update Governors on the recent school reviews</b>            The CEO gave an update on her school reviews and reported that her initial focus was completing a trust review using the Department for Education's Good Quality Trust Descriptors. She worked with senior leaders to visit all schools, meet head teachers, and gather key data and insights. Governance was identified as a strength, with clear communication from local advisory committees to the board. She advised governors to triangulate information through learning walks and use the TED approach (Tell me, Explain, Describe) for supportive challenge. The CEO highlighted that a coaching session on effective questioning was scheduled for January. Finally, the CEO thanked the meeting for their commitment and confirmed she would attend some future meetings.</p>	

	<p><i>The Governors asked whether governance was one of the five priorities mentioned and if the suggestions about triangulation and talking to staff were part of that governance priority.</i></p> <p>The CEO explained that the governance priority was focused on transparency of information to enable the board to make strategic decisions. She stated that the board set the strategic direction and needed assurance through effective processes regarding the work of the executive team and schools. The CEO noted that the strategy document was still being finalised and would include an action plan. Examples of actions included reviewing the trust's articles and the scheme of delegation to ensure accountability and effective information flow. The CEO added that the action plan would likely include measures to ensure information at a local level was triangulated for assurance. The CEO noted that this was to strengthen governance through verification.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Clerk Update</b></p> <p><b>5.1 Appointments/nominations</b></p> <p><b>The Clerk advised the meeting of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vacancy for a parent governor at Moretonhampstead had now been filled.</li> <li>• The vacancy for a Foundation Governor at Ilington was still ongoing, the Clerk mentioned she would chase this up with SL.</li> <li>• There was still a vacancy for a staff governor on the Moorland LAC, the Clerk advised that AH's were encouraged to ask around at their schools, the Clerk said she would follow this up.</li> <li>• The Clerk raised that Trustees were looking to recruit a Sustainability Governor to monitor how each school was doing, the Clerk asked the Governors to consider and email her if there was any interest. The GP added that Sustainability strategy was to appear as a standing item on the LAC agenda and school visit notes.</li> </ul> <p><b>5.2 Training-</b> The Clerk informed the meeting about the recent Exclusion Panel training and invited any Governors who would like a copy of the PowerPoint slides to contact her.</p> <p><b>5.3 Clerk to Local Board Committee to update the governors on any local or national issues - Governance Audit-</b> The Clerk reported that, in the coming weeks, Clerks would be circulating a Governance Audit Form. She explained that the form would include a series of questions designed to help the Trust and the Governance Team gather valuable information about governors' skills and expertise. The aim was to create pools of governors who could support specific areas such as Marketing and Communications, Content Editing, AI, and IT. She noted that this initiative would enable the Trust to better utilise the strengths within the governance community and enhance collaboration across the Trust.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Standards and Curriculum Committee Focus: Personal Development/Wellbeing – Relationship Education, PHSE &amp; RHSE</b>  <b><u>(Due to GDPR and confidentiality, please refer to visit notes for further information and clarification)</u></b></p> <p><i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i></p> <p><b>Hennock-</b> The Governor reported on PSHE curriculum delivery, confirming it was managed well. She found no concerns after speaking informally with pupils and staff and reviewing displays during her visit. Hennock continued to take a relational approach and children were encouraged to advocate for themselves. Pupil feedback was sought through School Council etc.</p> <p><b>Ilington-</b> The Governor reported that he had discussions about the curriculum, including the switch from Jigsaw to Kapow during his visit. He noted that the Feedback was positive, as Kapow was considered better suited for mixed-age classes and easier for teachers to use, reducing workload. They also discussed recent NSPCC visits, walkability, and pupil voice. The AH added that Kapow was</p>	

	<p>more cost-effective and that the first pupil voice review would take place after the initial eight-week unit.</p> <p><b>Wolborough-</b> The Governor noted positive feedback on the switch from Jigsaw to Kapow. She highlighted practical approaches for supporting children’s mental health, including zones of regulation and visual check-ins. These methods allowed pupils to display how they were feeling informally, making it easier for teachers to respond, such as adding movement if many pupils indicated tiredness. She added that the English Lead was very good and training had a positive impact on the staff team. Maths was also strong and provided good value for money.</p> <p><b>Widcombe-in-the-Moor- (Please refer to visit notes for further information)</b> The Governor shared her first impressions after visiting and discussing PSHE. She noted that pupils had completed walkability activities around local lanes but suggested that future sessions could focus on city environments to provide broader experience, as some pupils found the current approach repetitive. She also commented on the positive feedback regarding Jigsaw, confirming it worked well for staff and included training resources.</p>	
8.	<p><b><u>Standards and Curriculum Committee Focus: New OfSTED Framework (Due to GDPR and confidentiality, please refer to visit notes for further information and clarification)</u></b></p> <p><i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i></p> <p><i>The Chair asked what training Academy Headteachers had received regarding the new Ofsted framework.</i></p> <p>The AH for the LAC explained that the DoE (Director of Education) had led on sharing information about the new Ofsted framework during Academy Headteacher meetings, with updates provided regularly. She added that the most recent meeting included discussion about preparing for case studies, as Ofsted would review individual pupils during inspections.</p> <p><i>A Governor asked what role governors could play in supporting the process when their school received an Ofsted inspection call and asked for clarity over was expected from a governance perspective.</i></p> <p>The Governance Professional explained that a local governor usually attended alongside a trustee, with the trustee providing strategic information and the governor offering local context. The DoE typically briefed governors and trustees the day before, sharing key points and previous Ofsted questions to help prepare. A Governor added that Governors should review the Academy School Improvement Plan, visit notes, and the school website.</p> <p><b>Hennock-</b> The Trust had provided training on the new framework with Lizzie Lethbridge.</p> <p>It was felt there was some vulnerability around the move to measure impact, particularly in settings such as Hennock where there had been leadership changes and limited time for strategies to embed and be evidenced. The child-led deep dive approach made whole school knowledge sharing and staff skill development a priority.</p> <p>SIMS was not helpful as a tool for tracking assessment. The AH had joined a Working Party to look for a new system and, in the meantime, was creating cohort sheets to enable ground level tracking.</p> <p>There was strong centralised provision from Claire Appleby as English Lead, which was helpful as she was not class based and had some capacity, and from Richard Charley as Maths Lead, who was delivering interventions during the half term.</p>	

9.	<p><b>Standards and Curriculum Committee Focus: Christian distinctiveness/SIAMS (For CofE Schools) with a learning walk. (Due to GDPR and confidentiality, please refer to visit notes for further information and clarification)</b></p> <p><i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i></p> <p><b>Ilington-</b> The Chair noted that there was no foundation governor for Ilington, but R.S had been supporting by attending Ethos Group meetings. The SIAMS inspection had taken place on 14 October and was generally positive. Development areas included deepening understanding of justice in a wider societal context and strengthening the shared understanding of spiritual growth and spiritual capital. The Chair added that recruitment was underway for a foundation governor or parent representative to join Ethos Group meetings and provide an external perspective. The Chair highlighted that Sharon Lord had been attending meetings, while R.S had been conducting learning walks and pupil voice activities to triangulate evidence. The school aimed to be inclusive by welcoming candidates of any faith or no faith for the role.</p> <p><b>Hennock-</b> The school site looked good, including a new library space. Displays were clear and well presented, and the vision and values were part of these. Safeguarding information was clearly displayed in classrooms and staff areas such as toilets and the staff room.</p> <p>There was a focus on vision and values in assembly, for example weekly through the Pride of School Award.</p> <p>Pupils were able to speak about the vision and values, although there was some confusion with other related areas such as British Values.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Feedback from Ethos Committees and Community Groups</b></p> <p><b>Wolborough-</b> The PG for Wolborough reported that she had carried out a walk around the school to observe its environment. She noted that it was clear the school was a Church of England school and looked for indicators of what was important to the school. She highlighted that the displays were impressive, showcasing values, community links such as churches, May Day, Poppy Day, and mental health support. She felt this was a very positive reflection of the school's ethos.</p> <p><b>Hennock-</b> The PG for Hennock added that, from her perspective, she had also walked around the school, observed the displays, and spoken to pupils. She noted that while the pupils were enthusiastic about values, there appeared to be some confusion between the school's own values and British values, particularly regarding their origins.</p> <p>The following questions were asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Where would we see examples of flourishing happening? What does it look like and how is it monitored?</i></li> </ul> <p>The Ilington AH noted that staff had expressed how much they valued the time to sit together and listen during church sessions. The Golden Mile was highlighted as an opportunity for both spiritual and environmental flourishing, as well as a time to check in with the children. Examples of flourishing were also evident in the support provided to pupils with additional needs through the school's relational approach. The school aimed to embed flourishing throughout its culture, guided by the Trust vision of "Flourishing schools for all at the heart of our communities." This principle extended to every stakeholder, parent, and pupil, with the understanding that every interaction was an intervention to support flourishing across the school community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In what way is the Worshipful life of the school inclusive and Invitational?</i></li> </ul> <p>The Ilington AH commented that having these discussions minuted in the LAC minutes had been very useful when preparing for the SIAMS inspection, as it demonstrated the impact of the school's approach and its focus on flourishing. She explained that the school aimed to be invitational and inclusive, giving the example of collective worship where children were invited to join in prayer but could choose to make the prayer their own or simply use the time for gratitude and reflection. She noted that pupils were very respectful during these moments, with some choosing quiet reflection while others used sensory toys or sat to the side if</p>	

	<p>needed. The AH added that the school adopted a relational and supportive approach, allowing flexibility for pupils with additional needs, such as leaving collective worship during moments that might be overwhelming, for example when singing happy birthday in celebration assemblies.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Successes and Sharing of Good Practice</b></p> <p>It was noted that Sharon Lord had provided outstanding support for SIAMS and was also offering valuable assistance to other schools. The Chair reported that he had attended the recent launch of the Digital Strategy Group and observed strong engagement from passionate contributors.</p> <p>LC praised the Executive AH for Hennock and Widecombe for his exceptional leadership in managing a complex situation at Hennock while stepping up to the role of Executive Head for Widecombe. She highlighted his calm and positive influence, which had significantly improved the mood and stability within the school. LC noted that the executive AH had made a considerable personal effort to be present and available across both schools. Feedback from parents had been overwhelmingly positive.</p>	
13.	<p><b>School Updates</b>  <b><u>(Due to GDPR and confidentiality, please refer to visit notes for further information and clarification)</u></b>  <b><i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i></b></p> <p>A Governor noted that the risk register remained unclear regarding responsibilities and requested support to understand her role. She highlighted the increasing number of executive headship examples within the Trust and suggested exploring efficiencies to avoid duplicated meetings. During a conversation with her school AH, she learned that site management was the biggest pain point, which she felt was an inappropriate use of a Academy head's time.</p> <p>The CEO explained that the Risk Register operated at a strategic level, reviewed by the senior leadership team and the board. Strategic risks were owned by senior leaders, including the DCEO, DoE, and herself, and had been discussed at recent board meetings. She stated that the next step would be to review individual school risk registers and support headteachers in understanding how to manage risks within their settings. Rachael advised governors that the Academy School Improvement Plan (ASIP) was currently the best reference point, as it highlighted key actions and associated risks.</p> <p><i>A Governor asked for an update on the inclusion hub and outdoor provision at Hennock, which had stopped last year due to staffing issues after one member of staff went on long-term sick leave and resigned, and another went on maternity leave. The Chair recommended this question go to the S&amp;C meeting for discussion.</i></p> <p>The CEO stated that decisions about school structures should be made by headteachers, as they understand their context and pupil needs. However, these decisions must be financially sustainable. She explained that after completing the recharge process, she planned to meet individual headteachers to review what was appropriate for each school.</p> <p><b><u>PAN (to include pupils joined/left)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widecombe-- 95 total</li> <li>• Ilsington- 77 total (17 in pre school)</li> <li>• Hennock- 38 (only 4 in pre-school)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Staff wellbeing and workload</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widecombe- Workload was high, there was more SEN in school.</li> <li>• Ilsington- Workload felt busy, Interventions were also more challenging.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Attendance (Our attendance targets for the Trust are 96.5%, with an aspirational target of 98%)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wolborough- 93%</li> <li>• Hennock- 97%</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widecombe- High engagement of parents.</li> <li>• Wolborough- Parent engagement was low, this needed to be addressed.</li> </ul>	

	<p><b><u>Pre-school update</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wolborough- Building works were underway to extend the early years provision.</li> <li>• Hennock- Pre-school was a focus, as the new Ofsted framework looked for evidence of whole school/inclusive provision.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Safeguarding</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hennock- Safeguarding audit with Alex Waterman has happened. Main action was that online safety should have its own dropdown on website and that there was a need for a separate risk assessment for Prevent (from last S175); both underway.</li> </ul>	
14.	<p><b>Standards and Curriculum Trustees Meeting</b></p> <p>The meeting <b>agreed</b> that this item would be deferred to the next Spring 1 LAC meeting, for further discussion, due to the unavailability of the Standards and Curriculum minutes.</p>	
15.	<p><b>Next S&amp;C Focus:</b></p> <p>The Chair confirmed that the next focus for visits would include a mid-year attendance overview, parent and community engagement, and curriculum subjects, particularly EYFS.</p> <p><i>A Governor asked whether the Spring 1 visit notes would be updated to reflect the new attendance letter recently circulated. She suggested that governors should receive a breakdown of attendance data beyond a single figure, including analysis by SEND population and distinguishing sickness absences from unauthorised absences.</i> The Governance Professional confirmed that this information could be obtained from Academy Heads and encouraged governors to unpick data as needed. The CEO noted that attendance data was available through SIMS</p> <p>The Governance Professional added that updated Spring 1 visit notes would be issued, as the safeguarding audit had been moved to Spring 2. The Clerk confirmed she would share the updated version when available.</p> <p>The Chair requested that the GP/Clerk share question prompts or cue cards to support the new governors.</p>	
16.	<p><b>Reflection of the Autumn 2 Governor visit</b></p> <p>The Chair noted the value of upcoming training, particularly for new governors within the hub. He stated that training on visiting schools would be greatly appreciated, even by experienced governors.</p>	
17.	<p><b>Summary of Questions to be raised at LAC Level</b></p> <p>There were no questions raised.</p>	
18.	<p><b>Summary of Questions to be raised at S&amp;C Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could an update be provided for the plans of the Inclusion Hub at Hennock?</li> <li>• Could more central support be provided to reduce the burden of site management tasks?</li> <li>• Could the Trust provide an update on future staffing arrangements and an estimated timeline for decision-making as recruitment considerations advance</li> <li>• Could Governors have an update on PP budget plans</li> <li>• Training on risk register still pending</li> <li>• RSE policy: has this been reviewed?</li> <li>• SIMS: new system needed</li> </ul>	

The meeting ended at 6.50pm

Signed by the Chair of the Committee.....on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026