

Moorland Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

Wednesday 11th March 2026
5.30pm

Held online participation via Microsoft 'Teams'

Attended:

Chair- Oliver Heathman

Parent Governors- Lynda Cooper (Hennock) (**Chair for the meeting**)

Daisy Stewart- (Moretonhampstead)

Kate Bairstow (Widecombe-in-the-Moor)

Academy Headteacher- Tracy Hoare (Wolborough)

Staff Governor- Rebecca Barons

In attendance:

DCEO- Matt Matthew

Governance Professional- Charlotte Roe

Minutes: Nicol Bush- Moorland LAC Clerk

No	Item	ACTION
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies The Chair for this meeting (LC) opened with a welcome to Governors, and each Governor introduced themselves to the new Staff Governor- Rebecca Barons and Parent Governor for Moretonhampstead- Daisy Stewart. Apologies were received and accepted from the CEO, A-ML, C V-W, R.N and KW</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of interest There were no new declarations brought forward.</p>	
3.	<p>Approval of meeting minutes from 21st January 2026 For approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part I minutes- These minutes were approved as a true record and were signed accordingly. Part II minutes- (circulated privately to those who attended) These minutes were approved as a true record and were signed accordingly. 	
4.	<p>Matters arising from 21st January 2026 (not on the agenda) 4.1 Governors to review the responses to the questions raised at the previous LAC and confirm if any supplementary questions- There were no comments or questions raised. 4.2 GP to update the meeting on the Parent survey- The GP confirmed that the Parent Survey had been shared by each school, with parents/carers on Thursday 5th March 2026.</p>	
5.	<p>Clerk Update 5.1 Appointments/nominations The Clerk noted that the Moorland LAC still needed a Sustainability Governor and asked Governors to consider whether they knew anyone suitable for the role, and if so, to email her with their details. 5.2 Training The Clerk advised the meeting that all new Governors were expected to attend the "Introduction to school Governance in an academy trust" online, which would be on the following dates: 28 Apr 2026 16:00-18:00 10 June 2026 10:00-12:00 She added that all Governors were invited to attend.</p>	

	<p>The Clerk shared that, following the recent Clerks' meeting, it was discussed that as part of the Fair Pledge for training, Governors would be encouraged to complete two training courses per year starting from September 2026- Either online, or via the "Training" folder in the LAC SharePoint. Governors said the expectation could be unachievable because time was a major constraint. The Clerk said she would continue updating the training SharePoint so governors could access slideshows and videos whenever they had time.</p> <p>5.3 Clerk to Local Board Committee to update the governors on any local or national issues</p> <p>The Clerk highlighted that Risk Registers have been temporarily removed from LAC agendas but would remain on the Board committees' agendas. She added that the GP would now work with the CEO on Visit note templates and questions within them, to fit in line with the new Ofsted framework.</p> <p>5.4 Governors Audit</p> <p>The Clerk reminded Governors to complete and return, as soon as possible.</p> <p>5.5 Support for SATS</p> <p>The Clerk asked if Governors would be available to support schools across the Trust with SATs invigilation, and if they could, to please contact the Clerk/GP.</p>	
6.	<p>Focus: Provision and impact for SEND</p> <p>Hennock- The school had a strong OAIP offer supported by termly reviewed provision maps with SMART targets and a clear monitoring cycle. EHCP targets were built into the system so progress could be tracked effectively. Delivery of provision maps was manageable, and if an intervention could not be resourced, it would be costed and taken to the local authority with SENDCO support. SEND need was particularly high in Years 3 and 4, though KS2 progress remained strong. The school was highly inclusive and that approaches supporting SEND pupils benefitted all pupils. SEND pupil voice was gathered directly in class and had been positive during a recent LSC visit. Parent voice would be captured through the upcoming trust survey and through ongoing informal and formal conversations.</p> <p>Moretonhampstead- The school had four main mixed year classes, and this structure was working well for both staff and pupils. An additional space, the Den, was being used to support pupils with SEND and had proved positive for all pupils. However, with 30 percent of pupils on the SEND register, teachers and TAs were under significant pressure to meet a wide range of additional needs. There was a strong desire for more technology in the school to help support these needs.</p> <p>Ilington- Was predicted to meet the expected standard using the new Ofsted framework toolkit, with a calm environment and a strong graduated approach. Staff understanding of SEND was secure, and teaching assistants received regular inclusion training. 30% of pupils had SEND, though most caused little disruption. Key barriers included limited space, staffing pressures and difficulty contacting the Devon 0-25 team. 22 pupils were on the SEND register, 5 with EHCPs, most on track. The AH noted strong Year Six outcomes. Pupil voice and parent communication remained positive.</p> <p>Widcombe- The school had worked hard to create an inclusive environment, supported by individual inclusion and OIAP plans for pupils with additional needs. Although space remained a challenge for a small school, staff had maximised what was available by creating quiet zones, friendship stops with activities, an alternative lunch space for pupils with sensory needs, and a breakout room with plans for further improvements. Outdoor areas were also being developed to support pupils who required space to regulate. A learning walk demonstrated the significant effort invested in providing safe and flexible areas for all pupils.</p> <p>Provision maps were structured around four areas, with staff setting SMART targets and reviewing progress three times a year. Pupil and parent voice formed part of this process. Classrooms were well equipped with accessible displays and resources, ensuring learning remained inclusive. Staff knew pupils' needs well, and pupils appeared well supported to achieve.</p>	
7.	<p>Focus: Provision for PPC (Pupil premium children) & CIC (Children in Care) and the impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hennock- PPG discretionary funding was limited to £400, so it was used to benefit as many pupils as possible, including music provision and support for trips and enrichment activities. It was also reported that pushback from social care could create barriers for PPG pupils, placing greater responsibility on the school to support families. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moretonhampstead- It was reported that there was a significant funding gap for families whose children were just above the threshold for PPG eligibility, leaving the school with a shortfall despite having 12 PPG pupils. Many more pupils required support than the funding covered. The school's fundraising group, FOMS, helped to bridge this gap so that no child missed out. The impact of PPG and LAC spending meant there was insufficient funding to provide the extra teaching assistants needed. Teachers and TAs continued to give additional support to these pupils, but this added to staff workload. Additional support came from local groups such as Wellmoor and from the Co-op, which provided £200 vouchers. • Ilington- Due to time constraints, discussion focused mainly on SEND and safeguarding. It was reported that Ilington had a very small number of pupils eligible for PPG funding, most of whom were also on the SEND register. The school had only £400 available, which limited what could be provided. The funding was used for SATs books, stretch materials, support for school trips and breakfast club places where needed, although the school often covered breakfast club costs to ensure good attendance. 	
8.	<p>Focus: Safeguarding Trust wide Audit to be reported to Board of Trustees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hennock- The safeguarding audit had been completed before half term, including trust wide targets set by AW (DoS). These targets focused on increasing the use of Staff Safe on CPOMS and updating the system more regularly. School specific actions related to RSHE and the digital strategy. The Academy Head highlighted the importance of staff accessing graded care profile training to ensure Early Help could continue to be delivered effectively. It was also noted that Learning Walk time had coincided with a playground celebration marking the launch of the renovation project. Pupils were spoken to during the visit, but staff safeguarding questions would be followed up on a future visit. • Moretonhampstead- the S175 audit had been reviewed. One of the key actions was the introduction of a new system called Staff Safe, designed to record and manage low level concerns involving staff, parents and pupils. This included situations such as pupil disclosures, ensuring appropriate support for the staff member, child and parent. • Ilington- reported that a number of actions were being addressed through the ongoing safeguarding action plan. • Widcombe- Completed and sent to Devon: Safeguarding action plan: Staff CPOMS developed and in place. Extra training to be introduced for all staff in relation to early help support for students. 	
9.	<p>Feedback from Ethos Committees and Community Groups The Meeting asked the AH the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In what ways is the worshipful life of the school inclusive and invitational?</i> <p>The AH provided an update from Wolborough regarding collective worship. The school had a science inspection in January of the previous year, during which worship was described as inclusive and invitational. The school had a high proportion of pupils who were not Christian, and staff ensured that no child was required to take part in prayer. Children were invited to join in but were equally encouraged to use reflection time in a way that suited them, such as sitting quietly or thinking.</p> <p>Worship was often pupil led, and pupils were invited to come forward to offer spontaneous prayers linked to the theme of the session, which staff described as joyful and positive. The school also benefited from regular involvement from the local vicar, who led worship every Tuesday. Although the school had historically welcomed speakers from different faiths, this had been less frequent recently and was identified as an action point for future development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has the monitoring and evaluation of CW been useful to the school - will it help to bring improvement?</i> <p>The AH reported that formal evaluations of worship at Wolborough had not taken place recently, although they had been useful in the past for understanding pupil engagement. Informal feedback still occurred. A recent worship attended by the</p>	

	<p>Foundation Governor showed pupils remained calm and focused despite distractions.</p> <p>Pupil participation in prayer continued to be strong, especially among younger pupils, while older pupils sometimes needed encouragement. Staff ensured a good range of pupils were invited to contribute.</p>	
10.	<p>Staff Update</p> <p>Governors expressed concern that staff wellbeing was under significant strain.</p> <p>Staff reported that they recognised senior leaders were doing everything they could within current constraints. Governors agreed that both they and senior leadership could best support staff by directing resources towards the areas of greatest impact, particularly improving IT systems and addressing the pressures created by complex SEND behaviours.</p> <p>Part II was taken</p>	
11.	<p>School Updates</p> <p><u>PAN (to include pupils joined/left)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hennock- 44 pupils including pre-school • Moretonhampstead- currently 101 children enrolled in the school + 20 in preschool. <p><u>Pupil wellbeing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hennock- Pupils reported being happy at school. <p><u>Attendance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hennock-95.25% (academic ytd) • Widcombe- 92% (D&V had recently hit the school) <p><u>Suspensions and permanent exclusions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widcombe- 1 fixed term for 1 day <p><u>Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hennock- PTFA very active in organising playground refresh. There was a significant and high-level engagement from parish councillors and members of the local community with this. <p><u>Sustainability Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moretonhampstead- Had a strong sustainability strategy with a range of initiatives and incentives for pupils. JC in Reception led much of this work, running recycling clubs and encouraging pupils to create items using recycled materials. Devon Waste had visited the school to inspire the children. The school also benefited from excellent outdoor learning led by AK, which helped pupils understand sustainability through activities such as growing vegetables and plants and using natural materials in environmentally friendly ways. • Ilington- Much of the work in this area was already happening naturally, and the plan largely reflected existing good practice. Given the school's community and pupil demographic, pupils were already engaged with sustainability, nature and caring for the school environment, including the field, which acted as an important nature space. A local volunteer from the Ilington Wildlife Group was due to lead a weed walk to teach pupils about the natural planting around the site. The AH noted that, as with many areas, the main barrier to further development was limited funding and resources. <p><u>Pre-school update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moretonhampstead- Pre-school continued to be a huge success, with the structure of working with reception, it made the transition for the children going into reception smooth. 	
12.	<p>Standards and Curriculum Trustees Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to draft minutes (please be aware the minutes are draft and remain confidential until approved) • Feedback on any issues raised from local board Chairs in S&C Meeting 	
13.	<p>Next S&C Focus:</p> <p>The Chair shared the next S&C foci, there were no comments or questions raised.</p>	
14.	<p>Evaluation of governance impact</p> <p>The Governors agreed the meeting had been impactful. SEND challenges and Staff wellbeing was discussed at length.</p>	

15	<p>Sharing of good practice and successes across the LAC schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent from Ilsington who has sourced, help fix and make ready 37 computers for BayTech to provide into school by the end of term. • Matt Matthews DCEO – Big thank you from the ilsington AH for personally delivering a computer for a staff member that needed one after theirs stopped working. • An AH shared a positive inclusion example from across the Trust. A child who was profoundly deaf and had global developmental delay initially attended school for only short periods and found separation from her mother extremely distressing. The school successfully recruited a staff member trained in British Sign Language, which transformed the child's experience. After a few months, she was confidently separating from her mother, forming friendships and engaging fully in school life. Other pupils had learned sign names and were increasingly using signing themselves. Governors noted that, despite many challenges, there were also uplifting and successful inclusion stories within the schools. 	
15.	<p>Questions to be dealt with at LAC level (Governance Professional)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A question was raised around Safeguarding software, which the GP said she would raise with AW- the Director of Safeguarding. 	
16.	<p>Questions to be escalated to S&C for Trustee consideration (Clerk)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an assessment of the criticality of initiatives handed down to the schools? i.e. are they critical or nice to haves; do they have impact for student outcomes? With school resources stretched, do these pull resources from front line pupil facing roles, or fall to the AH or other staff who are already stretched? 	

The meeting ended at 6.32pm

Signed by the Chair of the Committee.....on 6th May 2026.