

Moorland Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 25th June 2025

At 5.30pm

Held online via Microsoft 'Teams'.

Attended:

Chair for this meeting - Lynda Cooper (Hennock)

Parent Governors- Rosie Stamp (Ilsington)
Charlotte Vicary-Ward (Bearnese)

Academy Headteacher- Kat Williams (Ilsington)

In attendance:

DCEO- Matt Matthew

Governance Professional- Charlotte Roe

Minutes: Clerk to the Trust- Nicol Bush

| No | Item | ACTION |
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| 1. | Welcome and apologies The stand- in Chair opened the meeting with a welcome to Governors, and extended a welcome to the new Parent Governor for Bearnese Charlotte Vicary-Ward Apologies were received and accepted from OH, VM and RN. | |
| 2. | Declarations of interest There were no new Declarations of interest brought to the meeting. | |
| 3. | Approval of meeting minutes from Wednesday 7th May 2025 The meeting minutes were approved as a true record and were signed accordingly. ACTION- Clerk to send the approved minutes to the HR team, who will arrange for them to be published on the Trust website. | CLERK |
| 4. | Matters arising from Wednesday 7th May 2025 (not on the agenda) 4.1 Outstanding matters arising on PP white paper document. The Governors discussed the PP document. The DCEO explained that the way Pupil Premium funding was managed had not changed. The schools continued to pay through a recharge system to support inclusion and school improvement. The DCEO noted that no requests had been made to alter this arrangement. 4.2- Absence of a Foundation Governor for Ilsington School- To be added to the next Moorland LAC- Matters arising. ACTION- Clerk to add absence of foundation Governor for Ilsington to the next LAC meeting agenda. | CLERK |
| 5. | Clerk Update 5.1 Appointments/nominations The Clerk informed the meeting on the following LAC appointments: Bearnese- Newly appointed Parent Gov: Charlotte Vicary-Ward Wolborough- a Parent nomination had been received and was undergoing paperwork and approval. Ilsington Foundation Governor- Sharon Lord had re-advertised the post. 5.2 Training - Update on training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk register training with DCEO- The GP explained that a new approach was being considered. It was suggested that Directors might be willing to record a short training session. This recording could then be shared with | |

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| | <p>all governors, allowing them to watch it at a time that suited them. Governors could then inform their clerks once they had completed the training. The GP added that looking ahead, it was proposed that this recorded training model could be trialled from September as a more flexible and accessible solution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GP advised that the Trust required more governors to be trained in participating on Exclusion Panels. <p>5.3 Clerk to Local Board Committee to update the governors on any local or national issues- The Clerk stated that the slides from the recent Clerk's briefing were circulated via email to Governors and added there was nothing significant to note.</p> <p>The DCEO highlighted the importance of attracting and retaining pupils as key to maintaining the long-term sustainability of schools. He raised that this was becoming increasingly difficult and represented yet another pressure on headteachers, who were now being asked to enhance their efforts around marketing. He suggested that, where possible, support from parents could be helpful, perhaps through a subgroup of the PTFA or a small marketing team.</p> <p>The DCEO also raised that there was interest in hearing what schools were currently offering to parents, not just what staff were doing for pupils, but how parents were being supported through transition periods. Questions were raised about whether the current support was sufficient, whether it could be improved, and how it was being communicated. The DCEO suggested that even simple steps, such as providing clear guidance on school websites, could make a difference. After reviewing a few school websites, he observed that there was very little information available for parents regarding transition support.</p> | |
| 6. | <p>Focus: Overview of Curriculum</p> <p><i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i></p> <p><u>Hennock</u></p> <p>The ASIP draft for 2025 to 2026 set out key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work on developing the curriculum, building on progress made the previous year. The Cornerstones programme played a key role. A strong focus on improving support in the EYFS and foundation stage. Ongoing use of the Relational Approach, now in its third year at Hennock. Continued focus on writing, with both curriculum improvements and efforts to involve parents. Further work on the OAIP to strengthen SEND provision. <p>Hennock had strengths in delivering a broad and progressive curriculum, especially in subjects like history, geography, art and design and technology. SEND support was strong, with thoughtful classroom strategies in place. EYFS was still a development area. A full-time teacher had been appointed to lead preschool and support transition into Year R. This teacher brought experience from both nursery and Year 5. The enrichment offer included after school clubs and trips, ending with a themed enrichment week in July. This year, the week was more closely linked to learning skills. Outdoor learning was planned for the next year. Participation in all activities was high.</p> <p><u>Ilswington</u></p> <p>Maths stayed strong, with pupils doing well and enjoying lessons. The new Kapow curriculum helped mixed-year classes by giving better structure and resources.</p> <p>There was interest in using Kapow for PHSE next year, as the AH had seen it work well before. English was still a key focus. Next year, the school planned to help pupils improve their reading and writing skills earlier. The AH said these goals were already part of the school improvement plan.</p> | |

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| | <p>There were no curriculum deep dive days, but the AH talked about working with other schools in the Moorland Hub. She mentioned a good partnership with Widecombe Primary, where staff shared ideas and supported each other. This was expected to help teachers and improve lessons.</p> <p>The school offered lots of extra activities, like clubs, trips, and music, supported by teachers and PTA funding. The AH suggested a shared minibus booking system to make planning easier and help families know about trips in advance.</p> | |
| 7. | <p>Focus: Review of attendance for the academic year <i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i></p> <p>Hennock Whole school attendance [as of 21.06.2025]: 97% Attendance was rigorously tracked and traced through the school office; Sarah Reddington (previous AH) had a good handle on this; parental engagement was good.</p> <p>Illington The school's attendance rate stood at 95.5%, which was considered good and reflective of sustained efforts to ensure consistent pupil attendance. Several proactive strategies were discussed that have contributed to the school's strong attendance rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent Engagement: Strengthened communication channels with parents have been highly effective for pupils with persistent absences. - Early Help Initiatives: The school has offered timely intervention to families requiring additional support, ensuring challenges affecting attendance are addressed before they escalate. - Free Breakfast Club Places: Providing free access to breakfast clubs has proven to be a valuable incentive to getting pupils into school. | |
| 8. | <p>Focus: Behaviour and Relational Approach <i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i></p> <p>Hennock (Please refer to Governor visit notes for further clarification on behaviour and Relational approach)</p> <p>Illington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relational plans and support for pupils with additional needs: Relational plans remain a critical part of the school's approach to behaviour management, ensuring tailored support for pupils with specific behavioural, trauma-related, or SEND needs. These plans are linked to individual pupils, providing structured interventions that foster positive interactions and emotional regulation. - Alternative provision and behaviour support - Recent inclusion review- went very well; pupil voice was very positive | |
| 9. | <p>Feedback from Ethos Committees and Community Groups</p> <p>Illington- Parent Governor attended SEGS session on Christian distinctiveness within the curriculum. Other SEGS meeting ongoing, although no Foundation Governor appointment (KW stands in).</p> <p>The AH for Illington said that Sharon Lord had been actively involved, along with Catherine from the church and Vicar John, who had all taken part in meetings as part of the school's SIAMS group. RS had also been meeting and participating in this group. In addition, RS had been supporting the school's monitoring schedule, which formed part of the responsibilities overseen by Sharon Lord. As the school had not had an officially appointed foundation governor during this period, the team had followed the agreed timetable to ensure continuity.</p> <p>RS offered to share the meeting minutes with Governors, the meeting agreed that would be useful.</p> | RS |

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| | <u>ACTION-</u> RS to circulate Ethos minutes to LAC Governors. | |
| 10. | <p>School Updates <i>Governors raised highlights from their reports. The following notes are taken from those reports:</i></p> <p><u>Hennock</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – PAN (to include pupils joined/left)- 9 pupils left this half-term – Staff wellbeing and workload- Please refer to Governor visit notes for further information. – Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA/parental engagement- Please refer to Governor visit notes for further information. <p><u>Illesington</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – PAN (to include pupils joined/left) - 80 for next year. – Pupil wellbeing- The lasting impact of COVID on pupils' emotional development was discussed. While academic performance appeared relatively stable, challenges persisted in Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED). – Staff wellbeing and workload- (See Visit notes for clarification) – Feedback on any parent forum meetings/parents' evenings/PTFA/parental engagement – Safeguarding- Emergency planning has been undertaken between Kat and Becky Humphries to review and refine safeguarding strategies regarding challenging behaviour. Preventative measures to mitigate risks are ongoing, including the use of a network of walkie-talkies for easier and more instant communication around the school site particular of lone teachers or staff that are pregnant. A robust plan is in place to transfer Y6 pupil data over to their new settings, as this was an area of weakness last year. CPOMS: The roll-out CPOMS continues to benefit the school. Safeguard training video: The safeguarding training videos compiled by Alex and Gemma are very helpful at all levels. These are often watched together, as part of staff meetings/training to encourage discussion and reinforce shared responsibility and awareness. <p>The Governors discussed the importance of marketing across the Trust's schools. The Governance Professional noted that it would be helpful to gather ideas from Governors on how to promote Link Academy schools more effectively within the wider community. The Governance Professional requested that LAC Clerks reach out to other LAC Governors to identify anyone with experience in marketing or public relations who may be able to support the Trust's promotional efforts.</p> <p>The GP said she with speak with the DCEO and the incoming CEO regarding marketing.</p> <p><u>ACTIONS-</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAC Clerks to reach out to LAC Governors for help with marketing. • GP to speak with DCEO and incoming CEO regarding marketing. | CLERK/GP |
| 11. | <p>Successes and Sharing of Good Practice Any positive news to share or examples of good practice that could be shared within the LAC/across the Trust.</p> <p><u>Hennock-</u> LC highlighted that staff continued to go above and beyond, organising enrichment trips and end-of-year activities that allowed pupils to get out and about.</p> <p>She noted that a group had recently visited Torquay, and another had gone to the local boys' grammar school. These opportunities reflected the dedication of the staff, particularly the strong and consistent support from teaching assistants. Despite the challenges, pupils remained engaged and positive. Lynda highlighted that when visiting the school, children were active, happy, and participating fully in school life. One particularly successful initiative had been</p> | |

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| | <p>the introduction of <i>open classrooms</i>. Each class took turns hosting an open afternoon, usually around 3:00 p.m., where parents and carers could come in before the end of the school day. These sessions were informal, allowing families to walk around the classroom and see displays of pupils' work. There was no formal presentation, just a relaxed opportunity for children to share what they had been doing.</p> <p>Ilington- The AH reported that the school had been fortunate to access several free training courses through Devon, including sessions on relational support and planning. She, along with another teacher, had attended one of these courses, which was also attended by FM from the Inclusion Hub. As FM did not need to attend the next session in the series, she offered her free place to another colleague—an example of how the team was making the most of available training opportunities and sharing them across the Trust.</p> | |
| 12. | <p>Standards and Curriculum Trustees Meeting (Meeting minutes were circulated to Governors before the 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 <p>There were no comments brought forward to the meeting.</p> | |
| 13. | <p>Next S&C Focus: Focus: TBC</p> <p>LC noted that governor meetings for the next academic year would begin very early, with the first meeting scheduled for 1st October. Governors were advised that, upon returning in the autumn term, they would need to be ready to engage with schools within the first one or two weeks.</p> <p>There were no other comments brought forward to the meeting.</p> | |
| 14. | <p>Key Accountability Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Are children safe? Do they feel safe?</i> 2. <i>Are children attending? Are the places of education fit for purpose?</i> 3. <i>Are children achieving? Are we providing the opportunities and support they need to achieve</i> 4. <i>How are our staff feeling?</i> <p>The Governance Professional explained that the questions were part of a Devon County Council initiative. These materials reflected the framework Devon was using to self-evaluate its own practices. She noted that previous attempts to evaluate impact, such as asking Governors to summarise in a sentence whether they had made a difference, had often proven difficult. As an alternative, the Governance Professional suggested using the Devon framework as a more structured approach.</p> <p>Hennock- LC shared that the inside the school was in great condition, but part of the playground was closed off, which limited outdoor space. This needed to be fixed.</p> <p>Pupil achievement looked positive overall, though the full impact of recent challenges might show in future data. She had some concerns about Early Years but felt they were getting the support they needed.</p> <p>Staff morale had been low a few weeks ago, with some staff feeling unsettled and thinking about leaving. Since half term, things had improved, and there was a more positive atmosphere, helped by SC's calming presence.</p> <p>Ilington- KW said that, like many schools, they sometimes faced challenging behaviour, especially when children became unsettled. However, the school had strong support in place, including relational support plans, and staff talked with pupils to help them understand and manage these situations. Staff used radios to stay in touch across the school and respond quickly when needed. Although the full data hadn't come in yet, KW said Teachers were pleased with the multiplication check results and felt positive about pupil achievement overall this year.</p> | |
| 15. | <p>Summary of Questions to be raised at LAC level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing strategies | |
| 16. | <p>Successes to be shared with S&C committee</p> | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from H&S has been useful at Ilsington • Samantha Freeman had been incredibly supportive with marketing ideas. • Becky Humphries had been an incredible support for Ilsington School. • Positive feedback from Governors on the monthly safeguarding bulletin- Gemma and Alex had done a fantastic job. • Bearnes PTFA had been hugely successful in raising funds and were aware of certain family situations e.g emails containing information on local food banks etc. | |
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The meeting ended at 6.55pm

Signed by the Chair of the Committee..... on October 1st 2025.