SCHOOL NUMBER
11/072

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
GOVERNOR SERVICES

MELLOR ST MARY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

AUTUMN TERM MEETING

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON TUESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Mr P Skupski (Chair)
Mrs H Adams
Ms S Chudasama
Mr P Metcalfe
Mrs C Siggs
Mrs J Taylor
Mrs C Wilding
Mrs E Wilson
Mrs J Embley-Peers (Headteacher)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs M Calland (Clerk)

The meeting was opened with a prayer.

ACTION

25.37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were accepted from Mrs N Burtonwood-Wilson and Mr C Blackburn.

Clerk

25.38 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Following discussion it was agreed that the term of office for the Chair, would be until the first termly meeting of the autumn term in 2026.

It was agreed that Mr P Skupski be elected as chair.

25.39 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Following discussion it was agreed that the term of office for the Vice-Chair, would be until the first termly meeting of the autumn term in 2026.

It was agreed that Mr P Metcalfe be elected as vice-chair.

25.40 GOVERNING BODY MATTERS

a) Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest in relation to agenda items.

b) Membership

The clerk confirmed the following:

Changes since the last meeting:
No changes

Vacancies:
Foundation governor (Ex-officio)

Terms due to expire:
The term of Foundation governor Mr P Metcalfe was due to end on the 21/03/2026.
The term of Foundation governor Mrs E Wilson was due to end on the 03/05/2026.
Mr Metcalfe confirmed that he would seek re-appointment with the diocese and Mrs Wilson would consider her re-application.

There were no further terms due to expire this academic year.

Governors agreed to review and update their personal details on GovernorHub.

c) DBS / Section 128 Checks for Governors

The governing body confirmed that all necessary arrangements were in place and all governors had the required clearances.

The chair confirmed the Single Central Record (SCR) was up to date, and all details in relation to governors had been duly recorded.

d) Register of Business Interests

All governors, observers and associate members to committees were reminded of the need to update the Register of Business Interests on an annual basis, and to ensure that appropriate details were included on the school's website.

Governors agreed to complete the form on GovernorHub. **Governors**

e) Code of Conduct

The Governing Body reviewed and confirmed adoption of the Code of Conduct (2025). Governors were encouraged to reflect on the commitment, duties and responsibilities included in the Code. All agreed to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

f) Disqualification Criteria

The Governing Body noted the disqualification criteria for governors.

25.41 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2025 having been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record, with the following amendment:
Governors had received the audited unofficial school fund accounts 2024/25.

Chair

25.42 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

It was confirmed that all actions from the previous minutes had been completed.

25.43 REVIEW OF COMMITTEES AND NOMINATED GOVERNORS

a) The Governing Body reviewed the constitution and membership of its committees and the requirement to appoint a clerk to each committee. It was agreed that the membership of the committees for the 2025/26 academic year be appointed as detailed on Governor Hub.

The terms of reference and delegated powers of the committees would remain the same as in the previous year.

b) Nominated governor appointments were reviewed and confirmed as detailed on Governor Hub.

25.44 REPORTS

a) Committee Reports

The governors noted and accepted the minutes of the following committee meetings:
Curriculum- 14/10/25
Resources- 21/10/25

The following matters from the meetings were discussed:

<u>Curriculum</u>

Q- In the curriculum meeting it was discussed that staff are completing SEN training to help support you (HT/SENCO), is it too soon to say if this is helping with your workload?
A- Yes, it is too soon to say. The staff who are completing SEND qualifications don't start these until December. TAs are also being trained to support SEN.

Governors agreed they were very pleased that school had achieved the Platinum Sports Award.

Q- How did open week go?

A- 10 families were shown round during the week. They were all very complimentary about the Year 6 pupils. There had also been some ad hoc visits from families. Overall, there had not been as many visits as last year, despite the same level of marketing.

Resources

• School was in a potential clawback position this year.
• The headteacher and chair met with finance officer to determine sufficient expenditure to avoid clawback (another meeting would be arranged prior to the end of the financial year to ensure clawback would be avoided).
• VAT for the outside classroom was not taken until April. If it had had been processed in the same financial year as the work was completed (24/25) clawback may have been avoided.
↳ The chair would follow this up.

The governors ratified the following policies as commended by the Curriculum Committee:
· Attendance
· Admissions
· Anti Bullying
· Behaviour
· Charging and Remissions
· Children in our Care, Pupil Premium,
· Complaints
· Online Safety
· Mental Health and Wellbeing
· Managing Medical Conditions in Schools
·Mobile Technology, Acceptable Use Agreements, Social Media Policy,
· Safeguarding,
· SEND,
· Supporting Medical Conditions, Mental Health and Wellbeing,
· Whistleblowing

b) Nominated Governors

There were no reports from nominated governors.

c) Chair's Action

The Chair reported that it had been necessary to take a Chair's action because a delay in exercising this function would have been seriously detrimental to the interests of the school The Chair confirmed that the following decision had been taken:

Approved building expenditure:
Surface around Trim Trail (£16,800)
Replacing flagged areas at the front of school (appx. £8000)

Three quotes had been obtained for each job.

25.45 SAFEGUARDING

Governors confirmed that they had read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025. It was agreed this would be recorded on GovernorHub.

It was noted that arrangements were in place to comply with the requirements for governor training.
Governors were asked to complete 'Strategic Safeguarding for Governors' training and send their certificates/ evidence of SG training to the headteacher. **Governors**

Governors confirmed they had read and understood the messages from the School Safeguarding team in the Information Booklet.

25.46 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

a) School Improvement

Governors received the SIP, circulated prior to the meeting. The headteacher updated governors on the autumn priorities, summarised as follows:
• Focus on relationships.
• Inclusion- curriculum and support.
• Sustainability.
• SEND-PINS project (ensure environments are SEN friendly)
• Staff training.

b) Headteacher's Report

The headteacher's detailed written report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Mrs Embley-Peers presented the following key headlines:

<u>Key Data</u>
• 145 pupils on roll (5 over PAN).
• 94.1% attendance
• Persistent Absence was 8.7%
• SEND-17 pupils, 12% of school (Below local/national)
• 6 EHCPs with a further 3 pending.

Governors received the DFE attendance comparison report and noted that Persistent Absence was 21st out of 21 similar schools. This was an area of focus. School was below national levels for Persistent Absence and above for attendance.

Cohorts with lower attendance:
Y6- 93.1% (including a pupil on a part-time timetable)
Y2- 93.5% (due to holiday requests)
• The headteacher continued to meet with the LA attendance officer.
• There was an attendance contract in place with one family.
• Attendance below 90% would trigger a letter and support.

• SEND cost £108,159 per year.
• 3 Safeguarding incidents.
• 2 Fixed term exclusions

Q- How is the SEND cost calculated?
A- We identify this as part of the provision map to calculate the cost of a pupil's provision e.g. TA support, EP's.

Q- Is it unusual to have 2 fixed term exclusions?
A- Yes, this is unusual for our school, but it has been due to unique circumstances.

Q- Is Persistent Absence related to the same families and reasons?
A- In some cases it is certain families, for example some families take holidays every year. Some persistent absence is in EYFS, but nothing can be done about this until the pupil turns 5.
Two pupils are on part-time timetables which also comes under PA. These pupils already have support in place.

<u>Curriculum, Leadership and Staffing</u>
• Waiting for the government Curriculum Review before the final updates would be made to the curriculum.
• Looking at themes to ensure they follow British Values including sustainability, equality, diversity etc.
• Staff on leadership pathways.
• Mr Blackburn leading on Instructional Coaching.
• Temporary supply TAs appointed to assist with the needs in school.
• All appraisals had been completed.

<u>Community, Partnerships and Impact.</u>
• Collaboration with the United Benefice schools continued.
•The headteacher continued with SEND networking and training.
• Parental surveys had been sent out but some only had low responses.
• Workshops had been run for KS1/KS2 and SEN, but these had low attendance
↳ Encouraging parental engagement was an area for development.

Q- What feedback was given from the church survey?
A- We had 15 responses. There was a mixture of feedback regarding times. Most families wanted church to be engaging and fun.
It was only a small sample but has been shared with the worship committee. We cannot impose church attendance on staff or families.

Governors agreed that holding services in church, for example Harvest and Easter would help to raise the profile.
The United Benefice would hold a Christmas service at Blackburn Cathedral.

The headteacher was thanked for her detailed report.

25.47 UNAVOIDABLE SCHOOL CLOSURES

The headteacher confirmed there had been no unavoidable full or partial school closures since the last meeting.

25.48 SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2026/27

The governing body noted the school term and holiday framework provided by Lancashire County Council (following consultation with the County Union Secretaries and the Diocesan/Church Authorities).

Governors approved the circulated proposal for school term dates 2026/27 and agreed INSET days on:

1st September 2026
23rd October 2026
4th January 2027
7th June 2027
21st July 2027

Q- Have you considered putting the INSETs together for a week as some schools do?
A- They are training days so if we put them as a holiday, they would have to be twilighted through the year, which can mean late finishes for staff.
We use some of these days for important staff training such as SG or giving staff time for report writing to support their workload.

25.49 EDUCATIONAL VISITS – APPROVAL AND EVALUATION

a) Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational /Off Site Visits Policy and Guidelines

The governing body noted the information provided on the health and safety of pupils on educational visits.

It was confirmed that Jo Embley-Peers and Chris Blackburn were the school's trained Educational Visits Co-ordinators (EVC) and Jo Embley-Peers had Head/Administrator rights for the school's EVOLVE system. The reporting procedures for visits were agreed as:

Option 3
The governing body to approve residential Type B visits <u>only</u> prior to submission to Lancashire County Council. The headteacher/EVC to approve all Type A visits and to approve all other Type B visits for submission to Lancashire County Council. The decisions to be reported to the governing body meeting each term.

The headteacher confirmed that the details recorded above aligned with those on the EVOLVE system and she had returned the e-proforma to the county council by 20 December 2025.

b) Approval and Evaluation of Visits

The headteacher reported details of the following proposed educational visit which was considered and approved:

Tower Wood 17th-19th June 2026

25.50 LANCASHIRE POLICY/PROCEDURE REVIEWS

The governing body confirmed adoption of the following model Lancashire Personnel Policies and Procedures, and also all generic HR policies:

- Absence (Management of Sickness) Guidelines – August 2025;
- Disciplinary & Dismissal Procedure (Support Staf) – June 2025;
- Leave of Absence – June 2025;
- Parental Leave – May 2025.

25.51 FINANCE

a) Finance Policies

The governing body delegated the approval of the finance policies to the Resources committee (Finance manual March 2026)

- Lettings Policy/Charges;
- Charging and Remissions Policy;
- Internal Financial Regulations;

The headteacher was requested to ensure that the Lettings Policy and Charging and Remissions Policy were available on the school website.

b) Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

Governors agreed that Mrs Adams and the headteacher would consider the SFVS on behalf of the governing body. A detailed report together with the completed self-assessment, related party transactions spreadsheet and action plan would be brought to a future meeting of the governing body for approval. **Headteacher/ Mrs Adams**

It was agreed that the headteacher would submit the approved standard to the local authority by 31 March 2026.

c) Budget Sustainability

The governing body had previously delegated the review and setting of all school's budget plan to the Resources Committee.

It was confirmed that the headteacher had reviewed up to date pupil numbers which would form the basis of 2026/27 funding.

d) The Unofficial School Fund 2024/25

The governing body had noted receipt of and approved the audited accounts of the unofficial school fund for 2024/25 at the summer term meeting.

Governors appointed the same auditor for the 2025/26 account.

e) Financial Transparency of Local Authority Maintained Schools and Academy Trusts

The governing body confirmed that the required information had been published on the school's website.

25.52 GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

a) Governor Training Update

Attention was drawn to the courses available through Governor Services, including the online training via the NGAs Learning Link.

b) Training Link Governor Report

Mrs Adams presented a report on the recent skills audit, noting the following:

Identified training needs:
School budgeting
Stakeholder management

Skills and experience included:
• AI
• Primary school experience
• Finance
• Leadership
• Education
• Appraisals
• Risk assessments
• Training
• Experience from non-education backgrounds.

Actions:
• Review available training (Mrs Adams linked several training courses and drew attention to the governor training brochure and booking links on Governor Hub).
• Increase governor visits.

Q- Will we have full governor training on the new Ofsted framework?

A- The headteacher had attended some Ofsted webinars. As soon as enough information was available the headteacher would share this with governors. There were webinars available on the Ofsted website which governors could access in the meantime.
Ofsted were still receiving feedback from the pilot inspections and tweaking the process. It was expected that training would be developed following the feedback.

25.53 SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Governors noted the details of the processes and statutory closing dates outlined in the supporting information.

No changes to the admissions criteria or numbers were proposed, and it was confirmed that the school had consulted within the last seven years.

25.54 COMPLIANCE

The headteacher confirmed the school was compliant with:

- the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- the Department for Education's digital and technology standards.

25.55 INFORMATION, UPDATES AND ITEMS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION AS REQUIRED

The governing body noted the guidance and additional information in relation to:

a) Employee Assistance Programme
b) Attendance and new Attendance Handbook for Schools
c) New Ofsted Framework
d) Updated Relationships and Sex Education Guidance
e) Lancashire Governors Association

25.56 CONFIDENTIALITY

Governors were reminded that all matters discussed at governing body meetings were not for general discussion outside the meeting.

There were no items for recording as a Part b, confidential item.

25.57 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Governors confirmed the next meetings as follows:

Spring term 2026		
Curriculum	Tuesday 24th February	5.30pm
Resources	Tuesday 3rd March	5.30pm

Full Governing Body	Tuesday 24th March	7.00pm
Summer term 2026		
Resources	Tuesday 5th May	5.30pm
Curriculum	Tuesday 2nd June	5.30pm
Full Governing Body	Tuesday 23rd June	7.00pm

CLOSING REMARKS

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and support and duly closed the meeting at 8.40pm.