

NEWSTEAD WOOD SCHOOL

Part A Minutes of Local Governing Board Meeting

23rd September 2025 at 6.30pm

The meeting was held virtually

Naureen Khalid (NK)	Appointed Governor (Chair)	Present
Paula Hills (PH)	Appointed Governor	Present
Steve Penny (SP)	Appointed Governor (Vice Chair)	Present
Alan Blount (AB)	Headteacher	Present
Sol Ako-Otchere (SO)	Appointed Governor	Present
Eileen Xiaoyu Zhang (EXZ)	Parent Governor	Present
Jenny Wilkins (JW)	Appointed Governor	Present

In attendance:

Victoria Faint (VF)

Clerk

Papers Circulated prior to meeting: Agenda; Part A and Part B Minutes of LGB meeting 24.6.25; A Level Subject Analysis, GCSE 2025 Results; Ofsted framework briefing note; H&S Annual Return 24/25; Head's Report; NWS SIP 25-26; Safeguarding Report; Challenge Matrix; Policies: Accessibility Plan September 2025; Attendance Policy September 2025; Exclusion Policy September 2025; ICT Acceptable Usage Policy Staff; Missing and uncollected pupils September 2025; Mobile device Policy 2025; Racial incidents Policy 2025; Records, Retention Schedule; Relationships and Sex Education; Safeguarding Policy; Student Acceptable Usage Policy 2025; UL H&S Policy Statement, Organisation and Arrangements 24 25 signed; United Learning Whistleblowing (Raising Concerns) Policy September 2025.

Item	Minutes	Action
1	Welcome The Chair opened the meeting at 6.33pm.	
2	Apologies for Absence and Quorum: - There were no apologies for absence. - The meeting was confirmed quorate.	
3	Declaration of Interests: No declarations of interest were made in respect of any agenda item.	
4	Governing Board Business: <u>Election of Chair and Vice Chair 2025/26</u> - The Chair informed that she had been appointed by the Trust Board and her term of office was for three years. She had another two years to serve. - Vice Chair: Steve Penny was unanimously elected as Vice Chair for 2025/26. <u>Governor Hub</u> - VF informed that she had made Kathy, Alan's PA, an Admin person on Governor Hub, so that she could upload documents for the meetings.	

- The Chair asked everyone to ensure that they had completed their KCSIE, confirmation of Safeguarding training and Business Interest forms, and that these had been uploaded onto Governor Hub. If any Governors were experiencing difficulty with uploading, paper copies could be given to AB for scanning onto Governor Hub.
- The Chair asked everyone to enrol themselves on training through the school's Governor Hub.

Clerking Arrangements

- The Chair informed that the clerking arrangements would remain with Croydon Education Partnership as before, with VF as the school's designated clerk.

LGB Code of Conduct

- The Chair reminded that the Code of Conduct was on Governor Hub. She asked everyone to ensure that they had read and signed it.

LGB Terms of Reference/LGB Handbook

- A new version of the Handbook was on Governor Hub. There was also a link on the school's website. The Chair said it was important for Governors to know what had been delegated to them, what to do in meetings and what to hold the school accountable for.

Nominated Governor Lead Roles

- The following were agreed at the meeting:
 - Safeguarding: Jenny Wilkins
 - SEND: Eileen Xiaoyu Zhang
 - Finance: Paula Hills
 - Health and Safety: Sol Ako-Otchere
 - Careers: Steve Penny
 - Risk Management: Steve Penny .

Action: The Chair informed she would check the Governors' Handbook to ensure all mandatory roles had been covered.

1

Skills Audit

Action: VF agreed to find a blank skills audit form and put it on Governor Hub for the Governors to complete.

2

Governor Training

- All Governors confirmed they had completed their Safeguarding training.
- SP informed that he had completed Exclusions and Complaints training in the last academic year. It was agreed that this training was still standing for this current year. However, the mandatory training of Safeguarding had to be completed in the current academic year.
- The Chair asked PH to ensure she attended New Governor training, which ensures that new governors understand their role as well as how to remain strategic.

	<u>Protocol for Governor Visits</u> - It was agreed that the Governors should carry out one visit a term, and add their report to the next meeting pack. <u>LGB Self Evaluation</u> - The Chair informed that United Learning had asked the school to self-evaluate the results. She asked the Governors to keep looking at the evaluation form. <u>Governor DBS and Contact Details</u> - The Chair asked everyone to check that they were up-to-date with their DBS checks, and to send their contact details to VF. <u>Visit to the National Cyber Security Centre</u> - SP asked for the minutes of the last meeting to be changed to UK Cyber Security Council. He said that the Council develops and promotes recognised standards for cyber security in support of the Government's National Cyber Security Strategy. - He informed that the Cyber Security Council had agreed to come to a careers evening to talk to the students about a career in cyber, and also to monitor them in the Sixth Form. SP reported that staff from the National Cyber Security Centre were willing to attend a staff day or brief the Governing Body on recent trends in cyber, particularly in relation to schools. <u>Pupil Premium</u> - AB assured that the new Pupil Premium Plan would be put on the website by the end of December. He informed it would be the one-year plan that would be reviewed.	
5	Minutes and Matters Arising: <u>Minutes</u> The minutes of the LGB meeting held on 24th June 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting once the change had been made to UK Cyber Security Council. The Chair would sign a hard copy of the minutes and leave them at the school for safekeeping. <u>Matters Arising</u> There were no matters arising not already covered at the meeting.	
6	Safeguarding: - Everyone confirmed they had read KCSIE 25. - AB confirmed that the school was compliant with the current changes, and all staff had completed their training. Action: AB to arrange for the Safeguarding lead to come into a meeting for ten minutes to talk about safeguarding, and the challenge of the school having a nine-mile radius, covering a wide range of safeguarding needs.	3
7	Report of Headteacher: (See also Part B minutes) The Governors confirmed they had read the Headteacher's Report. Particular items of note:	

Q: Normally Further Maths is taken by able mathematicians who need it for university. What are you seeing behind these results? Also, what is the problem with Chemistry?
A (AB): Anecdotally, some students are taking Chemistry because it is expected of them, rather than they are passionate about it. Regarding Further Maths, in some instances I think they have supported students who are struggling with the demands of the course, but maybe a more structured conversation with parents about the appropriateness of continuing study on FMa would be more appropriate. We have had some robust conversations with the Head of Maths about the specification for Further Maths and the quality of T&L. I shall focus on these departments this year. There has been a change of staff in Chemistry, and the new HoD only joined us in January leaving a small window of opportunity to demonstrate impact last year. However, we have a qualified team of strong teachers in these departments. The new Head of Department is disappointed by the results.

Q: What about History? The results were not as high as I expected.

A (AB): There were no A* in History this year. The Department said they were not expecting them as the cohort had been weaker than in previous years. History has had a qualified and stable team for a number of years, so there was no apparent reason. They were not a bad set of results, but not at the level we expected.

- AB informed that 77% of all grades were awarded at A*-B.
- The grade distribution overall was:
 - A* - 15%
 - A - 32%
 - B – 28%
 - 29% of students achieved all A*/A's.
 - 67 students achieved all A*/A's
- The Average KS4 PA was -0.3 compared to 2024.
- The Chair asked AB to pass on the Governors' congratulations to the staff and everyone involved, particularly with the school's position in the Times.

Q: I notice there were three "U" grades. Were these all the same student?

A (AB): No, they were different students. We carry out a baseline assessment when they start Yr 12, and we got an early flag that they may be on the wrong course, but it was very difficult to change them because of strong parental views about where the subject will take them.

Q: Is it the practical or written that is pulling PE down?

A (AB): It is a tiny number. If they have drop another subject, they may favour PE.

- AB informed they had a very full and thriving Sixth Form. As a result, the smaller subjects of Music and German, which were predicted not to run, were timetabled with healthy numbers.
- Two Sixth Form open evenings would be held in November and December.

Q: Have you seen more private school children?

A (AB): I have seen more, but not sure about the numbers. I will look at the end of September and do a proper analysis.

Q: What is the Future Teachers programme?

A (AB): *That is a year before PGCE or initial teacher training. They work as cover teachers attached to a department. They start their training the following September, but they are already part of the school and have some experience. Some come through an agency with a placement fee and we take them as a salaried member of staff after a 15 weeks probation period. Others are employed directly.*

Q: *What is meant by setting homework centrally?*

A (AB): *It has a couple of advantages. You can set homework on line, ie for Yr 12 Chemistry. It ensures all groups are following the curriculum plan and keeping pace. The work is marked online and one person oversee completion and analyse performance. It helps reduce workload as well.*

Q: *Do you use AI in the school? I note the DfE approved its appropriate use in schools.*

A (AB): *In line with the Trust, we use Co-Pilot, and we are feeding back to them where it is making a difference. I think there are smart ways to use it. We are aware of it, and it is here to stay.*

Q: *What appropriate use will Ofsted look for?*

A (AB) *I have not seen anything explicit about AI from them.*

- AB gave year group details of attendance:
 Year 7: Consistently strong attendance, PA 1–2%.
 Year 8: Improvement over the year, PA as low as 0% in summer.
 Year 9: Higher PA in autumn (7%), but improved by spring/summer.
 Year 10: Mid-level PA (2–5%), stable across year.
 Year 11: Significant rise in PA in summer (17%) due to exams
- He informed that they would be maintaining proactive illness management strategies in late autumn and spring.
- Attendance champions would be used to target Year 9 pupils, ensuring consistency in engagement.
- Punctuality in Years 10 and 11 would be monitored closely, linking in to readiness for exams.
- The strong parental engagement and welfare checks for FSM and SEN pupils would continue.

Q: *Are the average Pupil Premium children achieving better than the rest of their cohort?*

A (AB): *Yes that is the case.*

- A discussion took place over the issue of drug dealing outside school gates and in local parks following JW attending a training course on this matter. This was not specific to Newstead and AB explained the high staff supervision ratio outside of school at the beginning and end of day, and that students were not allowed off site during the day. It was suggested that the names of parks should be included in the list of words that flag up, but AB said that at the moment flagging every park in SE London was unmanageable. AB advised good communication with the police and that information was routinely shared between school and the police. AB does receive regular briefing notes. He assured that the police were keeping them in the loop.

	Q: Do we have a community police officer? A (AB): There have been changes this year in terms of school policing. The police come in and talk to the students, we used to have a police cadets unit use the school in the evenings but disbanded from July. • AB informed that the school would be going into the Ofsted window in February. They were already working through each of the sections in the new framework. • The school was due both an internal and external audit. The earliest for these would be after Christmas. • The results were a big headline, and the GCSE results had been phenomenal. There had been no gaps between Pupil Premium and the SEND cohort. • AB reported that KS5 had been more variable this year. They had a slightly weaker intake, and they were working through the departments to make sure they continue to improve. Further Maths remained an issue. • AB informed that in the main part of the school, numbers were 33 over PAN, in pursuit of class sizes of 30 as opposed to 28. • The size of Year 12 had been increased due to a very successful enrolment round this summer. Numbers were in flux at the start of term as some students were holding multiple places and had not confirmed if they were staying or leaving. • AB reported subjects with noticeable improvements in the 7-9% compared to 2024: ○ Computing, Drama, German, History, Music and RS. ○ English was strong but performed lower than maths by approx. 10%. ○ There were noticeable declines in Art and Design and Further Maths.	
8	Teaching/Learning/Curriculum: • AB informed that the 2024/25 outcome review had been completed. • He asked if there were any questions regarding the School Improvement Plan which had been previously circulated. • AB stated that he was continuing last year's work and the Plan now reflected the key things he wanted to make happen. Q: Re the School Improvement Plan, how is the Sixth Form attendance? A (AB) The fingerprint readers in certain areas across the school including Main Reception, Library and the Sixth Form Block are not working well at the moment. Q: Are the new staff settling in well and are you fully staffed now? A (AB) Yes, they are settling in well and we are fully staffed with the exception of the permanent TA.	
9	Policies: • The Chair informed that some of the policies had just been updated, and there had been no major changes in any of the policies. The following policies came to the meeting: ○ Accessibility Plan September 2025 ○ Attendance Policy September 2025 ○ Exclusion Policy September 2025 ○ ICT Acceptable Usage Policy Staff ○ Missing and uncollected pupils September 2025	

	○ Mobile device Policy 2025 ○ Racial incidents Policy 2025 ○ Records, Retention Schedule ○ Relationships and Sex Education ○ Safeguarding Policy ○ Student Acceptable Usage Policy 2025 ○ UL H&S Policy Statement, Organisation and Arrangements 24 25 signed ○ United Learning Whistleblowing (Raising Concerns) Policy September 2025. ● The policies were unanimously approved at the meeting.	
10	Confidential Matters: ● Part of Item 7: Report of Headteacher	
12	Any Other Business ○ Tennis courts. AB informed that there had still been no movement with padel. He should have had a response by 8th September, but it was still with the planners.	
13	Closure of Meeting Date of next meeting: ● The meeting was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 25th November. This was subsequently moved to Monday 24th November. VF extended her apologies for this date as she already had a meeting in her calendar for another school. The Chair thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 7.52 pm.	

No.	Action Part A	Who	By	Status
Meeting of 23rd September 2025				
1.	The Chair informed she would check the Governors' Handbook to ensure all mandatory roles had been covered.	Chair	For next meeting	Open
2.	VF agreed to find a blank skills audit form and put it on Governor Hub for the Governors to complete.	VF	In the near future	Open
3.	AB to arrange for the Safeguarding lead to come into a meeting for ten minutes to talk about safeguarding, and the challenge of the	AB	A future meeting	Open



	school having a nine-mile radius, covering a wide range of safeguarding needs.			
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Signed: _____	Print Name: _____
Date: _____	