



**WHINLESS DOWN
ACADEMY TRUST**

**Whinless Down Academy Trust
Local Governing Body Meeting
Thursday 9th July 2026**

Priory Fields Headteacher: Miss C Hall
St Martin's Headteacher: Mrs H Thompson
Vale View Head Teacher: Mrs L Sprigmore

Minutes of the Local Governing Body Meeting held at Priory Fields School on Thursday 9th July 2026, at 4:15pm.

Governors Present: Malcolm Bowler, Katie Burton, Francesca Bushell, Henry Coates, Casey Hall (Priory Fields Headteacher), Kirsty Meakings, Chris Scoble Lisa Sprigmore (Vale View Head Teacher), Helen Thompson (St Martin's Head Teacher), Andrew Wright, Shelley Yalden

Others Present: Jacky Cador (Assistant Headteacher at St Martin's School)

Governance Professional: Katie Banes

1	<u>Welcome, Introductions, Resignations and Apologies for absence</u> The Governance Professional welcomed Governors to the first trial LGB meeting whereby all three schools have joined together as one local governing body.
1.1	Apologies for absence were received from Alison Mackintosh and Chris Scoble. Apologies were accepted by the LGB and the meeting was confirmed to be quorate.
1.2	<u>LGB Merge Trial – Acting Chair for LGB Meeting</u> All Governors present were in agreement for Henry Coates to act as Chair of Governors for this meeting, with official elections for governance roles to take place in the first meeting of the new academic year.
2	<u>Declaration of Business/Pecuniary Interests Against this Agenda</u> All Governors were given the opportunity to declare any new business interests and/or declare any pecuniary interests against this agenda. No new declarations of business/pecuniary interests were declared.
3	<u>Minutes from Term 2 and 3 LGB Meetings Published on School Websites</u> The Governance Professional confirmed the minutes from meetings held for Priory Fields and St Martin's/Vale View LGB in Term 2 and 3 are available to view on the school websites.

5.2	<p>Sports Premium Funding</p> <p>Governors received an update on the Government's proposed changes to PE and Sports Premium funding and the rationale behind the reforms.</p> <p>The discussion highlighted national concerns regarding physical activity levels among children and young people. Fewer than half of children are achieving the recommended sixty (60) minutes of daily physical activity, with participation levels particularly low among girls, pupils with SEND, and disadvantaged pupils. Governors noted that increasing participation and reducing inequalities in access to physical activity have been key priorities nationally, alongside tackling childhood obesity, with around one in five children living with obesity by the end of primary school.</p> <p>The Government's ambition is for every child to have equal access to high-quality PE, physical activity and school sport, regardless of background or location.</p> <p>It was explained that the current PE and Sports Premium is ringfenced funding paid directly to primary schools based on pupil numbers, with schools determining how the funding is spent. However, the Government has identified significant variation in provision between schools and is therefore introducing a new model of support.</p> <p>The new approach will replace the existing PE and Sports Premium with a broader system of support through schools and local networks. The aim is to provide professional development, online training, targeted support where it is most needed, improved swimming provision and stronger links with community organisations. The current PE and Sports Premium will be replaced by a PE and School Sport Partnerships Network whereby, the network aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support both primary and secondary schools - provide national expertise locally - improve consistency - target support where it is most needed - strengthen links with community sport <p>The government has announced it will spend over one billion pounds across three years which will go towards the new PE and School Sport Partnerships Network, school sports facilities, equipment, improved accessibility, including for pupils with SEND and transitional funding for primary schools as the PE premium is phased out.</p> <p>During the academic year, 2026/27, the Trust should continue to maximise the current funding, review activities dependent upon sports premium, continue evaluating the impact of sports premium on pupils and prepare for future guidance as more operational details are published.</p>
6	<p>Governance Structure</p> <p>The Governance Professional shared the updated Terms of Reference for the LGB and explained that minor tweaks had been made to ensure delegation of functions between the LGB and Trust Board are defined clearly. Governor responsibilities for monitoring will be agreed at the first LGB meeting in the new academic year and put forward to the Trust Board to approve.</p>
7	<p>Headteacher Report</p> <p>The Headteacher Report was made available to all Governors prior to the LGB meeting. To support all governors in their understanding of the context and priorities for each school, the Headteachers gave a brief overview of their school priorities, with more in-depth information provided within the Headteacher Report.</p>



Priority 2 - Raise standards in writing by strengthening the spelling curriculum and embedding it across the curriculum. Ensure all subjects provide purposeful opportunities for retrieval practice to reinforce core skills, supporting pupils in consolidating key learning and increasing the proportion working at age-related expectations.

Priority 2 for St Martin's is very similar to Priory Fields but, with a bigger emphasis on spelling. There was a high focus on grammar and punctuation throughout the previous year however, spelling continued to require improvement to ensure children reach the expected standard in spelling. Pathway to Spell was introduced in January this year, with positive feedback and results.

Priority 3 - A strong emphasis on reading for pleasure and motivation supports high attainment, enabling the school to maintain the previously consistent record of pupils achieving well in reading at both the expected and greater depth standard.

St Martin's have focused on children fostering a love of reading and reading for pleasure to support high attainment in reading. Reading has been a strength at St Martin's in the past, with achieving above national average results for many years previously. Last year, reading attainment was just below the national average, achieving 72% reaching the expected standard.

A whole-school initiative has been implemented to help develop a love of reading for pupils. Additional purchases have been made to increase the number of reading for pleasure books available for children. There are plans to develop the library area, currently the library area is used as a shared space which is not working well to support reading.

NFER Reading assessments have been used to support teachers in making strong judgements when making their teacher assessments, using the results to develop next steps and plans moving forward.

Priority 4 - Through a focus on research-based approaches to challenge and engagement, all pupils achieve as well as they can. As a result, the percentages of pupils working at GDS across the school continue to increase.

Priority 4 links to the previous Ofsted inspection development point. Since the new Ofsted framework, the focus has shifted slightly. Children have achieved greater depth maintained in reading, writing and maths. Staff continue to have high expectations of all pupils however, it is noted that some children struggle with motivation in school.

Vale View School

Key Priority 1 - The quality of teaching across the school is strengthened through the use of research-based approaches to ensure consistently good teaching – this leads to improved outcomes for all children at the end of key transition points.

Some teaching required support from the School Improvement Lead to help support and develop the quality of teaching. Staff absence and a subsequent vacancy was covered by staff from Priory Fields. Teachers have used the IRIS tools and coaching model to support and develop teaching. Support from the external advisor has had a positive impact across the school, resulting in significant improvements in writing across the school.

Key Priority 2 - To improve clarity, confidence and fluency in spoken and written English across the curriculum by implementing research-based approaches.

An action plan was developed to help address those children who were struggling with composition and writing coherent sentences across the school. To support improving oracy and written English across the school, teachers have been ensuring they are allowing for increased opportunities for children practice their oracy skills. This has also included various techniques to such as competitions and parents workshops to help keep children engaged and motivated.



	<p>school and allowing for a supportive transition, with needs already identified. A Governor asked if additional funding is provided for children with SEN in the nursery. It was confirmed that SENIF funding is received, which allows for additional resources to support learning and towards an additional practitioner in the nursery.</p>
7.4	<p><u>Attendance</u></p> <p>A Governor identified that the number of persistent absentees and attendance has increased and decreased throughout the year and asked if there were any underlying causes for this. Governors were informed that mobility has an impact, throughout the year thirty-two (32) children have left Priory Fields, with thirty-five (35) children joining the school. It was also identified that there are a number of children on part-time timetables, which also impacts attendance percentages.</p>
7.5	<p><u>Suspensions</u></p> <p>It was noted that suspensions and behaviour has been a challenge at Priory Fields. However, the number of suspensions has reduced from the beginning of the academic year to the end of the year. The school have worked hard to review the reintegration processes and seen a reduction in the number of high-level behaviours. Governors commented that the figures indicate the school are setting the high standard of expectations for pupils, with policies and systems in place to support pupils.</p>
7.6	<p><u>Performance and Standards</u></p> <p>Governors were informed there had been a delay in the release of SATs results to schools and that this was an issue for all schools in Kent. Therefore, performance data will be shared in the first meeting of the new academic year.</p>
8	<p><u>Governor Monitoring</u></p> <p>Monitoring reports were available for Governors to view on Governor Hub prior to the LGB meeting.</p> <p><u>SATs Monitoring</u></p> <p>SATs monitoring took place at all three schools, with Governors confirming that schools followed the correct protocol for administering the SATs papers and that there are robust systems in place throughout the testing period.</p> <p><u>Attendance Monitoring – Priory Fields</u></p> <p>Attendance monitoring took place at Priory Fields in term six (6). Governors reported there are clear strategies and interventions in place to support attendance and improving attendance for those who are persistently absent. A level of concern remains, but it is evident there are strategies in place to continually improve pupil attendance.</p> <p><u>Inclusion Monitoring – Vale View</u></p> <p>Inclusion monitoring looked at engagement of pupils and families for clubs at Vale View. Monitoring highlighted pupils feel empowered by having an input to the clubs that are on offer to pupils, with more pupils interested in attending the clubs. Information about clubs are shared at Parent Coffee Mornings, encouraging parents to book children into clubs and informing them of the benefits for their children attending.</p> <p><u>Data Monitoring – Vale View</u></p> <p>A Governor attended monitoring at Vale View to review assessment procedures in place. The monitoring feedback outlined assessment systems and processes which take place when assessing pupil progress. External barriers were highlighted and discussed as part of the monitoring.</p>

