

MINUTES OF MEETING



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Academy: Sparken Hill Academy
Meeting title: Summer (1) term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Thursday 7th May 2026 at 4.00pm
Location: At the academy

Membership

'A' denotes absence

Mr M Bland
Mrs L Bunn
Mrs D Carter
A Mr R Collins
Mr G Eden
Mr P Gawthorpe (chair)
Mr R Lilley (principal)
Mrs C Middleton (vice-chair)
Mrs K Phoenix (vice principal)
Mrs M Pimm
A Mrs S Sparks
Mrs S Wichmann

In attendance

Miss J Littlewood (clerk to the governors)
Mrs V Dashper (school business manager – SBM)

FGB/40/26 Apologies for absence

Action

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Mrs S Sparks (illness).

It was

resolved

that governors accepted and consented to this absence.

FGB/41/26 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

FGB/42/26 Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months

Governors **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the governing body membership list.

The clerk drew attention to the following ends of terms of office:

- Mr P Gawthorpe (partnership governor) – 31 October 2026.

FGB/43/26 Approval of minutes of spring (2) term meeting and any additional special meetings

The minutes of the spring (2) term meeting held on 26th March 2026 having been previously circulated were confirmed as a true and correct record, therefore it was **AGREED** that the minutes of 26 March 2026 were to be signed electronically by the chair.

Chair/
Clerk

Actions in the minutes were reviewed. It was noted that they had been undertaken, were subject to the following update or were to be discussed in the meeting:

FGB/22/26 Approval of minutes of spring (1) term meeting and any additional special meetings

The school business manager advised that the reserves policy was delayed (see **FGB/05/26**) pending the resolution of other budgetary and estate matters.

VD/Clerk

FGB/44/26 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

Governors **DETERMINED** there had been no committee meetings since the last FGB meeting (26 March 2026).

Policies

Governors **RECEIVED, NOTED** and **RATIFIED** the following policies subject to agreed amendments:

- bereaved partners leave policy;
- carers leave policy;
- emergency plan;
- health and safety policy;
- mental health and well-being policy;
- paternity leave policy parental leave policy;
- probation policy;
- quality assurance policy and procedure;
- redundancy and restructuring policy.

FGB/45/26 Staffing update – see confidential item

FGB/46/26 Overseeing financial performance – financial reporting

The SBM provided governors with a summary of the financial picture that included:

- a) budget update 2025/26 and 2026/27 – **see confidential item**;
- b) minibus update;
- c) early years specialist update;
- d) air conditioning update;
- e) management accounts and cash flow statement (P7)

b *Minibus update*

The SBM reported that a meeting had been scheduled with GM Coachworks for tomorrow (8 May 2026) regarding the minibus specifications – further information was to be provided to the F&P committee meeting (4 June 2026).

VD/Clerk

c *Early years specialist*

The SBM informed governors that the early years specialist training course was fully funded and there was no contribution required from the academy.

Q. Governors questioned whether the amount had been included in the budget calculations shared?

A. The SBM communicated that the money had not been included in the budgetary calculations.

d *Air conditioning proposal*

The SBM alerted governors to the further exploratory work undertaken about the associated electrics required for the proposal and the impact on the quotes provided by the companies (see **FGB/25/26 d**).

Q. Governors asked about the preferred supplier now the quotes were in?

A. The SBM shared the reasons and rationale for choosing the preferred supplier, SCE Renewables and the intention to go ahead with the installation.

Q. Governors enquired whether the quote was a flat rate cost?

A. The SBM reassured governors that a conversation was being undertaken with the company to explore the load testing, etc.

Q. Governors queried how long the work might take?

A. The SBM advised that this was currently unknown – the principal added that there was the potential to relocate classes to allow the work to be undertaken but this required additional safeguarding processes to be implemented.

Q. Governors questioned the plan if the company was unable to complete the work in the May half-term?

A. The SBM clarified that the work was not possible whilst the building was occupied therefore it would then need to take place during the summer holidays.

Following discussion, it was

resolved

that governors **APPROVED** the commissioning of SCE Renewables to install air conditioning (£50,645 plus VAT).

e Management accounts and cashflow statement (P7)

The chair **CONFIRMED** that he had received the management accounts for period 7, and they had also been uploaded to Governor Hub.

Governors **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the cash flow spreadsheet (P7) in line with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook – **see confidential item**.

Governors **THANKED** the SBM for presentation of the latest financial information and answering questions posed.

FGB/47/26 Review risk management arrangements

The SBM presented the proposal to continue with RPA for 2026/27 at a cost of £29 per pupil – an increase of £2 per pupil – the SBM added that the recent service from RPA following the leak in the private day care setting had been a positive experience re. service and cover.

Q. Governors asked how pupil numbers were calculated?

A. The SBM verified that pupil numbers were derived from the GOV.uk website.

Governors **APPROVED** the purchase of RPA (risk protection assurance).

Governors **RECEIVED, NOTED** and **APPROVED** the risk management policy as presented.

FGB/48/26 Estates Management**a Private Day Care Setting – see confidential item****b Boiler Update**

The SBM reported that an alternative provider had now been sourced (Ebtech – the company who were carrying out the heat meter replacement) – service of both

boilers was scheduled for May half term and this would help identify what was required for the boiler that was currently not working, including costs to repair.

FGB/49/26 Information from the Corporate Director for consideration and action

i) *Reducing the need for restraint in schools through Inclusive Practice and Reasonable Adjustments*

The clerk provided a summary of the content of the report and drew governors' attention to the following:

- updated DfE guidance on restrictive interventions was effective from 1 April 2026 – the guidance prioritised prevention, early support and de-escalation;
- Nottinghamshire County Council continued to promote trauma-informed, respectful approaches through its revised 'Understanding Behaviour' training;
- the statutory DfE guidance set clear expectations for lawful use, recording and reporting and outlined responsibilities for leaders and governing bodies;
- questions for governors to ask.

The safeguarding governor **AGREED** to examine the 'questions for governors to ask' at the next link governor visit and feedback at the FGB meeting (16 July 2026).

CM/Clerk

The principal reassured governors that the academy was very tight on this and highlighted that:

- the school followed the Team Teach model;
- the relational schools' approach was important to the reduction in the need for restraint;
- refresher training for stage 1 was planned;
- there had been no use of physical restraint in school for many years.

Q. Governors enquired who had completed the training?

A. The principal informed governors that seven of the teachers had undertaken the training.

ii) *The Revised Statutory Guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education*

The clerk provided a summary of the content of the report and highlighted the following information:

- the updated DfE statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education must be implemented by 1 September 2026;
- the guidance outlined legal duties and emphasised high-quality, evidence-based teaching to support pupils' wellbeing, development and safeguarding;
- the guidance set key principles, including:
 - engaging pupils and parents;
 - ensuring age-appropriate and sequenced learning;
 - delivering curriculum content through skilled, well-trained staff within a whole-school approach;
- schools retained the flexibility to tailor content to local context;

- Ofsted will consider RSHE provision as part of broader personal development and safeguarding responsibilities;
- questions for governors to ask (feedback 16 July 2026).

FGB/50/26 Communication received and updates

a *From the principal*

The principal alerted governors to the following:

- 2 x SAR (subject access requests) which had been responded to in line within timelines and guidelines;
- 1 x complaint had been raised but considerably outside the timeline within the school complaints policy;
- 1 x flexible working request covered under item **FGB/45/26**.

b *From the clerk – Governor Newsletter*

The clerk drew attention to the content of the first 2026 summer term edition of the Nottinghamshire Governor e-newsletter and highlighted the following items:

- welcome and overview from governor services;
- safeguarding and HR updates;
- governor strategic HR responsibilities including governors' high-level responsibilities for
 - workforce strategy, culture, pay;
 - equality, compliance and staffing risks;
- clerking and minutes – expectations with an emphasis on the statutory and procedural importance of professional, independent clerking and accurate minutes;
- articles for governor information:
 - governor strategic HR responsibilities including governors' high-level responsibilities for
 - workforce strategy, culture, pay;
 - equality, compliance and staffing risks;
 - service personnel – exceptional Leave of Absence – summary;
 - academisation – information for schools approaching conversion;
- articles related to governor roles:
 - summer term actions for governing boards;
 - new model agenda for committee/FGB circle model;
 - governor wellbeing;
- national updates including:
 - online safety consultation;
 - new screen-time guidance;
 - reading concerns;
 - RSHE changes;
 - teacher recruitment plan; and
 - rise in Ofsted complaints;
- Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) programme which encourages governors to champion HAF to support vulnerable pupils during holidays.

FGB/51/26 Health & Safety and Safeguarding

The principal notified governors of two low-level concerns dealt with in line with policy.

FGB/52/26 Approval of in-service training days 2026-2027

Governors **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the following Inset days from the principal with the request that one was disaggregated* for twilight training:

- Tuesday 1st September 2026;
- Wednesday 2nd September 2026;
- Monday 2nd November 2026;
- Monday 12th April 2027;
- * Wednesday 28th July 2027.

Following discussion, it was

resolved

that governors **APPROVED** the in-service training days as presented (with one day disaggregated).

FGB/53/26 Review of Trust's Scheme of Delegation for academies and responsibilities of the Trust Board**a Agree committee structure and membership of committees**

Governors **AGREED** to retain the current committee structure and membership:

- finance and personnel – all governors – Mrs C Middleton (chair);
- audit – Mrs L Bunn, Mrs D Carter, Mr G Eden, Mr P Gawthorpe, Mrs C Middleton, Mrs M Pimm, Mrs S Sparks (chair), Mrs S Wichmann;
- admissions – Mr P Gawthorpe (chair), Mrs M Pimm, Mrs S Wichmann.

In addition, governors **DETERMINED** that any matters related to pay progression were to be approved at the finance and personnel committee without the presence of staff governors and identified governors in case of appeal.

b Scheme of Delegation 2026/27

Governors **RECEIVED**, **NOTED** and **APPROVED** the scheme of delegation 2026-2027 as presented.

c Annual Planner 2026/27

Governors **RECEIVED**, **NOTED** and **APPROVED** the annual planner 2026/27.

d Policy Checklist 2026/27

Governors **RECEIVED**, **NOTED** and **APPROVED** the 2026/27 policy checklist.

e Review of and appointment to link governor roles

The principal presented the proposed governor monitoring schedule (uploaded to Governor Hub) with governor links aligned to the school improvement plan priorities.

Governors **AGREED** to consider the link roles and finalise links at the summer (2) term meeting.

**All to note
/Clerk**

FGB/54/26 Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training audit and requirements for 2026/2027

The training coordinator **THANKED** those governors who had completed all the mandatory training however, she **REMINDED** governors that there were still a few gaps in the effectiveness tool on Governor Hub.

**All
governors**

The training coordinator **ENCOURAGED** all governors to update their training record under their profile on Governor Hub as soon as possible.

Governors **AGREED** the following training had been undertaken:

- finance training – all governors.

FGB/55/26 Review of governor monitoring visit reports – key actions for governors

Governors **DETERMINED** that there had been no governor visits since the last meeting.

FGB/56/26 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account

Governors identified impact through:

- consideration and discussion regarding governance matters including:
 - membership, governor training and monitoring;
 - review of delegation and organisation of committees;
- scrutiny and challenge relating to financial matters specifically:
 - budget reviews and budget setting;
 - cash flow and investments;
 - availability of grant funding figures;
- consideration and discussion related to risk management arrangements, safeguarding and health & safety;
- increased awareness and understanding of staffing matters through questions and discussion related to:
 - recruitment and capacity;
 - changes to support staff arrangements;
 - flexible working requests and impact;
- questions and challenge regarding estates management including:
 - contracts, competitiveness and value for money;
 - consideration of project developments: aircon and minibus;
 - communication, conversation and resolutions re. private day care setting;
- consideration and review of policies, Corporate Director's reports and the summer (1) term governor newsletter.

Accountability continued to be evidenced in all governing body and committee meetings through regular review of actions, question and investigation.

FGB/57/26 Confirmation of dates for 2025-26

The governing body

agreed

Summer Term 2026

- Thursday 4th June 2026 (4.00pm) – F&P and Audit Committees;
- Thursday 16th July 2026 (9.30am) – FGB Meeting.

All to note

FGB/58/26 Confirmation of dates for 2026-27

The governing body

agreed

Autumn Term 2026

- Thursday 17th September 2026 (4.00pm) – FGB Meeting;
- Thursday 8th October 2026 (9.30am) – F&P and Audit Committees;
- Thursday 19th November 2026 (9.30am) – F&P Committee (Streets);
- Thursday 3rd December 2026 (9.30am) – FGB followed by AGM/Members;

Spring Term 2027

- Thursday 21st January 2027 (9.30am) – FGB Meeting;
- Thursday 25th February 2027 (4.00pm) – F&P and Audit Committees;
- Thursday 25th March 2027 (9.30am) – FGB Meeting;

Summer Term 2027

- Thursday 6th May 2027 (4.00pm) – FGB Meeting;
- Thursday 10th June 2027 (4.00pm) – F&P and Audit Committees;
- Thursday 15th July 2027 (9.30am) – FGB Meeting.

FGB/59/26 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

that there were four confidential items and that the confidential sections of the following reports:

- spring (2) term FGB minutes;
- financial report and associated documents;
- governor monitoring schedule and visit forms;

be deemed confidential but that all other papers and reports be made available as required.

The meeting closed at 5.33pm



Signed:

(chair)

Date: 16th July 2026