

THE GOVERNING BODY OF MILL LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held at 4:00pm at the school on Thursday, 13 November 2025.

PRESENT

Mrs A Iltaf (Chair), Miss C Barlow (Head Teacher), Mrs H Rawat, Mr M Seedat, Ms K Waugh (online), Miss C Winnett.

In Attendance

Mr W Schonenberg (Clerk)
Mrs B Ottewell (School Business Manager)

27. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED: That Mrs A Iltaf be unanimously re-elected as Chair for a further period of one year.

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs R Raja and Mrs A Wilby and consent was granted in both cases.

29. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE RAISED UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Head Teacher reported that she had a number of small updates to make which may be addressed throughout the meeting.

30. REPRESENTATION

Governors noted the following matter of representation:

<u>Appointment Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>
Mohammed Seedat	Co-opted	6.10.2025

The Head Teacher stated that she will be advertising for parent governors following the full return of the governor skills audits.

Action 1: The School to advertise the parent governor vacancies.

31. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED: That Miss C Winnett be unanimously re-elected as Vice Chair for a further period of one year.

32. MINUTES OF THE ANUAL MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2025

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the annual meeting held on 18 September 2025 be approved by the Governing Board as a correct record.

33. MATTERS ARISING(a) Representation (Minute 4 refers)

The parental governor vacancies would be carried over and the School will try again to fill these vacancies.

(b) Head Teacher Appraisal Panel (Minute 6 refers)

Both the Chair and Vice Chair had emailed their availability and a meeting date has been agreed with the KLP. This matter is now closed.

(c) Potential Governor Appointment (Minute 24 (b) refers)

Mr Seedat has been appointed and the matter is now closed.

34. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

This matter was brought forward on the agenda. Mrs Ottewell spoke to the following points:

Governors had received a budget breakdown, as at the end of period 7 (October).

The School is running with a contingency of approximately £53k. £22.5k of this sum is due to be repaid to the DfE for un-incurred academisation costs. All summer repair works have been paid for and included in the shown balances. The toilet repairs will be partially offset by an insurance claim and the balance paid for by the capital budget.

Governors undertook a short discussion on the previously stated academisation expenses in order to understand how these were shared out amongst the potential partner schools.

The School will need to meet an additional £17k staffing costs but will also benefit from an estimated £65k extra income due to rising pupil numbers. Expenditure remains in line with the budget.

The School is evaluating options on the front door entry corridor. This was an action from the recent Health & Safety audit. Governors acknowledged that this was a safeguarding weakness and that it should be addressed. Options have been raised with Kirklees.

Action 2: School to follow this up with Kirklees as a priority.

Q. The Chair asked whether governors would find it beneficial to have an online refresher training session on the Budget?

A. Governors agreed that this would be beneficial and looked forward to undertaking it with the School Business Manager.

35. BENCHMARKING

The SBM reported that the link shared with governors would enable them to access this website and examine, at their leisure, any budget costs with comparable schools. For Mill Lane the only outlier was admin costs. On examination it was found that this was due to regular coding of classroom printing costs which should have gone to resources. This will now be amended. Mill Lane Primary School is mid-range across all of the budget headings.

Governors entered into a short discussion on the relatively high costs of the buy-in for catering and cleaning.

Mrs Ottewell left the meeting at 4.35 pm.

36. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT/DATA REPORT AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS

The Head Teacher had provided a written report. She was asked to summarise the key findings.

(a) Budget

The increase in pupil numbers at census in October is expected to generate in the region of an additional £65 000 in the next budget (2026-27).

(b) Attendance

The Government has given attendance an increased priority. Every half term the DfE will publish national average attendance figures whilst grouping schools in sets of 20 and publishing this data. This will give schools the opportunity to contact "best performers" and learn what further they can do to further improve attendance.

Kirklees is replacing the Integris management information system with Arbor management information system.

Last year the overall attendance rate was 93.3%. Currently Mill Lane stands at 95.2% which is a considerable improvement. The practise of attending and the culture around attending have both improved. Lateness has also improved. The Head Teacher is focused on attendance daily. SEN children have better attendance rate than non-SEN children.

Pupils in receipt of free school meals attend less well than those not and this is now informing a piece of research work which may lead to changes in process for attendance.

(c) Admissions

The Head Teacher asked whether governors wished to increase school places. After a short discussion it was agreed that the PAN would remain unchanged.

(d) Safeguarding

Encompass (Police) reports, where cases arise, will now be included in each Head Teacher's report going forward. All case actions are recorded and provide clear accountability and traceability. There are currently no LAC at Mill Lane. The School is losing two children with EHCPs, but there are approximately 10 newer cases to process to EHCP level. The School had taken the decision to make 1 exclusion for 1.5 days within the current school year.

Q. What is happening with the extra SEN funding received from the SEND Cluster?

A. £5k was used to set up the second Learning Den.

(e) Health & Safety Report

The Health & Safety Report has been shared with governors and all urgent/immediate actions (red and amber on the report) have been addressed positively with the exception of the unsafe entrance to school which is flagged red on the report. There is a

risk assessment in place for the front door which governors have received but this was not deemed to be foolproof. The risk assessment with a covering email will be sent by the Head Teacher, on behalf of the governors, to Asset Management with a copy to Health and Safety in the hope that Kirklees will raise this as a priority in terms of capital expenditure.

(f) Data

Current Year 6 data was discussed and the Head Teacher explained that reading was very strong but maths was an area of relative weakness, although still likely to be above national average by the time children sit their SATs. As the SDP is reviewed it may be that maths is added to it.

(g) Staffing

Governors were reminded that Miss Massarella would be leaving at Christmas and that Mr Rhodes had been appointed to replace her. The Head Teacher reported that Mr Rhodes comes with excellent references and has extensive experience of teaching across key stage 2. With some potential staff changes being discussed for next September, it could be that there is an all-male team of teachers in key stage 2.

Parental engagement is ok at parent evenings but could be better at other times. This remains a challenge for school and has been for a very long time.

Q. On attendance are you aware of the new reports and comparison data from the Government?

A. Aware yes, but I need to investigate this further first including the option of joining an attendance hub.

Q. Regarding SEN support, how sustainable is the Learning Den?

A. The HT explained that the Learning Den was originally set up to meet the needs of pupils who could not successfully remain in a mainstream class so school needed to find a way to make the original and the new Learning Dens sustainable.

The funding for both Dens comes directly from EHCP money so, as part of the SEND action plan, there will be a process created that will mean that EHCP assessment requests are made sooner. This needs to remain high on the agenda for Mill Lane Primary School due to the imminent White Paper around SEND as the impact of changes as a result of this is not yet known.

Mrs Raja and Mrs Iltaf met with the Deputy Head Teacher in October to better understand SEN procedures. A report of the meeting will be shared in due course. Teachers are following the graduated approval process, line by line. Teachers know their children and should be confident in completing both the Graduated Approach and the IAPDR documents which will streamline and expediate the process of applying for an EHCP should it be needed. The School needs to move from reactive case handling to more pro-active assessments utilising staff knowledge. Staff need to be empowered to complete these reports in a more timely manner as outlined above.

The Head Teacher informed governors that all TA's are fully utilised on interventions Mondays through to Friday but in January this will change from Monday to Thursdays so that cover is freed up on Fridays to enable SEND admin to be completed. The Chair expressed that SEN governors need to see these plans in order to be able to fulfil their own roles of holding the leadership team to account. This was agreed.

Q. On the data there is a group of Year 5 pupils who are not comfortable with early learning concepts?

- A. The Head Teacher explained that she needed to go back to her records to explain, with accuracy, the reasons for this – governors will receive this information by email.

Governors went on to discuss that some children in Key Stage 1 find more formal learning a struggle which is why it will be beneficial to have a former EY teacher in Key Stage 1 in September 2026.

The Head Teacher was thanked for her report.

37. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Head Teacher asked whether governors would be happy to hold a single meeting with just the School Development Plan as focus. This could be held online and would be written up. Governors agreed with the suggestion.

Action 3: Head Teacher to arrange date and time of this meeting.

38. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES

This item had been covered in the Head Teacher's report above.

39. SAFEGUARDING & ENCOMPASS

This matter had been covered in the Head Teacher's report above.

40. GOVERNING BODY DEVELOPMENT: ACTIONS AND PRIORITIES 2025/26

The Chair expressed her desire to meet with governors every term. The Chair will arrange these meetings to suit individual governor's commitments.

41. POLICIES FOR REVIEW BY FULL GOVERNING BODY

There were no policies to review at this point in the school year.

42. CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2027/28

Governors discussed potential advantages and disadvantages of amending their PAN. It was agreed to await the Reception numbers next year before considering this matter further. Governors reconfirmed their existing PAN.

43. GOVERNOR DBS REQUIREMENTS

Governors noted the given advice and entered into a detailed discussion. It was agreed that the Head would contact the Governor Clerking Service to find out the implications of adopting Option B for re-appointments and share with governors.

Following this, the governors agreed to adopt the LA recommendation as follows:

- New Appointments (option B): prospective governors to be restricted until their DBS certificate has been seen and verified

In both cases, a Section 128 check and satisfactory new DBS check is required before appointment or re-appointment to the Governing Board.

44. GOVERNANCE OBJECTIVES

This matter had been covered by agenda item 14. Governors asked for it to be removed from the agenda going forwards.

Action 4: Governor Clerking Service to remove this agenda item.

45. BATLEY AND BIRSTALL HUB

There were no updates at this time.

46. PREVENT

Tier 1 training was undertaken in January 2025. The Head Teacher reminded governors that both Prevent and Basic Safeguarding training were mandatory for all governors. The School is missing some governors' training certificates. The Chair informed that she will resend the NGA link which will facilitate individual training sessions for those governors that need to update their status.

The Head Teacher agreed to send the link to Tier 1 training for all governors to complete and that all governors were invited to the school virtual Tier 2 training which was being held on 7 January 2026 (link sent previously).

47. REVIEW OF THE INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNMENT

Governors queried what this might mean. If it referred to the previous instrument of governance then governors agreed to leave this unchanged.

48. GOVERNOR ALLOWANCE GUIDANCE

The guidance was noted.

49. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS

Mrs Raja and Mrs Iltaf have undertaken two SEN visits this term. The Chair undertook one budget meeting whilst a second had been rescheduled. Mrs Rawat is scheduled in for a Safeguarding visit next week and Ms Winnett is booked to undertake an Early Years visit next week.

50. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Website Update

The Chair stated that governors need to review the Website, checking that all relevant information is up to date.

Mr M Seedat was asked when he would like to make a first visit to the school. He was invited to come in informally and be shown around. Some governors expressed an interest in dropping into the Learning Dens.

(b) Martyn's Law

All public buildings need to have procedures in place for evacuations and lockdowns. Four staff have already been on appropriate training. A full lockdown practise has already been undertaken. The School will undertake more age-appropriate practices going forward. This matter ties in with the front door issue.

Regarding evacuations, the former evacuation point is now unsuitable for smaller children. The school is looking into a new evacuation assembly point.

(c) Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Head Teacher shared the results of this annual review for WF17 6EG being Mill Lanes' post code index. Governors were invited to look this up on the gov.uk website.

52. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED: That future meetings of the full Governing Body be held at 4:00 pm on the following dates:

Thursday, 5 March 2026

Thursday, 11 June 2026

53. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

RESOLVED: That no part of these minutes, agenda or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available to the school, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

The meeting closed at 6.05 pm.

ACTION LOG:

Minute	Action	By Whom
30	<u>Representation</u> The School to advertise the governor vacancy.	School
34	<u>Front Door Access</u> School to follow this up with Kirklees as a priority.	School
37	<u>SDP Meeting</u> Head Teacher to arrange date and time of this meeting.	Head Teacher
44	<u>Agenda Item</u> Please remove this agenda item.	GCS