



ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Monday 9th February 2026
Time: 5.00pm
Venue: Didsbury High School

Clerk: K Warhurst
Present: J Game, K Houghton, A Clayton, M Hopkins, M Abadi, B Moss, J Taylor and D Woolley

Action	Initials
School tours for new Governors to be organised	KH
Safeguarding link update to be delivered at next meeting	MA
Newsletters to be sent to Governors for relevant year groups	KH
Governors to inform the Clerk of any changes to their Register of Business interests	All
Governors are asked to complete the mandatory training	All
Clerk to contact Governors regarding their learning plans	KW

Agenda – Part 1			
Category	Item	Notes	Action
1	Governance Arrangements	<p>Attendance updates</p> <p>A Clayton presented data regarding schools' attendance and went through each of the categories. AC explained they review attendance every week, reviewing each category and sub-group, and looking at gaps and areas for improvement.</p> <p>AC informed the governors that the school receive a comparison report every half term/termly. This compares the school to similar schools (schools with similar numbers for pupil premium, SEMH etc). Overall, the school is 10th out of 21 schools.</p> <p>Q – Do we know who the other schools are?</p> <p>AC confirmed the schools are from all over the country and they are only provided with the names of the schools who are higher up on the list, not below them. If a school is towards the bottom of the list, they are encouraged to reach out to schools higher up the list.</p> <p>AC confirmed the school's attendance was stable</p>	

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		<p>for half term 2. They had improved attendance for November which may have been linked to the inflatable rewards day for that month.</p> <p>AC advised that attendance dropped at the end of term. This can be down to several reasons, one of which is unauthorised term time holidays.</p> <p>Q – Does attendance drop for every year group?</p> <p>Yes, every year group drops at the end of term.</p> <p>AC explained rewards schemes are mainly run over a short period; the one-month inflatable reward in November was the longest one they have done.</p> <p>Q – If a student has an absence, are there other chances to get rewards?</p> <p>Yes, students are put into a draw for gift vouchers.</p> <p>School was above on majority of areas. It is important to note that the majority of students want to come in to school.</p> <p>Schools’ approach to SEN is right for these students and we go above and beyond to support them but this approach does effect attendance figures. There are a lot of absences linked to anxiety and poor mental health but school believe not putting these students on SEN support is wrong.</p> <p>As part of the transition from Year 6 to Year 7, school can review information and identify students who are likely to be persistently absent or take term-time holidays. School will communicate to the students and families that they are aware of these trends and this will be monitored.</p> <p>It was mentioned that attendance has increased on a Wednesday afternoon and school believe this is linked to the Electives.</p> <p>AC confirmed school are aware of the areas to focus on and the students they need to work with and support.</p> <p>She went on to say the Trust is looking at using their MIS system reports for attendance monitoring, including letters to parents providing absence data in days as well as percentages.</p>	
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		<p>School is also increasing their use of Manchester’s escalation pathway which results in the council sending notice to improve letters and attendance is tracked and results in a fine if no improvement over a set period of time.</p> <p>Q – Are parents/carers aware of this?</p> <p>It is in the attendance policy.</p> <p>AC mentioned the bulletins that are sent every Friday and the tutor group with the best attendance is mentioned, including their attendance percentage.</p> <p>The SEN team work alongside the pastoral team to review attendance and arrange meetings with families.</p> <p>School is trying everything possible but the main thing is for school to be a safe place and students want to attend.</p> <p>AC advised that nationally attendance is being discussed at multi-agency meetings and a lot conversation around ‘Educational neglect’.</p> <p>AC was thanked for the presentation.</p>	
	Apologies	Apologies were received from H El-Jarn, R Watt and M Hill	
	AOB items	None received	
	Declarations of interest in any of the agenda items	There were no declarations of interest made in any of the agenda items.	
	Register of Business Interests	The Register of Business Interests was circulated by the Clerk and Governors are asked to record any changes to their record.	All
	Code of Conduct	All the new Governors agreed to adhere to the Code of Conduct.	
	Part 1 Minutes	<p>Governors <u>approved</u> the minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2025 as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>There were no matters arising and all actions had been completed.</p>	

		Membership: Recruitment Update/Succession Planning	KH welcomed the new Governors and offered each of them a school tour from a Governor perspective.	KH
		Scheme of Delegation	DW provided a brief overview of the Scheme of Delegation for the new governors. It was also confirmed there were no material changes to note to the Scheme of Delegation.	
		Trust Board update	Governors reviewed the report from the October and December 2025 meetings and had no further questions.	

2	School Performance & Accountability	<p>Review Head of School including: Key aims, assessments, student migration and behaviour</p>	<p>Governors reviewed the Head of School Report.</p> <p>The report listed the areas of focus for this year including:</p> <p>Better GCSE and A-Level results which are both looking positive this year.</p> <p>School also will be focusing on behavioural culture of our community and reduction in suspensions and permanent exclusions.</p> <p>Year 13 cohort is 80 this year compared to 29 last year. There are 5 students who have offers for Oxbridge.</p> <p>Staff recruitment and retention is another focus. It is difficult to recruit in the current climate and we have always done well but it isn't easy. Staff retention is more important. The staff are brilliant but we drive staff to improve as better is always possible.</p> <p>School wants to maintain popularity in the local community. We are oversubscribed, receiving a large number of applications for 2026/27.</p> <p>Finally, school want the parents/carers to feel part of the process and share our vision for their children. They have not felt as connected as the school grows and school is aware communication is a big thing.</p> <p>The governors reviewed data on assessments, teacher predictions and comparisons to 24/25 cohort. The current Year 11 and Year 13 are looking in a good place.</p> <p>Year 10 are a high achieving year and did really well in their Year 9 languages exams and have started KS4 brilliantly. This year group has a high level of pupil premium and SEN students.</p> <p>Students on FSM do better at DHS than at other schools and attainment 8 figures surpass Manchester and National figures.</p> <p>With regards to student migration, the number of students leaving school was far fewer this time last year. This higher figure is mainly down to the number of students who have emigrated or</p>	
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			<p>relocated so far this year.</p> <p>There are a number of students off site at other schools or at DHS from other schools. DHS have been praised by a Pupil Referral Unit for the work done at the school to give students a fair shot at a fresh start and a sense of belonging.</p> <p>Suspensions for term 1 were the lowest since the school had a full year 7 to Year 11 cohort.</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding internal suspensions and what school are already doing. The governors were informed school think carefully about suspensions and they review whether a day at home would change behaviour.</p> <p>The governors reviewed the list of university offers for Year 13 and it was commented on the number of universities on the list whereby the students would have to pass an interview was impressive and the amazing range of subjects.</p> <p>Q – With regards to staff retention, do they complete a pulse survey?</p> <p>Yes, staff complete an annual survey but we also promote an open-door policy so staff feel they can talk about things at any time.</p>	
3	Governor Monitoring	Finance update including pupil numbers, bench marking and value for money	<p>Governors reviewed the Management Accounts to 31st December 2025.</p> <p>The current position is a looking healthier than last year but governors were made aware that the government is not funding the rate of the pay rises and staffing costs will increase.</p>	
		Policies – undertake school level reviews and note phase/Trust level policies	Governors were informed the Safeguarding policy was approved by the Chair in between meetings.	

		School Risk Register – review risks and any significant changes in risk levels / mitigating actions	KH explained the School Risk Register is updated every year and risks can be downgraded or amended. One risk to note is that it has been identified that the original builders made the staircase too narrow due to the location of the bannister. This impacts the fire evacuation plan which requires students to be able to evacuate down the stairs in a specific time. This has resulted in a review of the timetable to ensure only a certain number of students are above ground floor level at any one time. This is a short-term solution until the staircase is altered.	
		Safeguarding Link Governor update	It was agreed that M Abadi will provide a Safeguarding Link update at the next meeting as he is due to attend school on 31 st March 2026.	MA
4	Governor Development	Review Trust Training Plan	Governors were reminded as to how to access the online training courses and were asked to complete the 4 mandatory training modules. They were also made aware of additional courses available for new Governors. The clerk will email Governors individually regarding their training plans.	All KW
		Minute any training undertaken by Governors since the last meeting	Governors were asked to notify the Clerk of any training undertaken and provide certificates.	
5	Community Engagement	Stakeholder Engagement	It was mentioned that it would be useful for the governors to receive the newsletters for each year group so they are aware of what is happening in school. Rather than receiving a number of newsletters, each governor was allocated a year group. Year 7 – M Abadi Year 8 – J Taylor Year 9 – R Watt Year 10 – B Moss Year 11 – J Game Sixth form – H El-Jarn KH confirmed she would organise the governors receiving the newsletters	KH
6	AOB	African Adventure Fundraiser	KH informed the governors of a 24hr fundraising event the Sixth form were completing to raise money for their volunteer mission to support a local primary school in Kenya and asked if any of them were interested in contributing, they could do so via the go fund me link.	

7	Meeting Dates:	To note	Monday 11 th May 2026 at 5.00pm	
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Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes	
AC delivered a training update on attendance	
Governors reviewed the Trust Board updates	
Head of School report was reviewed, including key aims for this year, Year 11 and 13 assessments, Year 13 offers, student migration and behaviour.	
Management Accounts were reviewed	
Governors reviewed the School Risk Register	

Meeting closed at 7.00pm



J Game
Chair of Academy Committee
11.05.2026