



## **The Willows School Academy Council Meeting Monday 09 March 2026 at 16:00 The Willows School**

| <b>Those Present:</b> | <b>Roles:</b>               | <b>Initials:</b> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Rachael Booth         | Headteacher                 | RB               |
| Ann Gyte              | Chair of Governors          | AG               |
| Robin Linkens         | Vice Chair of Governors     | RL               |
| Andrea Smith          | Parent Governor             | AS               |
| Abbie Hodgkinson      | Community Governor          | AH               |
| Sandra Hedley         | Community Governor          | SH               |
| Cath Martin           | Staff Governor              | CM               |
| Joanne McLoughlin     | Parent Governor             | JMc              |
| Ryan Munks            | Staff Governor              | RM               |
|                       |                             |                  |
| <b>Also Present:</b>  |                             |                  |
| Paula Williams        | Executive Regional Director | PW               |
| Lee Anthony           | Maths Lead – Presentation   | LA               |
| <b>Apologies:</b>     |                             |                  |

| 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Actions |
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| 1.1. To receive apologies for absence<br><br>No apologies to receive.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |         |
| 1.2. To accept apologies for absence<br><br>No apologies to accept.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |         |
| 2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |         |
| 2.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered.<br><br>None.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |         |
| 3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |         |
| 3.1. Individual Governors to declare any personal, business, or other governance interests on any item on the agenda<br><br>None declared.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |         |
| 4. THE WILLOWS SCHOOL ACADEMY COUNCIL MINUTES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |         |
| 4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting:<br><br>The minutes of the meeting held on 8 <sup>th</sup> December 2025 were approved as a true record.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |         |
| 4.2. Review of Action Tracker<br><br>The outstanding actions on the tracker were reviewed and updated.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |         |
| 4.3. Matters arising from the Minutes<br><br>RB informed Transport monitoring remains ongoing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |         |
| 5. MATHS CURRICULUM PRESENTATION FROM LEE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |         |
| LA delivered a full presentation on the newly adopted Mastery Maths Curriculum.<br><br>Key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous curriculum lacked progression; pupils moved between topics too rapidly without consolidation.</li> <li>• New curriculum based on NCETM objectives, developed with support from Nexus and the Maths Hub.</li> <li>• Staff consulted and supported through training, planning time and phased implementation.</li> <li>• CPA (Concrete–Pictorial–Abstract) approach embedded across lessons.</li> <li>• Focus on core number fluency, vocabulary development, place value and reasoning skills.</li> <li>• Introduction of two morning fluency tasks per class to reinforce recall and mathematical thinking in different contexts.</li> </ul> |         |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observed early positive impact: improved number sense, vocabulary, and engagement.</li> <li>Future steps include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full universal adoption of CPA visuals/display resources across classrooms</li> <li>Assessment tools aligned with the new curriculum (in collaboration with Nexus)</li> <li>Dedicated weekly fluency lessons</li> <li>Continued staff and TA training</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Questions &amp; feedback:</b> Governors praised the clarity and ambition of the approach, commented positively on alignment with best practice, and noted the improvement in real-life application for pupils, including those in Post-16.</p> <p><b>ACTION: LA to share the Maths Curriculum PowerPoint with all governors.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p><b>ACTION:<br/>LA<br/>29/06/26</b></p> |
| <p><b>6. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                           |
| <p>6.1 Headteacher Report</p> <p>RB presented the updated report, which is now streamlined using Ofsted-aligned headings.</p> <p>5.1 Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on Ofsted statements; leaders disagree with some interpretations, particularly relating to curriculum adaptation.</li> <li>Governors expressed concern that Ofsted wording may misrepresent context and school improvement work.</li> </ul> <p>5.2 Curriculum &amp; Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion around Ofsted's comment on curriculum adaptation; governors felt the judgment did not reflect actual practice or rationale behind curriculum redevelopment.</li> <li>Staff training and curriculum development continue, supported by Nexus.</li> </ul> <p>5.3 Achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement judged positively despite concerns that Ofsted principles may combine with curriculum judgments.</li> <li>Some fluctuation in pupil premium progress noted, but small cohorts can distort data.</li> </ul> <p>5.4 Attendance &amp; Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance rated "standard met".</li> </ul> |                                           |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exclusions remain low; this was acknowledged and celebrated.</li> </ul> <p>5.5 Personal Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong practice noted, though governors questioned the lack of “exceptional” recognition given the evidence.</li> </ul> <p>5.6 Leadership &amp; Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retention good; long-term absent staff have now returned.</li> <li>Governance processes running effectively.</li> </ul> <p>5.7 Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding standards met securely.</li> <li>Internal and Trust audits were highly positive.</li> </ul> <p>5.8 Post-16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspectors queried destinations judged “suitable”; governors reiterated that final decisions are parental preference.</li> <li>Upcoming policy changes in the white paper may influence future Post-16 expectations and pathways.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: AG/RB to follow up with IT regarding inaccessible PDFs</b></p> <p>5.1.1 Updated SIP;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green items completed; ongoing items progressing.</li> <li>IAbacus adoption for appraisals and EHCP monitoring to continue gradually.</li> <li>SEF updates underway following Ofsted report; subject leads completing updated evaluations and action plans</li> </ul> | <p><b>ACTION:<br/>AG/RB<br/>29/06/26</b></p> |
| <p>6.2. School Dashboard</p> <p>Document for information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Now aligned with the new Ofsted framework terminology.</li> <li>Governors raised access issues on iPad due to PDF formatting; this will be reported to school IT services.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                              |
| <p>6.3. Budget Report</p> <p>The report was circulated via Governor Hub for information. A brief discussion took place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forecast shows £8k in-year surplus.</li> <li>Budgets remain stable; underspend in some cost centres due to cautious forecasting.</li> <li>No significant financial risks reported.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                              |

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| <p>6.4. School Calendar</p> <p>Document circulated prior to the meeting for information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing item; no concerns raised.</li> <li>• Governors can access the detailed version via the school website.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |
| <p>6.5. LA Overview of Maths Mastery and where we are with the 'New' Maths Curriculum and assessment tool.</p> <p>Discussed in the presentation.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
| <p>6.6. Issues with building ongoing – roof leaking, tarmac sinking;</p> <p>Roof leak / mould</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water ingress identified in radio room; roof specialists involved.</li> <li>• Damage currently cosmetic, not hazardous, but governors stressed urgency due to pupil and staff wellbeing.</li> <li>• Resources damaged; further risk monitored.</li> </ul> <p>Grounds / tarmac issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deterioration around Post-16 area flagged as a trip risk; repeatedly highlighted with maintenance.</li> <li>• Ongoing liaison with LA and Trust regarding funding responsibility and timescales.</li> </ul> |  |
| <p>6.7. BROMCOM – the new MIS (Management information system)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nexus-wide adoption agreed; Willows will transition from Arbor.</li> <li>• New system will support assessment, reporting, data automation and reduce manual workload.</li> <li>• Assessment implementation to begin once Bromcom is established, using LA's progression steps.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
| <p>6.8. Discussion around Ofsted Report 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ofsted Evidence Requirements:</b> During inspection, Ofsted requested specific examples from Academy Council of pupil premium impact. The team clarified that case studies are not their role and highlighted the challenge of demonstrating individual impact within the governance structure.</li> <li>• <b>Data Tracking Enhancements:</b> A tracker has been developed to monitor both academic progress and participation in enrichment activities for pupil premium students, supporting future reporting and inspection requirements.</li> </ul>            |  |
| <p>6.9. Pupil Premium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full review with Nexus completed; positive feedback received.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvements include: Strong evidence of high-quality teaching and targeted interventions</li> <li>New tracking system for PP academic and pastoral progress</li> <li>Greater celebration of pupil work (e.g., art partnership with Wales High School)</li> <li>Inspectors requested individual pupil impact examples; governors noted this was not appropriate for governance role.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                         |
| <p>6.10. Cabinet Member &amp; MP's Feedback from Pupil Parliament – Presentation Video<br/>At the last academy council a video of the pupil parliament was shared.</p> <p>Governors discussed best scheduling arrangements.</p> <p><b>ACTION: RM to act as link governor and report back next meeting on what the pupil parliament had been involved in.</b></p> <p>Suggestion to continue occasional pupil-voice videos or visits to meetings (visits by pupils is not possible due to the time of the meeting, Angela Duncan could do a presentation as the teaching member of staff leading the pupil parliament).</p> | <p><b>ACTION:<br/>RM<br/>29/06/26</b></p>               |
| <p>6.11. Skills Audit - Governors Self Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clerking Services to send audit to all governors; return requested within two weeks.</li> <li>Option to complete online or request printed version.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: All governors to complete and return to clerking services by 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p><b>ACTION:<br/>ALL<br/>GOVERNOR<br/>23/03/26</b></p> |
| <p>6.12. Any other reports from Governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletter issued; chair requested accessible format and will be supported by IT</li> <li>Work progressing on anxiety support, cyberbullying sessions, peer mentoring and parent workshops.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                         |
| <p><b>7. TRUST MATTERS</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                         |
| <p>7.1. Trust Verbal Update of Key Issues</p> <p>PW gave a brief overview of Trust updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several Nexus schools recently inspected; learning shared across the Trust.</li> <li>Merger process ongoing; due diligence and consultation progressing.</li> <li>White Paper anticipated to shift Post-16 and SEND systems significantly over next decade.</li> <li>Trust monitoring of upcoming changes and regional SEND pressures continues.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                        |                                                         |
| <p><b>8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                         |
| <p>8.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governors reminded to update declarations on the compliance portal.</li> <li>One update noted: governor's family member now employed as TA.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                         |

| 9. CONFIDENTIALITY & RISK                                                                   |  |
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| 9.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting<br><br>None. |  |
| 10. DATES OF NEXT MEETING                                                                   |  |

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| Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 | 16:00 – 18:00 | The Willows School |
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**Minutes approved**

| CHAIR | SIGNATURE | DATE |
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|       |           |      |