Coleridge Primary School

Minutes of the Full Governing Board meeting

Wednesday 9 July 2025 at 6.00 pm

Membership

Name	Initials	Term Expiry Date	Governor Category
Leon Choueke	LC	N/A	Head Teacher, Ex-officio(1)
Debby Kuypers **(Chair)**	DK	09-11-2025	Co-opted Governors (7)
Richard Holmes **(Vice Chair)**	RH	01-02-2026	
Nomi Tysman	NT	01-12-2028	
Jean-Michel Garcia-Alvarez	JGA	10-02-2029	
Becca Monahan	BM	17-11-2027	
Michael Wang	CW	01-07-2028	
Andrena Emin	AE	04-02-2028	
*Melian Mansfield	MM	19-01-2026	LA Governor (1)
Kirsten Schmidt	KS	04-02-2028	Staff (1)
Sarah Boffey	SB	05-01-2029	Parent Governors (2)
Ian Chapman	IC	05-01-2029	
Also in attendance:			
Tim Ibbotson	TI	N/A	Asst HT
Ben Strange	BS	N/A	Deputy HT
Ben Miller	BMi	01-07-2028	Associate Governor
Eddie Webb	EW	01-12-2028	Associate Governor
Morinade Akinbobola	MA	01-12-2028	Associate Governor
*Claudia Simms Abrahm	CSA	04-02-2028	Associate Governor
Corrina Phillips	CP	N/A	Asst HT and SENCO
Louise Foulkes	LF	N/A	Deputy HT
Adam Crosier			Clerk

* Denotes absence

PART 1

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence

LC opened the meeting at 6.05 pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from MM for reasons of prior commitments. These were accepted. The meeting was quorate.

2. Declarations of interest, pecuniary or otherwise in respect of items on the agenda

None.

3. Minutes of the meetings 23 June 2025

- Accuracy
  The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meetings and signed by the Chair.
- Actions

- ACTION: Adam to propose dates for the deep dive meeting on SDP.
  STATUS: Completed/closed.

  ACTION: LC to review the Easy Fund-Raising app.
  STATUS: Completed. Georgia Norton had taken on a role with Coleridge Families, and she would review the app. LC said that he would take on the link role with CF in place of BM.
  ACTION 1: LC to invite Georgia Norton to the first FGB meeting of the new school year.

  ACTION: LC to review whether there was scope for improved identification of, and communication with, alumni.
  STATUS: Closed. It was agreed not to pursue this action.

  ACTION: LC to contact the parent from KS's class re sustainability and climate change plan.
  STATUS: Completed/closed.

- Matters arising
  None.

4. 'Deep dive' session on the School Development Plan (SDP) priorities for 2025/26

LC explained that the aim of this session was to think about the SDP for the coming year and to focus on priorities, identify the next steps and take a record of each of the 4 areas. He said that the Ofsted framework provided a good working basis to develop the SDP.

He reminded governors that the Y6 KS2 results were simply a snapshot of one year group and that it was important to not rely on KS2 data alone, but to use data from across the school. He said that there was also a need to review the link governor visits/reports as part of the process.

<u>Leadership and management</u>
DK, RH had worked with LC and the senior leaders had also worked on this area.
LC said that the priorities were as follows: to engage better with parents and carers, to foster a listening culture and to provide high quality development for staff.
He said that these priorities had emerged from reviews of staff surveys, and a previous parents' survey that had highlighted parents wanting to know HOW as well as WHAT children learnt. There was also an impact on staff development for staff morale.

DK said that in relation to the value of surveys, these had become more focused. Previously there had been surveys but no follow up. Now there was a commitment to reporting what was done as a result of each survey.
Teaching staff were typically more positive in their responses than support staff, especially around competences and behaviour.

She said that in relation to staff development, the continuing professional development (CPD) programme was very expensive. A challenge for the leadership was to find a means of creating a commitment to self-development. With school finances in the state they were, it was not possible to buy into expensive training programmes.
On the questions of parents' surveys, there had been both internal and Ofsted surveys and these had been slightly different with some issues in the latter that had not been identified in the former.

She added that progress on strategy still needed further work.
From the previous year's SDP, the school had identified the need to expand its use of surveys: this had now been achieved and was a school activity.
The goal of enhanced communication with parents had not been completed and parents had asked for a longer parents evening. If this was to be done, it would require longer parents' evenings but also reducing the number of sessions from 3 to 2 evenings over the year. She said that for Y6 pupils the final parents' evening was very important for transition to secondary school.

LC added that there was a question about what parents wanted to know more of, and this required more work. He said that in relation to strategy development, a question for the board was to identify where it wanted the school to be in the future. He said that he was keen to develop 'school sharing': this was the sharing of knowledge between schools, something that was built into other schools.

He reminded governors that he had met with the new school improvement advisor (SIA), and that the aim was to make the strategy a live document.
SLT and governors would be required to work on this as well as LC and the SIA. He said that his view was that the strategy needed to address:
- aspects of the school's finances (income generation, wrap around care etc)
- to learn from other schools through improved collaboration
- to explore artificial intelligence (AI) and the school's use and response to developments in this area: this would include safeguarding concerns as well as curriculum impacts.

<u>Quality of Education</u>
LC said that this priority included a need to include SEND.
BM reported back on the impacts on quality of education over the past year and the degree to which ambitions set in the previous SDP had been met.
BS said that there remained a clear need to develop the school's approach to addressing the commitment to improving learning at home. This involved clearer conversations with parents about how their children were learning and how to support their children in their learning at home. It was agreed that at present relevant information was difficult to access in a single and easy to find place. The website held bits of information but these were dispersed and not always easy to find. The homework policy and expectations about what should be done at home needed to be clarified.

Governors agreed that a significant challenge was that there were always parents who did not read the website or newsletters, and finding effective ways to communicate with parents who were difficult to engage with, was obviously difficult.
It was agreed that addressing this concern should be the focus of this element of the SDP.

On the question of SEND, governors reviewed the areas that needed to be addressed.
CP said that the school had worked on teaching techniques and had now introduced certain 'key non-negotiable adjustments' for different areas for needs, including Dyslexia, ADHD and Autism. She said that there were certain consistent interventions that were effective for all children that had been implemented as requirements for all teaching staff. This approach was important because there was no longer the funding available to operate large numbers of small group interventions for children with specific needs. Instead there was a list of strategies, for instance using enlarging text, colour on backgrounds. This was available to all teachers and benefited all pupils but especially those with Dyslexia.

It was agreed that the priorities under the quality of education heading should include:
Home learning, writing and creative writing, SEND and adaptations,
Pupil Premium – narrowing the gap and Sports Premium.
Work on Early Years and transition would continue, but was no longer required as a priority in the SDP.

Personal development
LC reported that MM and MA had recently attended a session with HEP looking at this issue. He said that the school committed to being an actively anti racist school, to respect diversity, equity, opportunity, and to enable pupils to speak out against bullying, to become active citizens, develop positive relationships, understand impact of behaviour on others.

MA said that it had been because of Ofsted that the board had chosen these areas. She said that there was a need to think about expanding Personal Development beyond the curriculum, and that issues of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) did not fit only within the curriculum. She said that much of this related to questions of leadership and management and of the relationship with parents.

It was agreed that there was a question about whether EDI should be an SDP focus area or an action plan. LC agreed that it had to be addressed across all areas and that it was unclear where this matter should sit. It was proposed that there be monitoring of EDI separately but that the matter should be included across the SDP areas.
Also, that there should be a link governor for this area.
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Personal development and cultural capital: LC said that the school had strengths in whole school cultural capital and identified as examples the school play and sports events where everyone was involved, as well as more focused activities targeted at particular children.

LC said that in personal development, the school had made great gains in terms of equality. He was proud that children were able to talk about it and call it out.

CP left the meeting

He said that he was hoping to hear back from Black children that they felt safe and heard. The one area that had not been successful was the Leeds Beckett scheme. He said that the school had achieved more from its work with HEP in this area. He proposed to scrap the Leeds Beckett scheme, even though this was a form of accreditation.

Governors discussed the need to expand the areas of work covered by the DEI action plan, to address other protected characteristics beyond race. LC acknowledged that the school was unable to tackle every problem in a single year. He proposed holding training sessions with external speakers and further discussions to identify where priorities lay. He reminded governors of the citizenship project which was another whole school project. This involved Y5 pupils running 4 x political parties with whole school voting, and the winning manifesto to become part of the school council's work for the next year. He said that sustainability would also become a focus of activity. By the end of 2025 the school was required to have a climate and sustainability action plan. He said that this would probably be managed under leadership and management.

<u>Behaviour and attitudes</u>
LC said that the goal here was to support children to develop positive relationships. The school was fortunate to have high quality professional staff who helped children to to speak out against bullying and discrimination.

NT echoed this and said that over the past year there had been outstanding action to work with parents and support staff. There was a need to now evaluate the impact of what had been done, and to develop work in the areas of neurodivergence and LGBTQ+.

LC said that he would like to add a heading on 'resilience': this would involve supporting parents', children's and staff's resilience. For staff, this would focus on supporting individuals to face challenges and to take control independently, rather than always falling back on the school. For children, it was about navigating an element of independence. For parents, it would involve finding ways to manage anxieties about issues their children faced.

Governors discussed this notion and agreed that it was a difficult area to develop, and that it could be contentious. NT said that there was a tension over encouraging children to manage their own difficulties while at the same time having a message to tell the teacher everything.

LC pointed to the work on zones of regulation, which encouraged children to consider the size of a problem and to find the appropriate response.
He said that another area of focus was the parent – staff relationship. He said that for young staff, it could be very daunting to have conversations with some parents.

MA recommended reviewing the concept of a trauma informed approach and understanding that everything must be child centred.

Governors discussed how the school was seeing parents move into crisis mode very quickly, and the challenges this presented. LC reminded governors that the SLT capacity was reducing in the coming year, and reported that senior staff were overwhelmed by children reporting concerns, many of which would not have been readily reported in the past.

Governors discussed that they struggled with what was the responsibility of the school to address and what was beyond its remit.
BS said that his view was that children needed to be educated that it was important to understand that 'you're not going to be happy all the time'. There was a need to develop the confidence as a school to say 'we won't be dealing with some matters'.

Governors agreed that it was important to allow children to experience disappointment and the realities of life. Also to review approaches to dispute resolution and compromise. LC said that the new SIA would help develop this area of the school's work.

5. Any other business
   None.

6. Date of next meeting
   TBC.

7. Confidential items
   None.

Signed...
Date..29.9.25................
Chair of Governors