



**Hilltop School Academy Council Meeting
Friday 13 March 2026 at 10:00
Hilltop Academy**

Those Present:	Role:	Initials:
Paula Williams	Chair	PW
Sharon Biggin	Governor – Vice Chair	SB
Fiona Featherstone (via Teams)	Community Governor	FF
Jo Grantham	Curriculum Lead	JG
Sam Macdonald	Executive Headteacher	SMc
Sandra Rosado (via Teams)	Parent Governor	SR
Also Present:		
Lisa Suter	Officer	LS
Apologies:		
Rachel Parkin	Community Governor	RP
Dale Gordon	Staff Governor	DG
No Apologies:		

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Actions
1.1. To receive apologies for absence Apologies were received for RP and DG.	
1.2. To accept apologies for absence Apologies were accepted for RP and DG.	
2. OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS	
2.1. Presentation to Staff Nominee (s) Staff nominations showed more depth and personalisation. Wellbeing team introducing voucher scheme for multiple nominations.	
3. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	
3.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business None. 3.2 Confirmation of Resignation – Ruth Milburn The Academy Council unanimously approved the resignation of RM. Governors expressed their gratitude for RM’s long service and noted that she had served since before several current members joined the Council. - Discussion: Hilltop choir requested for pensioners’ Christmas lunch. - Choir confirmed; to be communicated formally.	
4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS-	
4.1. Individual Governors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda None.	
5. HILLTOP SCHOOL ACADEMY COUNCIL MINUTES	
5.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting: The minutes of the meeting held 16 January 2026 were approved as a true record.	
5.2. Review of Action Tracker The outstanding actions on the tracker were reviewed and updated.	

5.3. Matters arising from the Minutes None.	
6. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED	
6.1 Headteacher Report JG delivered a thorough overview of curriculum intent, structure, assessment and improvements. <u>Curriculum Intent</u> • Aims: independence, communication, emotional regulation, real world readiness. • Continuous review cycle; curriculum refined based on feedback. <u>Curriculum Structure</u> • Core Curriculum: EHCP outcomes, PSHE/RSE, Preparing for Adulthood. • EYFS: play based; seven areas of learning. <u>Engagement Pathway</u> • Stage 1: highly self-directed learners. • Stage 2: adult-led engagement. • Stage 3: early readiness for academic content. • Academic Pathway: English, Maths, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts. <u>Post-16 Pathways</u> • Nurture – highest support. • Support – semi-independence. • Independence – college/employment focus. • Restabilisation Curriculum: bespoke support for pupils unable to cope in class. Key questions were raised. Can pupils move between pathways? Yes, movement is fluid and based on progress. How does restabilisation integrate with LA responsibility? Rotherham supportive; other LAs inconsistent. <u>Teaching Approaches</u> • Rosenshine principles embedded across school. • Explicit instruction and small step scaffolding.	

• TEACCH structured learning successful in several classes. <u>Assessment Systems</u> • Evidence for Learning used for EHCPs, engagement evidence, academic tracking. • Moderation improved; staff confidence growing. • Trust wide Next Steps framework introduced. Actions: SMc will deliver an Ofsted framework explainer at the next meeting. Subject leads to present deep dives in future meetings. SM provided an overview of the Headteacher Report. <u>Context</u> • NOR near capacity (183). • Staffing stable; turnover aligned with school vision. <u>Inclusion</u> • Double disadvantage focus (PP + SEND). • Pupil Premium strategy being restructured and ring fenced. <u>Curriculum Updates</u> • Little Wandle phonics chosen; English Hub likely to match fund. <u>Attendance</u> • Above national SEND average (86.5%). • Internal processes require refinement. <u>Behaviour</u> • Only one suspension issued; safety-related and family supportive. • Sheffield LA slow regarding post-16 transition planning. <u>Personal Development</u> • Enrichment: Chinese New Year, Eid, Parliament Week, Remembrance. • Pupil Parliament developing stronger influence. <u>Pupil Voice</u> • Work ongoing to capture views of highly complex and non verbal pupils. <u>Leadership & Workload</u>	Actions: SMc 26/06/26 Subject Leads 26/06/26
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• Distributed leadership stronger. • Workload reductions through streamlined planning/assessment. <u>Safeguarding</u> • Recent audit strong with minimal actions. <u>Post-16</u> • Gatsby benchmarks fully met. • Accreditation routes clearer and more structured. 6.1.1 Appendix 1 – Updated SIP This was circulated for information prior to the meeting. 6.1.2 Appendix 2 – School SEF This was circulated for information prior to the meeting.	
6.2 Draft School Dashboard Summary The Dashboard needs to ensure that identified areas for attention align with the priorities set out in the School Improvement Plan (SIP).	
6.3 Budget Report Financial recovery remains strong. The deficit has been cleared and a surplus is projected.	
6.4 School Calendar This was circulated for information prior to the meeting. Four CPD days grouped in September for compliance and training.	
6.5 Pupil Premium The Pupil Premium strategy is under review.	
6.6 Cabinet Member & MPs' Feedback from Pupil Parliament Current representation is strong at Hilltop, and work is underway to strengthen participation from Forest View. Non verbal pupil voice is captured through observations, insights from parents and behavioural indicators. Pupils influencing playground equipment, clubs, classroom environment changes and school dinners feedback.	

Increased pupil engagement when they see changes implemented.	
Plans to introduce cross site meetings and Post-16 mentorship.	
Aim to formalise Parliament decisions and share outcomes via displays and assemblies.	
6.7 Skills Audit – Governor Self-Assessment	
Members were reminded to complete via GovernorHub, paper versions are available. Action: All members to complete their Skills Audit and return to Clerking Services.	Action: All Members 27/03/26
7. TRUST MATTERS	
7.1. Trust Verbal Update of Key Issues	
Work on the Nexus merger is continuing.	
Seven Hills (Sheffield) scheduled to join imminently.	
8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS	
8.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the Chair	
<u>School Meals</u> - Significant parent concern reported. - Staff spending time preparing alternative food for pupils. Actions: SR to look into school meals. SLT to review meals provision and report back.	Actions: SR/SLT 26/06/26
<u>Holiday Clubs / Short Breaks</u> - Reduced LA provision affecting families. - CAMHS reports increased pressure. Action: SMc to coordinate cross agency discussion.	Action: SMc 26/06/26
9. CONFIDENTIALITY & RISK	
9.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting	
None.	
10. DATES OF NEXT MEETING	

26 June 2026	10:00 – 12:00	Hilltop Academy
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Minutes approved

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE
Paula Williams		