

SHELDWICH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Board of Trustees' Meeting

Term 4 – Wednesday 25th March 2026 at 4.20pm

Present: Mr D Milham (Chair), Mrs S Garrett, Mrs C Lay, Mr M Lee, Mr A Brookes, Mr M Lee, Mr S Greathead, Mrs A du Plessis, Mr A Woods, Mrs S Paice and Mrs E Griffiths

Clerk: Mrs J Linter

1. Apologies

Apologies received from RF.

2. Declaration of Business Interests

No changes were required to the declarations of business interests.

3. Membership

AB's term of office ended this month. It was agreed unanimously to appoint AB for a further 4 year term of office.

4. Minutes of Previous Board of Trustees' Meeting

The minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on 4th February 2026 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair of Trustees.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Headteacher's Report

SG presented her HT report to trustees.

SG reported that there has been an increase in the number of parents viewing and booking places at Little Hedgehogs.

There had been 47 parents listing Sheldwich as their first choice of school in September. Parents will hear what school their child has been allocated on 16th April 2026.

SG had met with all staff to discuss the GAG for 2026/27 and that support staff salaries (at KSB) will increase by 6.75% in September. Staff had been asked to consider if they would like to decrease their contracted LSA hours. Two staff has met with Sarah to discuss this further.

SG said that that charging for extra-curricular clubs raises around £7K per year. This week SG will be speaking to staff about a potential summer holiday club to raise further funds.

7. Finance and Resources Committee

School-based nursery grant

Guidance had been circulated regarding further funding available for school-based nurseries. With this phase, the DfE will provide LAs with the funding to delegate to schools with successful bids. An expression of interest form had been completed. A letter is also being sent to the LA to accompany the form.

SG had found some evidence which suggests there is a shortage of nursery spaces in Swale. ML said the maximum grant to any one setting is £500K. It is expected that the cost of providing a new building will be around this amount although schools are expected to provide some of the funding.

Revenue Monitoring Update and Forecast Update

The Revenue Monitoring report had been circulated to trustees. There is a £31 in year deficit forecast mainly due to a decrease in Little Hedgehogs numbers and staff absence.

GAG 2026/27

The General Annual Grant information for 2026/27 has been received. The total of £1,122K is an increase of £32K from last year. It was stated that the grant now includes the teachers' pay additional grant, teachers' pension grant and core schools budget grant; it was concluded that there was no real increase to GAG.

Support staff will receive a 6.75% salary increase which is funded by the school.

Budget 2026/27 Draft

ML, DM, AdP, SG and JL had met to discuss the first draft of the budget for 2026/27. An in year deficit is forecast at £24K. Support staff costs are being looked at as well as ways to generate more income.

DM stated that some local maintained schools are on consultation regarding support staff redundancies.

Reserves Policy

The current Reserves Policy states a minimum of revenue reserves must be kept at 6% of GAG. JL had spoken to Alex Baker (Aba), Burgess Hodgson accountant to discuss how this is looked upon at the year-end if reserves fall below this level. ABa said that the three year budget would be looked at to ensure the school was able to reverse the shortfall in the following financial year. It could be reported as a going concern issue if this was not the case. ML proposed that the Reserves Policy is changed to 5% of GAG. AB said that this is in line with some other schools. Change agreed unanimously.

Terms of Reference

Changes are required to Finance and Resources Terms of Reference regarding the Headteacher's appraisal. New wording is 'appoint up to three trustees to conduct the headteacher appraisal annually together with an external advisor'. Agreed unanimously.

Internal Scrutiny

The SBM at Hampton School will conduct an Internal Scrutiny visit with JL doing the same at Hampton. Areas that will be reported on for 2026/27 were agreed; Recommendations from Previous Visit, Risk Register, Website Review, Extended School and Pre-School Income, Monthly Monitoring Reporting and KPIs, Estate Management and Succession Planning.

8. Education

Formal Visit to look at Writing and Spelling

DM and EG had visited this morning to look at Writing and Spelling in school from pre-school to Class 6. They met with Shannon Morrison and SG and were shown what impact the new spelling scheme is having. DM said the classroom practise was very impressive and the children were engaged. EG said that the children spoke really well in the Pupil Voice meeting and expressed their understanding of the scheme very well. EG thought that the spelling scheme was good for inclusion. Their report will follow.

The Safeguarding report is expected to be available soon.

Education White Paper

SGr presented a report on a summary of the Education White Paper; Every Child Achieving and Thriving' (a copy is attached to these minutes).

The NGA had produced a three page summary of the DfE document (183 pages) and this had been circulated to trustees.

The trustees discussed the financial burden on schools to support SEND pupils and it was noted that funding that accompanies children with an EHPC does not cover all costs. Many schools are creating another class of children who are not working to the curriculum so that their needs can be met but with less staff costs.

All LAs will be expected to set up Community Schools Groups to allocated SEND funding. KCC have already done this.

SGr and ML will formally visit in June to look at SEND.

In addition, trustees will be visiting formally to look at Art and PE in Term 6.

9. Polices

None to report on.

10. Dates of Meetings and School Events

Forthcoming meeting dates are shown below. .

Term 5	Wednesday 20 th May 2026	Board of Trustees' Meeting	4.00pm
Term 6	Wednesday 3 rd June 2026	Trustee Development Day	2.00pm
Term 6	Wednesday 15 th July 2026	Board of Trustees' Meeting	4.00pm

11. Any Other Business

DM said that the Strategic Plan will be discussed during the development day to make adjustments so that it is in line with the new Ofsted Framework.

12. Confidentiality and Publication of Minutes

12.1 Confidentiality

No items were considered confidential.

12.2 Publication of Minutes

The minutes are to be made available for inspection under Regulation 13 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003, except for those items considered confidential.

Meeting closed at 5.20pm

Every Child Achieving and Thriving

Overview for Governors 25.3.26

Scot Greathead
Chair of the Education Committee

SEND is moving from a specialist, EHCP-heavy system to a mainstream, earlier intervention model.

National ambition = higher standards + higher levels of inclusion

Key targets:

- GCSE average grade 5
- Narrowing disadvantage gap
- Increased attendance
- Schools tracking belonging and engagement

Schools will carry more responsibility for SEND

- From EHCP-led to a mainstream-first system
 - EHCPs reserved for most complex needs only (Nationally defined Specialist Provision Packages, which will form the basis for an EHCP)
- Most children supported through: Individual Support Plans (ISPs)
 - barriers to learning
 - day to day provision
 - Reasonable adjustments
 - Intended outcomes
- School to publish an Inclusion Strategy ... accountability
- By 2028 £15million for National Inclusion Standards

This moves SEND from 'my school' to shared responsibility across a system

Schools expected to now work in local SEND partnerships

"We will put collaboration at the heart of the system by moving to all schools joining or forming high-quality school trusts"

- pool funding
- share expertise
- Inclusive mainstream fund £1.6 billion (3 years) = 'schools have direct responsibility' ...i.e approx. 24k per school per year (from 2026 – 2027 onwards)
- Expected focus on: small group work targeted interventions

What this means for us

Risks	Opportunities
More SEND responsibility in mainstream without immediate capacity Workforce pressure (training, expertise) EHCP threshold tightening (parental tension) Accountability increasing faster than support	Earlier intervention (less crisis-driven support) Better access to specialists Stronger collaboration across schools More flexible support (not EHCP-dependent)

Questions

- Do we have a clear understanding of all pupils with SEND, not just those with EHCPs
- How strong is our universal / targeted provision?
- How are we using external specialists right now?
- Are we ready to publish a clear inclusion strategy?