

**Minutes of the Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting
held on Wednesday 28 January 2026**

Present:	Mike Hulme Marion Budd Nicola Flash-Summers Philip Lillico	Acting Committee Chair – Local authority governor Headteacher Partnership governor Co-opted governor
Apologies	Carole Millard Miraj Mehta	Committee Chair – Partnership governor Staff governor
Others in attendance:	Grant Benjamin Lee Mathews Grace D’Sousa Keturah Smith Kate Atkins	Deputy Headteacher (items 1 - 8) Deputy Headteacher (items 1 - 8) Assistant Headteacher (items 1, 2) Personal Development Lead (items 1 - 8) Governance Manager
Quorum:	3 members (Headteacher plus 2 non-staff governors)	Quorum met: Yes

Item	
1	Welcome and procedural items
1.1	In the absence of the Committee Chair who was on annual leave, the Chair of the Governing Board welcomed everyone to the meeting. No business or pecuniary interests in relation to matters being considered during the meeting were declared.
2	Presentations
2.1	<i>Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education</i> Keturah Smith and Grace D'Sousa gave a presentation on the new Department for Education guidance for Relationships and Sex Education (RSA), to be introduced from September 2026), and on how the changes would build on the school's current Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHCE) programme. They said children were increasingly exposed to harmful content online and that many parents were poorly informed about advances in new technology and unable to educate their children about the dangers. The new guidance focused, amongst other things, on modern digital risks, such as AI-generated content, and on young people's mental health including, for secondary schools, suicide prevention. Keturah and Grace outlined the school's current curriculum offer, which includes one hour of PSHCE for all students every week, delivered by form tutors. The school would be providing further PSHCE extra-curricular opportunities in line with the new topics covered in the guidance. Governors welcomed the school's PSHCE offer and plans to extend it further. They discussed a range of issues with the school leaders, including about the design and delivery of the PSHCE curriculum and ways of providing adaptations for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). They noted the challenge for schools of delivering a broader curriculum with no additional time or resources.
3	Minutes and actions
3.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2025 were approved .
3.2	Members noted the actions arising from that meeting, which had all been completed or were included on the agenda for this meeting.
4	Staffing update
4.1	The Headteacher updated the committee on staffing matters, noting there had been no further resignations this term. A vacant post for a French teacher was being covered by agency staff until July and recruitment was underway for a permanent replacement to start in September.

5	Curriculum update
5.1	Lee Mathews provided an overview of this term's work to strengthen the quality, coherence and impact of curriculum, teaching and learning across the school. All initiatives aligned to the school's three strategic priorities: attendance, SEND progress, and achievement and progress. Lee said significant progress had been made towards establishing a clear and coherent Islip Manor High School curriculum standard. Oracy (talk in the classroom) remained the school's primary learning and teaching focus and "think-pair-share" routines were now well embedded, with quality assurance indicating more purposeful, evaluative talk and increased use of subject-specific vocabulary across year groups. Lee said quality assurance continued to follow the school's "tight but loose" model. Learning walks would be taking place across the school in February. These were brief, informal classroom visits by school leaders to observe teaching and learning. They would focus on oracy and assessment and feedback. All governors were invited to attend walks. Action: Lee Mathews to invite all governors to attend learning walks
5.2	Governors discussed a range of curriculum and learning issues with the school leaders and congratulated the school on taking a proactive approach to issues such as oracy. They supported the next steps outlined by Lee, which included finalising and publishing the first formal Islip Manor High School curriculum standard and ensuring full alignment across the curriculum, teaching and quality assurance.
6	Attendance update
6.1	Grant Benjamin provided an update on student attendance. Attendance had improved last term in comparison with the same period last year with overall attendance up by 7.1% and attendance of SEND students up by 6.8%. In common with most schools, attendance was higher at Key Stage 3 than at Key Stage 4. Grant said the school was below the national average of 92% by approximately 3%. The data was significantly impacted by the attendance of Key Stage 4 students and the "U code" for missed registration which counted as half a day's absence. Grant noted improvements in attendance of those students who qualified as "persistently absent" and of White British students, although attendance of this group remained a concern. Grant set out the steps being taking by the school to improve attendance, including letters to parents to set out attendance expectations, support to White British students via the attendance mentor, and rewards and incentives for students with good attendance. He said that the school had joined a RISE (regional improvement for standards and excellent) hub for improving student attendance and that the leadership team would receive training and support from the hub to improve the school's systems and processes.

	Governors discussed a range of issues with the school leaders, including the need to reward students who demonstrated consistently good attendance as well as those showing significant improvements in attendance. They also noted opportunities for peer learning for year leaders whose students showed poorer attendance from year leaders whose students had better attendance.
7	Behaviour update
7.1	Grant Benjamin provided an update on student behaviour. There had been no permanent exclusions so far this academic year and the school continued to support students to avoid permanent exclusions. There had been 23 suspensions so far this year, compared with 48 this time last year. Suspensions were only used as a last resort and after other options to keep students in school had been explored. Grant said persistent disruptive behaviour accounted for the most suspensions and was largely down to the repeated actions of a small number of Key Stage 3 students. Many of these students had additional needs and support for them was already in place. Grant outlined actions to improve student behaviour, including further staff training to respond to areas of focus as and when they arose, and the support of therapists and mentors for some of the school's most vulnerable students. In discussion with governors, the school leaders said the school was working with a cohort of students who regularly didn't do their home learning to understand better the reasons for this and what additional support could be provided before sanctions were imposed.
8	Policies
8.1	The Headteacher presented three policies and recommended them for governors' approval. <i>Careers information, education, advice and guidance (CEIAG)</i> The policy had been updated to align with the Department for Education (DfE) Careers Guidance statutory guidance (May 2025) and the revised Gatsby Benchmarks which were effective from September 2025. It had also been updated to reflect the reintroduction post Covid of face-to-face work experience for Year 10 students later this academic year. <i>Provider access</i> The policy had been updated to align with the DfE statutory guidance (May 2025) and current provider access legislation. This specified that schools must provide at least six encounters with approved providers of apprenticeships and technical education for all students in Years 8-13. <i>Supporting students with medical conditions and first aid</i> No changes had been made to this policy as it was still compliant with the latest legislation. Governors approved the policies.

	Confidential Part II meeting
	This part of the meeting is covered in a confidential addendum.
	<i>Next meeting: Wednesday 3 June 2026</i>