GOVERNING BODY TERMS OF REFERENCE

2026 - 2027

Lowther Endowed School Governing Body is also the Responsible Body for Little VIPs Day Care, operated as a Governor Led Nursery under Section 27 of the 'Community Powers' of the Education Act 2002.

Throughout, the term "school" will include governor led Little VIPs Day Care

LOWTHER ENDOWED SCHOOL & LITTLE VIPS DAY CARE
FULL GOVERNING BODY

Core Purpose

- To ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- To hold leaders to account for the performance of the school, Little VIPs, its pupils and children, and the well-being and performance management of staff.
- To oversee the financial performance of the school and Little VIPS, making sure its resources are allocated appropriately and its money is well spent.
- To engage with stakeholders and hearing their voices.

The Core Features of Effective Governance

Lowther Endowed School Governing Body will conduct its business in line with DfE's Maintained schools governance guide - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and the Lowther School and Exhibition Foundation principles.

Our governance arrangements will be characterised by: -

- Corporate decision-making in the best interests of its pupils and future pupils.
- Integrity, objectivity and honesty in the best interests of the school.
- Ensure that the school and Little VIPs operate within statutory safeguarding, health and safety and Special Educational Needs regulations.
- Having the right people with the necessary skills, time and commitment, and sufficient diversity of perspectives to ensure internal challenge, all actively contributing in line with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- Clear governance structures with tightly defined remits, particularly in relation to functions delegated to committees or other bodies.
- Clear separation between the strategic and operational in terms of the role of the board and its school leaders.
- A positive relationship between the board and its school leaders enabling robust constructive challenge on the basis of a good understanding of objective data particularly on pupil progress, staff performance and finances.
- Access to support and advice from LA governor services and a clerk to governors
- Robust processes for financial and business planning and oversight and effective controls for compliance, propriety and value for money.
- Processes for regular self-evaluation, review and improvement including; skills audits, training and development plans, and independent external reviews as necessary.

Membership

The Governing Body Instrument of Government dated 21st February 2013 and review 8th October 2026 provides that that Governing Body shall consist of:

- Two parent governors
- One Local Authority governor
- Two staff governors (one of whom will be the Headteacher in ex officio role)

- Eight Foundation governors
- One co-opted governor

The total number of governors is fourteen. The Foundation governors shall be in a majority of two over all other categories of governor.

Term of Office

The term of office of all categories of governor is four years.

Quorum

In line with the School Governance (Roles Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 - Part 4 meetings and proceedings of the governing body: the quorum for a meeting of the Governing Body and any vote on any matter at such a meeting, is one half (rounded up to a whole number) of the membership of the Governing Body.

The number counted in the membership of the Governing Body for the purposes of the quorum ***does not include*** vacant positions on the Governing Body.

Every question to be decided at a meeting of the Governing Body is to be determined by a majority of the votes of the governors present and voting on the questions.

Meetings

The Governing Body must hold at least three meetings in every school year. Other delegated committees will also hold at least one meeting per term.

Advice given to the school by governors is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity.

Structure

The Governing Body may delegate business to sub-committees. Lowther Endowed School has three such committees:

- Curriculum and Staffing.
- Finance, Health & Safety and Premises.
- Headteacher Performance Management

Each committee has a Terms of Reference

Duties of the Governing Body

In order to comply with its core functions, the Governing Body shall:

1. Elect a Chair and Vice Chair on an annual basis at the Autumn meeting and whose term of office shall be one year.
2. Appoint a Nominated Person to oversee Little VIPs Day Care.

3. Appoint link governors for Safeguarding (including Prevent), Special Educational Needs and Early Years.
4. Delegate the functions of the Governing Body to the Chair or Vice Chair in cases of emergency.
5. Appoint and remove the Clerk.
6. Appoint and suspend governors in consultation with the Lowther School Exhibition Endowment.
7. Delegate, where applicable, its functions to a committee, any governor (save for Headteacher governor) or the Headteacher.
8. Receive and review reports from Committees and from others who have received delegated functions.
9. Determine the constitution, membership and terms of reference of any committee and review them annually.
10. Appoint a clerk to each committee.
11. At each meeting to review Pecuniary, Business and Other related interests.
12. Agree and monitor the School Development Plan.
13. Set an annual budget detailing planned spending.
14. Monitor the budget regularly.
15. Produce a policy review schedule and review Policies.
16. Approve a staffing structure.
17. Approve staff performance pay increases.
18. Ensure that the School curriculum is balanced and broadly based and meets all of the National Curriculum requirements.
19. Ensure that Little VIPs curriculum is balanced and in line with the Early Years Statutory Framework.
20. Approve appropriate targets for pupil achievement.
21. Receive reports on pupil's achievement in assessments and examination results.
22. Draw up an action plan following Ofsted and other inspection and monitor implementation.
23. Appoint staff including the Headteacher ensuring the implementation of personnel procedures including safer recruitment.
24. Set standards for regulating staff capability and conduct.
25. Set up procedures to hear, manage and resolve complaints and grievances.
26. Agree a policy for the health and safety of the pupils and staff.
27. Agree a plan to ensure the maintenance and development of school assets including premises.
28. Adopt arrangements to ensure high levels of attendance and good standards of pupil behaviour.
29. Identify and monitor key success indicators.
30. Review the impact of Pupil Premium, Early Year Pupil Premium and PE Premium and other specific funded initiatives.

FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Key Purpose

Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its resources are allocated appropriately and its money is well spent.

General Terms

- To act on matters delegated to the committee by the full governing body as set out in this Terms of Reference.
- To liaise and consult with other committees where necessary.
- To contribute to the School and Little VIPs Development Plan and Self-Assessment processes.
- To consider safeguarding and equalities implications when undertaking all committee functions.
- To report back to the full governing body.

Quorum

The quorum for meetings and for any votes shall be 3 governors.

Meetings

- The committee shall meet at least three times in the academic year, once in each full term. Additional meetings may be scheduled where the business or circumstances of the school dictates at any given time.
- The meetings will have a Chair and Vice Chair who shall be elected at the first meeting of the academic year.
- Meetings may take place by electronic means or by a mix of face to face and electronic, depending on the availability and preferences of governors.
- Committee meetings will not be open to the public but minutes shall be made available for inspection on request.
- Information relating to a named person or any other matter that the committee considers confidential will be redacted or recorded in Part 2 minutes and such items will not be available for inspection.
- In the absence of the Chair or Vice Chair the committee shall choose an acting chair for that meeting from among their number and record that in the minutes of the meeting
- In the absence of the Clerk the committee shall choose a clerk for that meeting from among their number (someone who is not the head teacher).
- The draft minutes will be prepared by the Clerk and forwarded to the Chair of the FHSP Committee for checking within 5 working days of the meeting. The draft minutes of each meeting will be stored on Sharepoint and included with the agenda for the next ordinary meeting of the full governing body and will be presented at that meeting by the Chair or Vice Chair (or in their absence another member of the committee).
- Any decisions taken must be determined by a majority of votes of committee members present and voting – but no vote can be taken unless a majority of those present are governors.

Terms of Reference

Finance

- Guide and assist the headteacher and the governing body in all budgeting and financial matters.
- Adhere to the LA's financial and procurement procedures.
- Set and approve a scheme for financial delegations; review annually the level of delegation to the headteacher and other staff for the day-to-day financial management of the school and make recommendations to the governing body.
- In consultation with the headteacher, draft a 3-year budget plan which reflects the development priorities for the school for recommendation to the full governing body.
- In consultation with the headteacher, prepare an annual budget for approval by the governing body in May and a midyear budget by the end of October of each year.
- Ensure the approved budget plans are submitted to the LA in the required formal and by the required date each year.
- Monitor income and expenditure against the agreed annual budget at each meeting and consider proposals for virement.
- Provide a summary financial report at each full governing body meeting and make recommendations where necessary.
- Ensure financial information is provided to the LA as required.
- Complete the SFVS annually and submit by the required deadline.
- Respond to recommendations made by the Council Director for Finance following internal audit of the school, and review any associated action plan.
- Review the school's contract register and service level agreements to ensure that contracts are reviewed prior to expiry/renewal and the most favourable terms obtained.
- To monitor the income and expenditure of all non-public funds.
- Arrange for the audit of all non-public funds for presentation to the full governing body.
- Ensure that insurance cover is in place in respect of all identified insurable risks at an appropriate level, as advised by Westmorland and Furness Council for the School and the National Day Nursery Association for Little VIPs.
- Determine whether sufficient funds are available for pay increments as recommended by the Headteacher.
- In the light of the Headteacher Performance Management Group's recommendations, to determine whether sufficient funds are available for increments for the Headteacher.
- To put in place and regularly review a charging and remissions policy.

Health and Safety

- Ensure that the school has access to expert Health and Safety advice, policies and risk assessments.
- Ensure that Health and Safety issues are appropriately prioritised and funds made available in the school budget to address any identified issues.
- Carry out an annual review of the Health and Safety Policy with the Headteacher.
- Ensure that an annual Health and Safety Audit is carried out and that Risk assessments are in place and reviewed as necessary.
- Monitor Health and Safety using checklists provided by the school's Health and Safety advisor.

- Report to the full governing body on outcomes of audits and monitoring.

Premises

- Provide support and guidance to the governing body on priorities for the maintenance and development of the school's premises.
- Liaise with the LA and the Lowther Endowment regarding premises and grounds issues.
- Arrange for inspection by a professional, the premises and grounds annually and prepare a statement of priorities for maintenance and development and recommend approval to the governing body.
- Review the Condition Survey and action identified maintenance and improvements
- Approve the costs and arrangements for maintenance, repairs and redecoration within the approved budget allocation and oversee the preparation and implementation of contracts.
- To establish and keep under review an Accessibility Plan.

Staffing

- To ensure that the school is staffed sufficiently for the fulfilment of the school's development plan and the effective operation of the school.
- To ensure that Little VIPs is staffed in accordance with recommended ratios.
- To establish and oversee the operation of the school's Appraisal Policy/Capability Policy including the arrangements and operation of the school's appraisal procedures for the Headteacher.
- To establish a Pay Policy for all categories of staff.
- To be responsible for the administration and review of the Pay Policy.
- To ensure that staffing procedures (including recruitment procedures) follow safeguarding and equalities legislation.
- To annually review procedures for dealing with staff discipline and grievances and make recommendations to the governing body for approval.
- To monitor approved procedures for staff discipline and grievance and ensure that staff are kept informed of these.
- To recommend to the governing body staff selection procedures, ensuring that they conform with safer recruitment practice, and to review these procedures as necessary.
- In consultation with staff, to oversee any process leading to staff reductions.
- To establish the annual and longer-term salary budgets and other costs relating to personnel, e.g. training.

In addition, any other matters delegated by the full governing body to the committee.

CURRICULUM & PUPIL PROGRESS

Key Purpose

To hold leaders to account for the performance of the school, Little VIPs, its pupils and children.

General Terms

- To act on matters delegated to the committee by the full governing body as set out in this Terms of Reference.
- To liaise and consult with other committees where necessary.
- To contribute to the School and Little VIPs Development Plan and Self-Assessment processes.
- To consider safeguarding and equalities implications when undertaking all committee functions.
- To report back to the full governing body.

Quorum

The quorum for meetings and for any votes shall be 3 governors.

Meetings

- The committee shall meet at least three times in the academic year, once in each full term. Additional meetings may be scheduled where the business or circumstances of the school dictates at any given time.
- The meetings will have a Chair and Vice Chair who shall be elected at the first meeting of the academic year.
- Meetings may take place by electronic means or by a mix of face to face and electronic, depending on the availability and preferences of governors.
- Committee meetings will not be open to the public but minutes shall be made available for inspection on request.
- Information relating to a named person or any other matter that the committee considers confidential will be redacted or recorded in Part 2 minutes and such items will not be available for inspection.
- In the absence of the Chair or Vice Chair the committee shall choose an acting chair for that meeting from among their number and record that in the minutes of the meeting
- In the absence of the Clerk the committee shall choose a clerk for that meeting from among their number (someone who is not the head teacher).
- The draft minutes will be prepared by the Clerk and forwarded to the Chair of the FHSP Committee for checking within 5 working days of the meeting. The draft minutes of each meeting will be stored on Sharepoint and included with the agenda for the next ordinary meeting of the full governing body and will be presented at that meeting by the Chair or Vice Chair (or in their absence another member of the committee).
- Any decisions taken must be determined by a majority of votes of committee members present and voting – but no vote can be taken unless a majority of those present are governors.

Terms of Reference

Curriculum Review & Pupil Progress

- To review, monitor and evaluate the curriculum offer of the School and Little VIPs
- To contribute to the:
  - Self-evaluation form;
  - School Development Plan;
  - Little VIPs Development Plan
- Propose targets for attainment and progress.
- To develop and review policies identified within the school's policy review programme and in accordance with its delegated powers (e.g. sex education and pupil behaviour/discipline).
- To ensure that the requirements of children with special needs are met, as laid out in the Code of Practice, and receive termly reports from the SENCO and an annual report from the SEN governor.
- To ensure disadvantaged groups are identified and strategies put in place to close gaps using the Pupil Premium and/or Catch up funding, monitor progress and report to full governing body.
- To ensure that Little VIPs is operated in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (EYFS) Assessment and Evaluation.

Assessment and Evaluation

- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of leadership and management.
- To monitor and evaluate the impact of quality of teaching on rates of pupil progress and standards of achievement.
- To monitor and evaluate rates of progress and standards of achievement by pupils, including any underachieving groups.
- To monitor and evaluate the impact of continuing professional development on improving staff performance.
- To set priorities for improvement, and monitor and evaluate the impact of improvement plans which relate to the committee's area of operation.
- To monitor and evaluate provision for all groups of vulnerable children (e.g. looked after children) and ensure all their needs have been identified and addressed, and to evaluate their progress and achievement.
- To regularly review and develop the Assessment Policy and to ensure that the policy is operating effectively.
- To consider recommendations from external reviews of the school and Little VIPs (e.g. Ofsted or local school improvement advisers), agree actions as a result of reviews and evaluate regularly the implementation of the plan.
- To ensure that all children have equal opportunities.
- To advise the finance and premises committee on the relative funding priorities necessary to deliver the curriculum.

Engagement

- To monitor publicity, public presentation and relationships with the wider community.

- To identify and celebrate pupil achievements.
- To oversee arrangements for educational visits, including the appointment of a named coordinator.
- To ensure all statutory requirements for reporting and publishing information are met and the school website content is fully compliant and presented in an accessible way.

In addition, any other matters delegated by the full governing body to the committee.

HEADTEACHERS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PANEL

Terms of Reference

On a yearly cycle to agree and set performance targets for the headteacher, to monitor performance against those targets and at the end of the yearly cycle to determine what targets have been met. The procedure shall be as follows:

- The Panel will meet in the autumn term of academic year, before 31st December, to decide what targets (if any) from the previous year have been met. At the same meeting the Panel will agree and set performance targets for that academic.
- The Panel will meet six months after the above meeting to monitor the performance of the headteacher to date against the agreed targets.
- The Panel will also decide what Pay Progression recommendations to make to the Teachers pay Committee.

Membership

Membership shall consist of no fewer than two Governors and an independent advisor, but excluding staff governor and Little VIPs representative.

Lowther Endowed School and Little VIPS Day Care

Governor	Type	Term of Office
Chris Staniowski	Foundation	01.10.2024 – 01.10.2028
John Banks	Foundation	03.04.2025 – 03.04.2029
Simon Cooper	Foundation	03.04.2025 – 03.04.2029
Alice Vince	Foundation	02.10.2024 – 01.10.2028
Rev'd Stephen Tudway	Foundation	03.02.2023 – 03.02.2027
Vacant	*Foundation*	
Vacant	*Foundation*	
Vacant	*Foundation*	
Gabriella Watkins	Parent	01.10.2024 – 01.10.2028
Ceris Blomfield	Parent	15.01.2026 – 14.01.2030
Michelle Clark	Ex-officio	01.09.2025
Vacant	Staff	
Sonia Fowler	LA	23.10.2025 – 23.10.2029
Hayley Fassam	Co-opted	27.02.2025 – 27.02.2029

Sub-Committees

Finance & Resources:	Chris Staniowski Stephen Tudway John Banks Michelle Clark
Curriculum & Pupil Progress:	Alice Vince Gabriella Watkins Sonia Fowler Simon Cooper Ceris Blomfield Hayley Fassam Michelle Clark
Headteacher Performance:	Stephen Tudway Chris Staniowski

Areas of Responsibility

Safeguarding:	Gabriella Watkins
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities:	Alice Vince
Inclusion:	Sonia Fowler
Early Years:	Stephen Tudway
Health & Safety:	Chris Staniowski