

# MEETING NOTES

FULL GOVERNING BODY: 1 OCTOBER 2025, 18:00 AT LEEDON LOWER SCHOOL

VISION: EVERY CHILD LEAVES LEEDON AS A GLOBAL CITIZEN, WITH THE SKILLS, EXPERIENCES AND CONFIDENCE NEEDED TO DREAM BIG, ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL AND BE A SUCCESSFUL LEARNER FOR LIFE.

## MEMBERSHIP

NAME	ROLE	TERM FROM	TERM TO
Nicola McIntyre	Chair	25 March 2025	25 March 2029
Nick Neill	Staff Governor	09 October 2024	09 October 2025
Jo Shelley	Parent Governor	25 March 2025	25 March 2029
Nicky Thurgood	Parent Governor	29 November 2023	29 November 2027
Michelle Stewart	Parent Governor	01 December 2022	01 December 2026
Heena Howe	Parent Governor	29 November 2023	29 November 2027
Debbie Hull	Co-Opt Governor	09 October 2024	09 October 2028
Christina Reid	Parent Governor	02 April 2025	01 April 2029
Simon Coath	Parent Governor	02 April 2025	01 April 2029
Richard Benson	Headteacher – Ex-Officio	NA	NA
Vijith Vijay	Governance Professional	NA	NA

## IN ATTENDANCE

Ian Watson – Applicant for the role of Governor

Paul Hussey – Applicant for the role of Governor

Gayle Raybould – Applicant for the role of Governor

## PREVIOUS ACTIONS

Action ID	Meeting Date	Agenda Point	Responsible Person	Status	Action
5	Wednesday, March 5, 2025	16	Richard Benson	In-progress	A survey to be conducted to assess wellbeing of parents and children.
12	Wednesday, May 21, 2025	12	Nicola McIntyre	Pending	NM to share survey summary results with staff before end of term.
13	Tuesday, July 15, 2025	12	Richard Benson	Pending	RB to share safeguarding audit with governors
14	Tuesday, July 15, 2025	15	Nicola McIntyre	Pending	To table Equalities Policy in September FGB

<b>AGENDA ITEMS</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Opening Items</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</b>	NM	18:00
<p><b>NM</b> welcomed the governors and started the meeting at 17:59. All governors introduced themselves.</p>			
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Annual Declarations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests</li> <li>2. KCSIE 2025</li> </ol>	NM	18:15
<p>Governors have completed declarations of pecuniary interest forms. <b>NM</b> confirmed that a form was sent out regarding KCSIE and all governors confirmed reading it. NM to share form with VV.</p>			
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters to be raised under AOB as urgent</b>	All	18:17
None			
<b>4</b>	<p><b><u>Minutes of the Meeting on 15 July 2025 for Approval</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters Arising</li> <li>• Previous Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Action 5 – RB – Parent and Pupil survey</li> <li>○ Action 12 – NM – Share survey results with staff</li> <li>○ Action 13 – RB – Share safeguarding audit</li> <li>○ Action 15 – NM – To table Equalities Policy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	NM	18:19
<p><b>MS</b> commented on the notes regarding the number of pupils taking the MC text. <b>RB</b> confirmed the number of pupils was 30.</p> <p><b>NM</b> highlighted areas for questions to <b>RB</b>: On page 4, <b>RB</b> confirmed that it covers phonics support. On page 5, <b>RB</b>'s comment about GLD to be removed. (removed from notes) On item 12, it was noted that the inclusion team had reviewed the safeguarding audit that morning, and the minutes are to be updated accordingly. Subject to these amendments, the meeting notes were approved.</p> <p><b>Previous Actions:</b> Action 5 has been completed and included. Action 12 was presented by <b>NM</b> on 2nd September 2025. Action 13 is complete. Action 14 is scheduled to return in November for review.</p>			

5	Correspondence Received	NM	18:24
<p><b>NM</b> informed the board that <b>AH</b> had resigned due to time commitments and expressed thanks to <b>AH</b> for her dedication and contribution to the board.</p>			
6	Chair's Actions	NM	18:25
None			
AGM			
7	<p><b>Appointments &amp; Elections</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appointment of Co-opted Governors <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <a href="#">Ian Watson – Application for the role of Governor</a></li> <li>b. <a href="#">Paul Hussey - Application for the role of Governor</a></li> <li>c. <a href="#">Gayle Raybould - Application for the role of Governor</a></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Appointment of Staff Governor</li> <li>3. Election of Chair</li> <li>4. Election of Vice-Chair</li> <li>5. Appointment of Link Roles</li> <li>6. Appointment of Budget Working Group</li> <li>7. Appointment of Pay Review Panel</li> <li>8. Appointment of Headteacher’s Performance Panel</li> </ol>	NM	18:27
<p><b>NM</b> clarified that <b>GR</b> and <b>IW</b> had joined as applicants for the co-opted governor roles.  <b>GR</b> introduced herself as the Senior SEND Adviser for CBC and noted her background as a secondary school teacher.  <b>IW</b> introduced himself as the Chair of Governors at Brooklands Middle School, sharing his prior experience as both a governor and a professional at the National History Museum.</p> <p><b>All governors approved GR and IW joining the board and formally adopted them as co-opted governors.</b></p> <p><b>NM</b> informed the board that <b>PH</b> would be joining in a supportive and advisory capacity.  <b>PH</b> introduced himself as a trustee at the Pyramid Schools Trust, a primary school headteacher for 30 years, and a governor for 40 years.  <b>NM</b> added that <b>PH</b> would join as an associate governor without voting rights.</p> <p><b>All governors approved the decision.</b></p> <p><b>NM</b> informed the board that <b>NN</b> had resigned as a staff governor on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2025.  <b>RB</b> added that the SENDCo had expressed interest in discussing the possibility of being included as a staff governor.</p> <p>To include this election in the next meeting. <b>Action: NM</b></p> <p><b>NM</b> added that a potential chair application had been received, but the applicant withdrew due to caring responsibilities. <b>NM</b> confirmed she would continue to chair until December and informed the board that <b>Maxine Powell</b> would be providing support in a consultant capacity (as part of the RISE support programme).</p> <p><b>IW</b> commented that there is substantial support available for chairs and described it as a rewarding role.</p>			

**VV** suggested seeking nominations from governors for the chair position and holding an election at the next meeting, as **NM** had agreed to chair the current one. **Action: VV**

**JS** expressed willingness to continue as Vice Chair for another year. **NM** nominated **JS** and **IW**, and **DH** seconded.

**JS was elected as Vice Chair.**

**NM** shared the results from the recent survey and confirmed the allocation of link roles:

**JS** – Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

**DH** – EYFS

**CR** – Finance

**MS** – Safeguarding, Attendance, PP & LAC

**NT** – SEND

**NM** – Wellbeing and Equalities

**SC** – Health & Safety

**HH** – PSHE and Behaviour

**NM** suggested that **IW** support **SC** and **CR** with the H&S and finance link roles, which **IW** agreed to.

**NM** proposed using remote meetings to support and facilitate effective link role implementation and monitoring.

**DH** and **CR** will complete the forthcoming Maths monitoring visit.

**NM** will share the staffing structure with governors to help them identify appropriate staff contacts. The commitment for each link role will be one meeting per term, linked to the School Development Plan.

**NM** confirmed that there are no sub-committees apart from the Budget Monitoring Working Group.

**CR** will lead this group as Finance Link Governor, and **NM** requested **IW**'s support and participation. **NM** also offered to join to ensure continuity. **MS** expressed interest in joining the group.

**Membership confirmed: CR, IW, MS and NM**

For the **Pay Review Panel**, and **JS** have previously led it, and **NM** confirmed it would be conducted remotely.

**Membership confirmed: CR, JS and NM**

For the **Headteacher's Performance Panel**, **CR** and **NM** will serve as members, with **DH** and **MS** expressing interest in joining the panel.

**Membership confirmed: CR, NM and DH/MS** (as a contingency for unavailability)

8	<a href="#">Adoption of Code of Conduct</a> <a href="#">Adoption of Standing Orders</a>	NM	18:47
Governors are happy to adopt and abide by the documents.			
9	<b>Adoption of Working Group and Panel Terms of Reference</b> 1. <a href="#">Budget Monitoring Working Group</a> 2. <a href="#">Pay Review Panel</a>	NM	18:53

Approved.

## School Strategy & Performance

10	<a href="#">Headteacher's Report</a>	RB	18:58
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**RB** presented the Headteacher's Report, written four weeks into the term. The report followed the usual structure, with a particular focus on the RISE programme, a two-year support initiative under a £137,000 contract. An attendance meeting with the Attendance Officer is scheduled for next week.

**RB** noted an increase in fines issued to families for term-time holidays, though overall holiday-related absences had decreased during the first four weeks. Two safeguarding referrals had been made, with no external suspensions reported.

There are currently twelve full-time teachers who receive paid PPA time. The report also detailed the number of support staff, including the addition of two new LSAs. A "Train Brain" day had taken place, alongside the usual annual updates and training, including Prevent and annual declarations.

No serious incidents were reported. The newly resurfaced playground has positively impacted pupil behaviour, with a reduction in minor incidents compared to the previous skiddy surface.

**DH** asked whether attendance had increased in the last week and if it was in line with other schools. **RB** confirmed that attendance was consistent with the local area.

**JS** queried whether unauthorised absences were a concern. **RB** explained that lateness was the main issue affecting attendance figures.

**NM** asked how lateness was being addressed. **RB** responded that start times had been adjusted, and families were gradually adapting. One parent with multiple children across the school had shown improvement since the younger child began attending. A specific hard-to-engage family is being used as a case study for discussion with the Attendance Officer for their advice.

**NM** asked how the new academic year had started. **RB** reported that several teachers had been moved around, including **NN**, who is now teaching Year 4. The school had introduced significant changes to the curriculum, and teaching and learning over the past 18 months - such as new Kapow curriculum, phonics scheme, Walkthroughs - and now it was about embedding these changes. Parent surveys and feedback have been reviewed, and efforts are being made to respond to recurring themes and questions.

**RB** informed the board that an email had been sent to the LA regarding the ongoing building works. The KS1 building, originally expected to be ready by half-term is now delayed until the end of term. A six-week programme has slipped by seven weeks, resulting in the loss of two nurture rooms and limited breakout spaces for interventions. **RB** described the delay as highly frustrating, with a "domino effect" impacting several areas of school provision.

**MS** asked whether this delay had a knock-on effect on behaviour. **RB** confirmed that it restricted the school's ability to provide targeted support due to reduced space for interventions.

**HH** asked whether a response had been received from the LA. **RB** confirmed that during a six-week programme, there was a ten-day period with no on-site presence, and the school had not been informed. The shared space between the two Year 1 classrooms is now very limited, which also affects after-school clubs, as they must be relocated to classrooms.

**JS** asked about the new Deputy Headteacher. **RB** reported that he is performing well, covering the SENDCo's teaching role when required. He is on secondment until Christmas and has expressed a strong interest in remaining permanently. There have been six applications for the post. **RB** added that the Deputy has been a valuable addition to the team and has made a positive impact in a short period.

11	<b>School Development Plan</b> 1. <a href="#">RISE support plan</a> 2. SIP and SEF 2025	RB	19:08
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**NM** explained that the school currently holds a double *Requires Improvement* rating. The school had been on course for academisation; however, shortly before the conversion with PST, the government decided not to proceed. The school had wanted to continue, but the DfE instead agreed to provide support through the RISE Programme. The plan for this, originally due to be submitted in the summer, had since been extended to September.

**NM** confirmed that the LA has been involved in planning the programme. Although the plan was intended to be co-created with the school, this has not occurred beyond the governance element. The contract for the RISE programme was signed earlier in the week.

**NM** updated on a call she had with Steve Kelly from PST this week, who confirmed that the funding covers two years, rather than the initially understood one year, which is a positive development.

**RB** reported that he is awaiting input from **Colin Moore** at Ramsey Manor to begin work on the details of the improvement plan. **NM** asked what the key points of focus would be. **RB** responded that it would continue to be the school's current school improvement priorities, but that it would be necessary to establish the structure of **Colin's** support, expected to be two days per week. He added that significant clarification is still required, particularly as half of the school building remains unusable.

**NM** stated that an immediate priority is to understand the implications of the new Ofsted framework. The **LA** had offered training on this, but the session unfortunately clashes with the DHT interviews. **MS** added that the framework would not be fully embedded by December in any case.

**NM** noted that more detail is needed within the improvement plan. **RB** agreed, explaining that the current plan is quite generic and requires greater personalisation. He confirmed that he has spoken to **Steve Kelly** (CEO) and **Colin**, both of whom have agreed to collaborate with him on refining the plan.

**NM** recalled that **Steve** had advised last year that the trust could not proceed with academisation at that time due to the incomplete building works and the school's financial deficit. The deficit has since been halved, and the building work should be resolved by Christmas, so his feedback now was that the process can begin. **Steve** will consult the DfE to confirm whether there are any conflicts between the RISE programme and potential academisation.

**NM** emphasised that the board has not yet formally recorded the decision to join PST, but that due diligence has been carried out when previously planning for academisation. Unless governors feel further research into alternative trusts is necessary, she proposed that the board take a formal vote to join **PST**.

**IW** shared his experience, explaining that Brooklands Middle School joined PST last year following a detailed and lengthy process. The process was beneficial for the school, and Leedon joining would ensure a more seamless transition for pupils between the two schools. He confirmed that the experience with PST had been very positive.

**JS** added that the trust has worked closely and collaboratively with the school. **IW** reiterated that issues are managed efficiently within the trust.

**JS** declared a conflict of interest as an employee of one of **PST**'s schools and abstained from voting. **IW** also declared a conflict of interest as Chair of Governors for one of **PST**'s schools and abstained from voting. **GR** abstained from voting due to a lack of knowledge of the history of this process.

**The governors formally passed a resolution to join PST, with no objections.**

<b>12</b>	<b>Stakeholder Feedback</b> 1. Parent & Pupil Survey Results (Summer 2025)	RB	19:18
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**RB** reported that the pupil survey received 39 responses, representing less than 10% of the school population. Although the sample size was small, the responses were largely positive, with the vast majority of pupils indicating that they enjoy school. **RB** expressed an intention to repeat the survey with all pupils in school, rather than sharing the link home, to gain deeper insights.

The parent survey also received a relatively low response rate with 74 responses. As part of the feedback, parents highlighted a desire for their voices to be more actively included in school decision-making. In response, **RB** confirmed plans to establish a **Parent Voice Group**, currently comprising 13 parents who have expressed interest in participating.

Parents also expressed more details on what their children will be learning, Now, as well as an update in the Leedon Link of details of what children have learnt that week, parents will get an update on what's being taught the following week, Web links to the whole year's learning have also been emailed to parents, and dates for school events have been set for the full academic year to ensure families are informed well in advance.

**IW** commented that, in his experience, non-respondents are often generally satisfied, as dissatisfied parents are typically more likely to provide feedback.

**RB** added that the school used Seesaw as its parent communication app during lockdown, and were looking to reinstate that, but noted that it requires proper configuration, as notifications currently ping one teacher for all 30 children in a class.

**DH** provided feedback that some school communications assume parents are already familiar with the context, which can lead to confusion.

**RB** confirmed that the surveys will be reissued later this year.

**HH** asked whether parent voice feedback will be shared with governance. **RB** confirmed that it will.

#### Financial & Premises Management

<b>13</b>	<b>Finance</b> 1. <a href="#">Leedon Lower School 2025-26 Returns &amp; Forecast - P5 August 25.xlsx</a> 2. New Licenced Budget Deficit Application	RB	19:23
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**NM** reported that there appeared to be an additional £36,000 shortfall, indicating that the school might need to submit another deficit application.

**Lousie Harris, SBM**, had since confirmed that by December the school is expected to be forecasting approximately £1,000 over budget.

**NM** explained that the deficit will not reduce significantly this year, as the school has across two-year groups currently three classes. Over the coming years, as the school structure reduces back to 2 form entry and one teacher is reduced, the savings will begin to take effect. The forecast projects that the school will move into a surplus position within the next three years.

Support staff pay rises were backdated to April, while teaching staff pay rises were implemented in September.

**RB** noted that the teaching staff profile is relatively expensive, with most teachers having between nine and ten years of experience. Ideally, some staff might have moved on to develop their careers elsewhere, but retention remains high.

**NM** added that the school has welcomed several refugee pupils this term. **RB** confirmed that there are currently 10 Afghan students spread across multiple year groups. The school is awaiting confirmation of funding support from the **LA**. These pupils do not have high needs but require additional assistance due to language and cultural barriers.

**CR** asked whether it was easy to find staff to support these children. **RB** explained that it is challenging, as there are four different languages spoken in Afghanistan. The school uses an online programme called Widget, which produces images for each word type, helping pupils understand lessons and routines.

**NT** asked whether the school was aware in advance that these pupils would be joining. **RB** confirmed that there had been no prior notice.

**RB** shared that one of the children expressed surprise and delight upon seeing the library for the first time, reflecting the cultural adjustment they are experiencing.

**IW** suggested that, if helpful, governors could write a letter to the LA emphasising the need for additional support for these pupils.

**RB** added that the school provides free breakfast club access and additional pastoral support where possible.

#### Standing Items

14	<b>Safeguarding – <a href="#">CBC Safeguarding Audit Report</a></b>	RB	19:28
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**RB** shared the audit report and provided a detailed summary, incorporating findings from the report.

For the benefit of the new governors, **NM** mentioned that the **LA** normally conduct a safeguarding audit and **RB** confirmed that most of the red-rated items from the current report have already been actioned. A number of recommendations remain, particularly those relating to record keeping and the timely closure of cases on CPOMS.

**NM** added that a safeguarding refresher training session is required for all governors and will share the training link. **Action: NM.**

15	<b>Wellbeing</b>	RB	19:33
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**NM** asked how staff were feeling at the start of the academic year.

**RB** responded that staff were positive and in good spirits. The recent resurfacing work has had a positive impact, and pupils are enjoying happier lunchtimes, contributing to an overall positive atmosphere across the school.

16	GDPR	NM	19:35
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No GDPR concerns to report

17	<p><b>Policies for approval:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025</a></li> <li>2. <a href="#">Child on Child Abuse Policy 2025</a></li> <li>3. <a href="#">Attendance Policy</a></li> <li>4. <a href="#">Uniform Policy</a></li> <li>5. <a href="#">LAC and PLAC Policy</a></li> <li>6. <a href="#">Accessibility Plan 2024-27</a></li> <li>7. <a href="#">School Confidential Reporting Policy</a></li> </ol>	RB	19:36
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The **Safeguarding Policy** has been adopted from CBC and has been formally approved by governors.

There were **no changes** to the **Attendance Policy**; governors approved it in principle, subject to the policy being circulated by email for confirmation (as link in agenda broken). **Action: VV** to circulate the Attendance Policy by email.

**CR** raised that cycling shorts should be included as part of the PE kit in the Uniform policy to ensure consistency.

**NT** noted that items do not need to be branded.

**NM** reiterated that while parents often assume branding is required, the policy clearly states it is not compulsory.

**DH** recalled that a previous communication may have suggested otherwise, and **RB** requested that this be shared for review.

**NM** emphasised the importance of avoiding additional financial burdens on families.

**JS** suggested that the policy should include a note acknowledging sensory issues, to ensure inclusivity for all pupils.

**RB** will discuss this with the SENDCo, and **NM** agreed to table the updated policy once that discussion has taken place. **Action: RB** to update the Uniform policy to be tabled at the next meeting.

The **LAC and PLAC Policy** was reviewed with **no changes** and **approved**.

Regarding the Accessibility Plan (2024–27), **RB**, **SENDCo**, **GR**, and **NT** will form a working group to review implementation to date.

**NM** suggested an annual check-in, with feedback from the group to be shared at the next meeting.

The **Accessibility Plan** was **approved**, subject to this ongoing review process.

The **School Confidential Reporting Policy** was **approved**.

18	<b>Governor Development and Training:</b> <a href="#">CBC Governor training programme 25-26</a>	NM	19:46
<p>The <b>2024–25 training link</b> was shared in error. <b>Action: VV</b> to share the most recent training programme.</p> <p><b>NM</b> recommended that governors make full use of the training opportunities available. An Ofsted training session on the new inspection framework is scheduled, and <b>NM</b> will share the details with governors. <b>Action: NM</b> to circulate information about the Ofsted training.</p> <p><b>NM</b> also recommended that governors undertake “Holding Senior Leaders to Account” training.</p> <p>A <b>skills audit</b> will be conducted to identify development areas and ensure the board’s collective expertise remains aligned with school priorities.</p> <p><b>NM</b> informed that <b>Maxine Powell</b> will attend and support the board during meetings. Governors <b>unanimously approved</b> this decision.</p> <p><b>NM</b> will explore options for bespoke governor training focused on areas such as leadership accountability, budget oversight, and other governance responsibilities, and will advise the board accordingly.</p>			
19	Any other business	NM	19:52
<p><b>NM</b> noted that the <b>Pay Policy</b> needs to be reviewed. <b>VV</b> had shared a version from Luton Borough Council, though it was highlighted that Luton does not implement performance-related pay, opting instead for incremental annual pay rises. The Board must decide whether to keep or remove performance related pay.</p> <p><b>JS</b> asked what approach PST would recommend and confirmed she had reviewed Brooklands’ pay policy, while <b>MS</b> had reviewed the Chiltern Learning Trust’s version.</p> <p><b>PH</b> suggested that it would be appropriate to remove performance-related pay entirely, provided that teacher appraisal is robust and linked to clear performance principles.</p> <p><b>SC</b> asked whether pay progression could be structured so that half of the increment is awarded automatically, and the remaining half is performance-based. <b>NM</b> responded that it would be unlikely unions would agree to it working in this way.</p> <p><b>PH</b> cautioned that unions may challenge linking pay directly to performance outcomes, so this aspect must be managed carefully.</p> <p>The Board agreed to remove performance related pay-progression.</p> <p><b>Action: NM</b> to share the draft Pay Policy with all governors online for review, before it goes to consultation with staff and unions.</p> <p><b>DH</b> added that the school is currently included in a Waitrose grant voting scheme this week.</p>			
<p><b>CLOSE OF MEETING AT 19:49, NEXT MEETING 26 NOVEMBER 2025</b></p>			

Minutes approved by the Governing Body on: 08.12.2025

Signed (Chair):

N Mchtyre

## ACTIONS

14	Tuesday, July 15, 2025	15	Nicola McIntyre	In-progress	Table equalities policy
15	Wednesday, October 1, 2025	7	Nicola McIntyre	Pending	Include the election for staff governor
16	Wednesday, October 1, 2025	7	Vijith Vijay	In-progress	Conduct a poll to seek nominations for the role of chair
17	Wednesday, October 1, 2025	14	Nicola McIntyre	Pending	To share safeguarding refresher training link.
18	Wednesday, October 1, 2025	17	Vijith Vijay	Pending	Circulate revised Attendance Policy for approval
19	Wednesday, October 1, 2025	17	Richard Benson	Pending	RB to update the Uniform policy to be tabled at the next meeting.
18	Wednesday, October 1, 2025	18	Nicola McIntyre	Pending	To share the Ofsted training information on the new framework.
19	Wednesday, October 1, 2025	19	Nicola McIntyre	Pending	To share the draft pay policy with all governors online for review.
20	Wednesday, October 1, 2025	19	Richard Benson	Pending	RB, SENDCo, GR, and NT will form a working group to review implementation to date