



*Ellington Primary School
Head teacher's Report
Governing Body Meeting*

11th March 2026

School Context

Number on roll

<u>Class</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Total</u>
Nursery – Mrs Cook	17	12	29
Reception – Mrs Milne	14	16	30
Year 1 – Mrs Horsley	18	10	28
Year 2 – Miss Nicholson	11	9	20
Year 3 – Mrs Morris/Mrs Richardson	13	17	30
Year 4 – Mr McConville	15	12	27
Year 5 – Miss Brooks	11	19	30
Year 6 – Mrs Sanders	16	10	26
Totals:	115	105	220

Pupil Premium: 22.5% – 43 children (21.8% / 48 children including Early Years PP)

Free School Meals: 15.5% – 34 children

SEND: 18.6% – 41 children. 3 EHCPs

Service Children: 0.5% – 1 child

Service Children Ever 6 measure: 1% – 2 children

Post Looked After: 3.6% – 8 children

Attendance Whole School Attendance 3rd September 2025 – 13th February 2026

	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Total % Attendance	94.9%	97.4%	97.4%	94.7%	96.9%	96.3%	97.3%

Whole school attendance is 96.34%.

Our attendance for the academic year 2024/2025 was 96%, above the national average of 94.9%.

Our number of persistent absentees is currently 8.9%.

Our PA in 2024/2025 was 9.3% and the national average was 14.3%.

Children with SEND attendance is 96.02% compared to 96.42% for children without SEND.

Our attendance for pupil premium children is 97.12% compared to 96.11% for non-pupil premium children.

Current Staffing

<u>Name</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>	<u>Upper Pay scale/ additional leadership responsibilities</u>	<u>Main scale coordinator role</u>
Kevin Hodgson Head Teacher	Achievement/Attainment of pupils Assessment and Pupil Progress Teacher performance management	Child protection lead Teaching and Learning	PE Lead
Dan McConville Assistant Headteacher	Year 4 Class Teacher Pupil Premium Lead Child Protection Designated Person	Maths Lead Science Lead	
Claire Sanders Assistant Headteacher	Year 6 Class Teacher Child Protection Designated Person	English Lead	TA Professional Development
Amy Milne	Reception Class Teacher Child Protection Designated Person	EYFS Lead	RE Lead
Samantha Horsley	Year 1 Class Teacher Child Protection Designated Person	Science Lead	PSHE Lead
Julia Morris	Year 3 Class Teacher	SENCO	Mental Health Lead

<i>Rachel Richardson</i>	<i>Year 3 Class Teacher</i>		<i>Music Lead French Lead</i>
<i>Eilish Nicholson</i>	<i>Year 2 Class Teacher</i>		<i>Geography Lead</i>
<i>Jade Cook</i>	<i>Nursery Teacher</i>		<i>Art Lead</i>
<i>Ella Brooks</i>	<i>Year 5 Class Teacher</i>		<i>History Lead</i>
<i>Martin Bailey</i>	<i>Digital Enrichment Teacher</i>		
<i>Dawn Redpath</i>	<i>PPA teacher</i>		<i>Design and Technology Lead</i>
<i>Karen Sayers</i>	<i>UKS2 teaching assistant</i>		
<i>Annette Mallaburn</i>	<i>UKS2 teaching assistant</i>		
<i>Cathryn Strachan</i>	<i>LKS2 teaching assistant</i>		
<i>Tracy Goodhall</i>	<i>EYFS teaching assistant</i>		
<i>Steph Patrick</i>	<i>EYFS/KS1/KS2 teaching assistant</i>		
<i>Glenn Liddle</i>	<i>LKS1 teaching assistant</i>		
<i>Rachel Hays (P/T)</i>	<i>LKS1 teaching assistant</i>		
<i>Laura Henderson (P/T)</i>	<i>EYFS teaching assistant</i>		
<i>Jenny Dyer</i>	<i>Office Manager</i>		
<i>Phillipa Levey (P/T)</i>	<i>Admin Officer</i>		
<i>Ed Robinson</i>	<i>Site Manager</i>		
<i>Julie Emery</i>	<i>Catering Manager</i>		
<i>Alysson Grant</i>	<i>Catering Assistant</i>		
<i>Bronya Laidler</i>	<i>Catering Assistant</i>		
<i>Pauline Millis</i>	<i>Lunchtime Supervisor</i>		
<i>Claire Gray</i>	<i>Lunchtime Supervisor / After School Club Leader</i>		
<i>Kim Scott</i>	<i>After School Club Leader</i>		

Staffing Update

We have recently appointed an experienced TA as an after-school club leader. Kim Scott has worked as a TA in the West End of Newcastle for almost 25 years and will work alongside Miss Gray.

Cathryn Strachan is leaving on Friday 13th March after working at Ellington for 20 years, she will be a huge miss. We are hoping to appoint a replacement to start after Easter for the Summer term.

Allyson Grant will be leaving her role in the school kitchen at the end of the academic year. Allyson is retiring after working at Ellington for 10 years.

Please see current staffing structure – attached.

School Improvement Plan

A new school improvement plan was written for 2024 – 2026 and we are coming towards the end of this. There are some areas left to focus on further:

Quality of Education:

SEND

- Ensure that all plans are fully implemented at all times.
- Implement a thorough monitoring schedule to monitor, support and challenge. Guaranteeing that all children with SEND are making progress.
- An impactful curriculum which promotes independent thinking, develops understanding about the wider world and builds children with aspirations.
- Evaluate and develop the current curriculum through coaching and mentoring ensuring AfL is used to maximise learning

Reading

- To implement consistent use of the “100 reads” as well as developing “Libraries of Certainty.”
- To reignite the use of Accelerated reader across Year 2-6.

Writing

- Implement extra opportunities for children to write creatively outside of English lessons (e.g. clubs, competitions).

Maths

- All children to have improved opportunities for problem solving in every lesson.

- Teachers using Manipulatives effectively to support all learners as required with a particular focus on KS2.

Science

- To have children completing fieldwork as part of the science curriculum including by using the school grounds.
- To have strong links with expert STEM agencies in the local community to increase pupils Science Capital.

Behaviour and Attitudes

- High expectations from all staff to ensure consistency in the application of behavioural expectations.

Personal Development

- Ensure our curriculum driver 'Wider World' is further developed through diversity enrichment.
- Develop environmental understanding through carefully planned activities.
- Ensure termly whole school focuses on career sectors.
- Plan visits and visitors linked to career sectors.

Leadership and Management

- Expert teachers will team teach to develop consistently good or better teaching

Early Years

- EYFS Lead will develop peer observations with quality interactions as the focus.
- Timetable staff members into early years so they can start to identify their subject in action.
- Ensure staff have a good knowledge of what their subject might look like across the EY phase.
- EYFS Lead to share knowledge and understanding of the EYFS Curriculum and how it underpins mainstream curriculum.

A new school development plan is currently being finalised in line with the new Ofsted toolkit. This will be shared at the next full governing body meeting.

StepLab

We have recently launched StepLab in school to improve the quality and consistency of teaching. StepLab is a professional development and instructional coaching platform used widely across the UK to help schools improve teaching in a consistent, evidence-based way. It is described as a digital engine for school improvement, designed to make teacher development more precise, more accountable, and more effective.

StepLab helps schools:

- Identify what great teaching looks like
- Break it into small, actionable steps
- Coach teachers weekly using those steps
- Track progress across teachers and subjects
- Build a culture of continuous improvement

Aims of StepLab:

- teaching quality improves year on year
- staff development is high-quality and evidence-based
- leadership has the right tools to monitor impact
- the school uses resources effectively

How StepLab works:

1. Leaders set a clear vision for teaching

Schools choose the teaching framework they want to use (e.g., Rosenshine-aligned steps). This ensures everyone is working from the same definition of “excellent practice.”

2. Coaches observe lessons weekly

Observations are short, focused, and supportive—not high-stakes.

3. Teachers receive one small improvement step

Instead of overwhelming feedback, StepLab focuses on one actionable change at a time.

4. Teachers practise the step

Coaches use rehearsal and modelling—this is where the real improvement happens.

5. StepLab tracks progress

Leaders can see:

- which steps are being worked on
- how coaching is being delivered
- where strengths and gaps are emerging

Exclusions

There have been no exclusions.

Racist/Homophobic Incidents

There have been no racist or homophobic incidents.

Bullying

There have been no cases of bullying.

Safeguarding

Currently in school:

- We have eight previously looked after children.
- We have one open child protection case. One case is now closed.
- All safeguarding is logged on CPOMS.
- We continue to use SENSO to monitor all online activity. SENSO is being upgraded in Autumn term.
- A safeguarding element is included in every newsletter.
- We are an Operation Encompass school.
- We have had a termly visit from Mick Dunn, Clennell Safeguarding Advisor
- All staff had training from Clennell - Physical intervention DfE guidance - accredited

Partnerships

As part of the governing board's strategic oversight, it is important to understand both the opportunities and challenges associated with being part of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). The table attached provides a balanced comparison to support informed discussion and decision-making. It highlights how MAT structures can influence school improvement, leadership, finance, governance, and culture, enabling governors to evaluate how well the trust's approach aligns with the needs and priorities of the school community.

After school clubs

TT Rockstars – KS1 & KS2

Just Dance – Years 3, 4 and 5

Dodgeball/Benchball – Years 5 & 6

Table Tennis – Years 3 – 6

Sports Club – Reception, Years 1 & 2

Digital Makers – Years 3, 4 & 5

Budget

Key findings from the December indicative budget were shared with the governing body.

Key Budget Variances Facing Primary Schools in the Coming Years

1. Declining Pupil Numbers and Reduced Income

Primary pupil numbers are projected to fall nationally over the coming years, driven by lower birth rates and demographic shifts. Because school funding is largely based on per-pupil allocations, this trend will reduce income for many schools.

Implications:

- Lower income despite largely fixed costs
- Increased vulnerability for small schools
- Potential need for class restructuring or mixed-age models
- Greater reliance on reserves to maintain provision

2. Rising Staffing Costs

Staffing accounts for around 75–80% of a primary school's expenditure. Pay awards for teachers and support staff have risen significantly, and increases are not always fully funded.

Implications

- Higher baseline expenditure year-on-year
- Pressure to review staffing structures
- Possible need to reduce hours, posts, or non-class-based roles
- Increased difficulty in balancing budgets without affecting provision

3. Inflationary Pressures on Non-Staff Costs

Schools continue to face rising costs in areas such as:

- Energy
- Catering
- ICT

- Insurance
- Premises and maintenance

Even where national inflation is stabilising, school-specific inflation remains high due to long-term contracts and specialist services.

Implications

- Reduced flexibility in discretionary spending
- Increased pressure on curriculum budgets
- Need for tighter procurement and contract management

4. SEND and Inclusion Funding Gaps

Demand for SEND support continues to rise, but funding has not kept pace with need. Schools are increasingly required to provide additional support without corresponding increases in income.

Implications

- Growing gap between statutory provision and available funding
- Increased pressure on teaching assistants and pastoral staff
- Risk of overspend in SEND budgets

5. Rising Deficits and Reduced Financial Resilience

More schools are reporting in-year deficits, and reserves are being used to maintain provision. This reduces long-term financial resilience.

Implications

- Higher risk of entering licensed deficit
- Increased scrutiny from local authorities or MAT central teams
- Reduced capacity for strategic investment

6. Capital and Estates Pressures

Ageing buildings and rising maintenance costs place additional strain on budgets. Capital funding is often insufficient to meet need.

Implications

- Increased reactive maintenance costs
- Potential health and safety risks
- Pressure to prioritise essential works over improvements

Health and Safety

We had a health and safety inspection by Northumberland County Council on 15th January. We are still awaiting the report but on the whole the inspection was successful with only some minor issues to correct.

We continue to have issues with the roof. We have had water ingress in one of the intervention rooms and the main entrance. We have been working with NCC and contractors to try and resolve this. This has also led to damage with our alarm with the panel being broken by the water ingress. NCC, Alumasc and Group Tegula have all been out to visit and inspect the roof. Despite being under warranty, the leaks continue. Karen Enright (NCC) has been supportive and a report has noted that the pitched roof will need replacing in the very near future.

We have on-going concerns over the MUGA and also the Reception outdoor area. Both of which have extremely slippery surfaces if the surface is damp.

Environmental Health gave us a surprise visit and we maintained our 5-star rating.

Premises

We have replaced the carpets in main corridors in school. This was completed during February half term. We have also replaced the carpets in Year 5, the large KS2 cloakroom and the main school office.

We are having a new extractor/air filter installed in the boys KS2 toilets in order to combat the odour. The flooring in the KS2 toilets, especially the boys will need replacing in the near future.

Governor Monitoring

Elizabeth Pink – SEND

Louise Welsh – Pupil Premium

Lizzie Jackson – EYFS

Danielle Towers – Safeguarding

Danielle Towers – Attendance

Request – governor visits to school

