

Fulfen Primary School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in a virtual setting on Tuesday 25 May, 2021 at 6.15 p.m.

Present: Mr. Middleton (Chair), Mrs. Davies (Headteacher), Mrs. Ballett,
Mrs. Connock, Mr. Holmes, Mrs. Poxon, Mrs. Tranter, Mrs. Witcomb,
Miss. Green

Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Governors)
Mrs. Hawkins (School Business Manager)
Miss. Chapman (Staff)

1 Welcome and Introductions:

Governors were welcomed to tonight's Governing Board by the Chair. Whilst meetings continue in a virtual setting it is hoped, sooner rather than later, that members can come together in a face to face meeting forum.

Tonight's agenda was packed full of strategic intent as well as ensuring the SLT is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities in particular areas – e.g. finance. Documentation had been uploaded to the Hub in advance of the meeting and, as always, Governors were given lots of opportunities to ask questions/seek points of clarification throughout the meeting.

The meeting was quorate.

2 Apologies:

Resolved: That apologies for absence be received and accepted from Mrs Lerner and Ms. Burley.

Resolved: That apologies not be received and therefore not be accepted from Ms. Mason and Mrs. Lightfoot.

The Vice-Chair will notify the School Office of tonight's meeting attendance so that the central log can be updated.

Governors are reminded that any Governor who does not participate in full Governing Board meetings for more than six months without their apologies being accepted by the Governing Board are automatically disqualified.

3 Confidentiality:

Governors were reminded that all discussions that take place at this meeting should remain confidential to the meeting.

4 Declarations of Interest:

No declarations of interest were made by Governors in respect of any specific items appearing on tonight's agenda.

Mrs. Tranter declared a general interest which needs to be logged on Governor Hub as per the circulated guidance.

5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 30 March, 2021 (including Confidential Appendix) be approved as an accurate and true record.

Resolved: That the Minutes, Agenda and all reports and other papers considered at the meeting be made available for inspection.

A copy of the Minutes will be retained for audit purposes and signed by Mr. Middleton via electronic or hard copy signature.

Resolved: That Mr. Middleton add his signature to the ratified minutes.

6 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:

Before agreeing the action matrix from the last meeting, it was agreed the Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk would come together between tonight's meeting and the Summer Term 2 meeting to discuss a number of issues including the completed skills audit, Link Governor roles/responsibilities and any other outstanding governance matters.

Resolved: That a meeting be convened after half-term to discuss/progress these issues.

Specifically, in relation to the action matrix from the last meeting:

Minute	Update
2	The Headteacher had posted a link for tonight's meeting in Governor Hub.
4	The Vice-Chair will check with the School Office but it is assumed all declarations on the Hub in relation to business/pecuniary interests and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) are up to date. The Vice-Chair will follow this matter up with specific individuals if this is not the case. Resolved: That the Vice-Chair follow up on any issues as needed.
7	The Headteacher confirmed a public record of the February minutes is available.
7	It was confirmed the ratified minutes from the last meeting have been signed by the Chair.
8	The Vice-Chair confirmed that she needed a number of dates for the Governor spreadsheet from Mrs. Tranter and also a photo from Ms. Mason for the School website. Resolved: That the Vice-Chair follow up on these issues outside of tonight's meeting.
9	The membership updates from the last meeting have been shared with Entrust.
11	Plans have now been made to discuss the Link Governor structure that will be finalised at the Summer Term 2 meeting.
11	Mr. Holmes has met with Mrs. Tranter in his capacity as Safeguarding/SEND Link Governor. A verbal update of this engagement session was provided later in the meeting.
14	The Chair/Headteacher have discussed whether any action needed to be taken in relation to the Pay/Appraisal Policies.

It is pleasing to see so many actions being progressed – a sign of effective governance in action.

7 Chair and Vice-Chair's Actions:

The Chair confirmed he had taken one action on behalf of the Governing Board since the last meeting – **see Confidential Appendix.**

The Vice-Chair gets through a lot of work on behalf of the Governing Board but confirmed she has not had to take any specific actions since the last meeting.

8 Financials:

The agenda was switched around at this point to enable a financial update to be delivered by the School Business Manager. Mrs. Hawkins had uploaded a series of financial documents to Governor Hub to aid Governor understanding of this critical area of school life. This documentation included the Main Budget Out-turn for 2020-21; an Income and Expenditure Report; a Budget Update Report; SFVS documentation and the Scheme of Delegation. It is also worth noting that Mrs. Poxon has supported the School Business Manager, not only in applying a high level of due diligence when scrutinising the budget information, but also providing a form of external validation to the School's financial decision-making from the perspective of an independent third party. Mrs. Poxon was complimentary about the level of financial control that is being exercised in relation to the School finances and was more than happy to support the documentation that was being presented to Governors at tonight's meeting.

1.1

Mrs. Hawkins began by confirming with Governors the Budget Out-turn as at 30.03.21 – **see Confidential Appendix.**

1.2

There was also an update on the SFVS self-assessment which has been completed by the School Business Manager with the support of Mrs. Poxon. In response to the 29 questions within the self-assessment the School was able to answer 'Yes' to the majority of questions which covered different aspects of financial performance. A number of questions were answered 'In Part'.

Governor Challenge: Governors challenged whether any action needed to be taken in relation to the 'In Part' responses.

Mrs. Hawkins confirmed that she and Mrs. Poxon would revisit these areas in the coming weeks to put an action plan in place. None of the areas are a cause for concern, more a streamlining of processes is needed to make financial management and control even more efficient than it is currently. Governors thanked both Mrs. Hawkins and Mrs. Poxon for the level of due diligence that has been applied in this area.

Resolved: That the Chair's electronic signature be added to the SFVS and it be submitted to the LA, well in advance of the published deadline.

1.3

The updated Scheme of Delegation had been made available to Governors which, once approved, will be submitted to the LA alongside the SFVS and 2021-22 Budget. Mrs. Hawkins confirmed there have been no significant changes to the document other than to update the names of budget holders. The delegated financial amounts have remained unchanged. Again, having been reassured that the necessary due diligence has been applied to this document, Governors were more than happy to ratify its contents.

Resolved: That the Chair's electronic signature be added to this document and it be submitted to the LA.

1.4

The School Business Manager and Mrs. Poxon confirmed they would look to arrange another meeting in the coming weeks to discuss various financial matters. Mrs. Hawkins confirmed how much she values these engagement sessions with the Link Governor.

Resolved: That both individual look to arrange a meeting at a mutually convenient opportunity.

Governors thanked everybody involved with the School finances for all the work they do in this area. The clarity of information and the way it is presented at meetings was warmly received by members.

9 Five Year Building Plan:

The next key strategic focus of the meeting was all about the next five years in terms of where the SLT wants to invest in the Fulfen site. The Headteacher felt it was vital the School has a rolling programme of investment in this area, particularly as the amount of money that comes to the School as Formula Capital is not going to be enough to improve/enhance the current buildings on what is a large site. Governors were informed that when the Headteacher joined the School some years ago, there was a significant amount of work undertaken in terms of the School buildings with further, small enhancements being applied in 2019 through the installation of intervention rooms and internal corridors at the School. In the last few years, very little financial outlay has occurred and the SLT was clear at tonight's meeting that some of the buildings are beginning to show some deterioration with a number of aspects falling into a state of disrepair.

Whilst the SLT understands the need for tight financial and budgetary control, there will be the need for the Governing Board to review the Budget over the course of the next few years and prioritise where some significant re-investment can take place back into the School buildings. The focus at tonight's meeting was centred more on outlining the vision of where the SLT wants to get to in the coming years. Clearly, the financial due diligence and budgetary considerations will need to follow.

Miss. Chapman began by outlining one of the main priorities in the Building Plan proposal which will see the School move to create a single Early Years unit on site. Governors were provided with some of the contextual information as to why the provision is currently separated and also some of the implications being faced with not having the Early Years provision together in one designated location. Miss. Chapman outlined how a single unit could be created with some minor internal changes and also what benefits would be secured from bringing this provision together into one inclusive setting. Some of the benefits relate to Safeguarding, others relate to logistical factors and of course there are always the benefits from a teaching and learning perspective – timely given the requirements of the new EYFS curriculum that are set to go live from this September. The Headteacher added that from an Ofsted perspective, for the School to secure an 'Outstanding' judgement, this is exactly the kind of investment project that is needed to secure this top rating with the spin off benefits that would result.

Other key components of the Building Plan include boosting the library provision in school with every pupil having access to a range of books that will inspire a love for reading and developing a range of spaces (i.e. Reading Garden) where pupils have access to environments that will stimulate/motivate them to build their vocabulary and improve their analytical, thinking skills. Beyond this focus on reading, there are other considerations including the inevitable replacement of boilers; the replacement of KS2 lighting; the plastering of school corridors to enable more of a branding focus; the replacement of kitchen work surfaces; the remedial action that is needed to the floor in the School Hall that is lifting in

several places and, finally, the replacement of carpets, tables and chairs in the classrooms. The purpose of these improvements is to create a light, airy and modern feel to the School which will not be lost on a visitor coming onto the School site. Governors noted all of these plans and confirmed that they will look to support the SLT in the years ahead with this vision, taking account of any budgetary constraints along the way.

Governor Challenge: Governors challenged over a number of aspects of the Building Plan, notably the extent to which there could be significant disruption to the teaching and learning environment as the EYFS unit takes shape; the possibility of the School tapping into external funding streams/the LA/charities to support the work that is needed and the need for a costings model so Governors could get a real sense of the total cost for the overall project.

The SLT responded to each of these points in turn and Mrs. Hawkins confirmed she would look to formulate an early draft of a costings model for sharing at a future meeting.

Resolved: That Mrs. Hawkins take this action forward, liaising with key stakeholders as needed. The costings model will be presented to Governors at the final meeting of the Summer Term or during the Autumn.

10 School Priorities 2021-22:

Governors at this point received an overview of school priorities for 2021-22. The reality is that the pandemic has impacted significantly on the school improvement priorities of the School with a number of areas being held over to the new academic year so they have the opportunity to take root and deliver a sustained impact.

The Headteacher confirmed that staff will continue to develop and embed the mastery approach around Maths delivery and assessment throughout the School. There will be a whole school focus on English with pupils being given the opportunity to develop a love for Reading through high quality reading lessons and experiences. Curriculum intent and impact will feature heavily with a member of the SLT currently generating a new curriculum map to replace the current Cornerstones Curriculum which is no longer fulfilling a purpose. Another priority area will be technology as staff build on the remote learning experience during the pandemic and develop more confidence in the integration of IT in their teaching. Finally, there will be a real focus on taking the EYFS to the next level and ensuring the gap in achievement between SEND pupils and their peers is narrowed at every possible opportunity.

Governors received the School Development Plan (SDP) in advance of tonight's meeting which contained action plans in relation to the above areas. These action plans account for how progress in each of the areas will be measured with clear success criteria in place. The Headteacher confirmed that she was more than happy for Governors to come into school and join the SLT on an observation-based activity linked to one of the priority-based activities. A number of Governors confirmed they would welcome taking up this invitation.

Resolved: That Governors inform the Headteacher if interested in this monitoring-based venture.

Governor Challenge: Governors challenged how non-core based subjects are being assessed so the SLT can account of rates of pupil progress and the impact of missing a significant amount of mainstream education.

The Headteacher confirmed a series of open-ended tasks are being used to facilitate evidence generation from pupils. This will provide teachers with a valuable insight into how pupils are progressing with the wider curriculum which will in turn provide important evidence for where the energies for the remainder of the Summer Term need to be placed.

11 Covid Catch Up Premium:

Mrs. Tranter provided a short verbal summary for Governors (accompanied by a written document) as to where the SLT has got to with the implementation of the Covid Catch Up Premium – a ring-fenced funding stream that has been set up to support young people to catch up on missed learning caused by the pandemic. Mrs. Tranter confirmed with Governors an impact spending plan will be uploaded to the School website in the coming weeks.

For now, she confirmed with Governors how the SLT is focusing on the continued roll out and embedding of the Relationships Policy that focuses on the pastoral needs of the School community during this challenging period. In conjunction with this policy is the focus on high quality teaching for all with a need to redevelop aspects of the curriculum to account for any missed learning objectives going forward and a focus on basic skills that may need a period of consolidation. Other initiatives included various Reading-based initiatives to drive through accelerated progress in this area; the use of a pandemic register to build a holistic picture around an individual pupil and their needs; the use of assessments to establish baselines for pupils so the true picture around catch up is understood; the investment in 'Insight' to support the data analytics process; the interventionist support for pupils including small group tuition and provision maps to track progress; the mental health/well-being offer that is being put in place for individual pupils and, finally, the work around Speech and Language that is largely being driven forward through the use of internal resource.

Governors were impressed by this package of measures which will impact on Fulfen pupils in a variety of different ways. Governors will be able to take in this additional detail when the Covid Catch Up Premium is published online. For now, Mrs. Tranter was thanked for this informative update.

Governor Challenge: Governors challenged whether some of the recent media stories around extending the School day are likely to come to fruition.

The Headteacher confirmed such a change is unlikely. In any case, the priority for school leaders is not about increasing school hours for pupils but making sure the existing time available is used as effectively as possible. With some careful planning, schools can ensure the curriculum evolves so catch up learning happens as a matter of course without putting additional strain on a pupil cohort that is tired and worn out from the lasting effects of the pandemic. Governors fully echoed these sentiments.

12 Headteacher's Report:

The Headteacher's Report had been shared with members in advance of tonight's meeting. It was presented to members in a different format which Governors found accessible and easy to follow. It was not the intention of the Headteacher to go through her report line by line. Instead, she pulled out a number of key headlines which can be reported as follows:

1.1

Numbers on roll are healthy with the School running waiting lists for a number of year groups. This shows how much the local community values the educational provision at Fulfen but also the numbers are crucial for the financial bottom line.

1.2

Attendance data was shared. The Headteacher confirmed the School is following its policy with a variety of measures being implemented to troubleshoot any emerging/persistent issues in this area. The SLT continues to refuse holiday requests in term time and the current data compares favourably to the national figures that were released in 2018-19.

1.3

Staffing changes were shared with members which did not present any cause for concern. The SLT takes the necessary action in this area to ensure the business continuity of the School is secured.

1.4

An update on safeguarding, child protection, welfare and behaviour was shared. It was confirmed all staff CPD is up to date in these areas and it was pleasing to see that there have been no incidents of a bullying, racist or discriminatory nature.

One behavioural issue was discussed – **see Confidential Appendix.**

1.5

The on-going parking problems around the School were highlighted. The SLT continues to do what it can to raise the profile of this issue, concerned that a health and safety incident could occur if parents continue to ignore the measures that have been put in place.

1.6

Governors were disappointed to read that the Salix lighting project has been pulled by central government. This means the School would have to pick up the bill to replace the KS2 lighting unless it can secure funding from an alternative source.

1.7

Early Years data was shared with Governors. What is impressive is the data is moving in the right direction with the number of pupils working at the expected standard increasing by 15% over the timeframe specified. It is clear the team in this area is doing a sterling job considering the challenges that have been faced in relation to the pandemic.

1.8

Finally, Governors noted the current strengths and areas for development when it comes to the quality of teaching throughout the School. It is pleasing to read that staff are not resting on their laurels and are dedicated to ensure pupils catch up with their learning and have every opportunity to fulfil their true potential, supported by the strong teaching and learning offer that is in place.

Resolved: That the Headteacher be thanked for her new-look, detailed and strategic-based report.

13 Policies:

Governors were asked to ratify the following policies/documents at tonight's meeting:

- SEND Policy and Information Report
- Uniform Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Attendance Policy
- Charges and Remissions Policy.

Resolved: That all policies/documents be ratified with immediate effect.

14 Link Governor Feedback:

Mr. Holmes confirmed he had held a Link Governor engagement session with Mrs. Tranter which focused on the areas of Safeguarding and SEND. Reports are on the Hub and Mr. Holmes provided a short verbal update at tonight's meeting.

He spoke warmly of his interactions in both of these areas and welcomed how the SLT puts Safeguarding at the forefront of everyday practice. He recounted the excellent relationships that the School has developed with families to gain their trust and break down barriers. Information surrounding attendance, training and the use of an online system to monitor concerns was shared and how the SLT continues to manage increased anxiety levels/attachment issues from the pandemic was also highlighted for special mention. Governors were reassured that DSL and DDSL related processes are robust in school and the relentless focus on getting families the support they need was also attributed to Mrs. Tranter and her team. External validation of Safeguarding practice was discussed and Mr. Holmes also confirmed he had checked on the well-being of Mrs. Tranter direct given the pressures./challenges surrounding her role.

When it comes to SEND, Mr. Holmes confirmed the current SEND profile of the School had been discussed including the work of the Inclusion Specialist who is supporting this vulnerable cohort. Future priorities were shared including how the gap between the vulnerable cohort and its peers was going to be reduced and the inclusive nature of the support provided was also singled out for praise.

Overall, Mr. Holmes congratulated Mrs. Tranter on her dedication to her role and the successes she is achieving on a regular basis for pupils and their families – long may this continue.

Resolved: That Mr. Holmes be thanked for his verbal update.

15 Any Other Business:

There were two items of additional business that were raised at this point in the meeting:

1.1

There was some confusion over the current folder structure on the Hub. The Vice-Chair confirmed her expectations in this area with action to be taken following tonight's meeting to rectify the current issues.

Resolved: That Mrs. Hawkins progress this action.

1.2

Governor Challenge: Governors challenged over the need to set up an area of the Hub that is dedicated to Ofsted Readiness. This area could then include crib sheets, Q+A documents, online resources and SLT documents to support Governors as they prepare themselves for an external inspection whenever the times comes.

Resolved: That the Chair/Vice-Chair discuss the best way to take this initiative forward.

16 Confidentiality:

Governors were asked to identify if there were any items/materials, which needed to be excluded from any Agenda, Minutes, reports or other papers discussed at the meeting, which would normally be made available for inspection following the meeting.

Governors were also asked to identify any items included on the Agenda, which require recording in a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes.

Resolved: That it be identified that the following items be included as a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes:

- Minute 7, Minute 8 and Minute 12.

There were no further items/materials identified for exclusion.

17 Dates and Times of Future Meetings:

The final Governing Board meeting of the academic year has been scheduled for Tuesday 6 July, 2021 at 6.15 p.m.

The Clerk also requested that a meeting schedule for 2021-22 is determined at the first possible opportunity to secure his availability.

Resolved: That this matter be discussed when the Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk come together for a short meeting to discuss this and a variety of other issues as already referenced in these minutes.

All that was left to do was for the Chair to thank all Governors for their contribution to tonight's meeting.

The meeting was brought to a close by the Chair.

Chair

Date

Fulfen Primary School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in a virtual setting on Tuesday 25 May, 2021 at 6.15 p.m.

Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Action Update
5	HT	Publish March minutes.	
5	Chair	Sign ratified minutes.	
6	Chair/Vice-Chair/Clerk	Convene a meeting to discuss various governance matters.	
6	Vice-Chair	Chase up any outstanding declarations.	
6	Vice-Chair	Pick up spreadsheet completion issue with Mrs. Tranter and photo with Ms. Mason outside of tonight's meeting.	
8	SBM	Add Chair signature to SFVS and Scheme of Delegation and submit paperwork to LA.	
8	SBM/Mrs. Poxon	Schedule meeting to discuss financial matters.	
9	SBM	Share costings model at future meeting around Building Plan proposal.	
10	Governors	Inform Headteacher if interested in participating in a monitoring activity linked to SDP.	
15	SBM	Sort out folder structure on Governor Hub.	
15	Chair/Vice-Chair	Discuss Ofsted Readiness and the best way to set up the Hub as a repository of information to support understanding in this area.	
17	Chair/Vice-Chair/Clerk	Agree final meeting schedule for 2021-22 and inform Governors.	

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6 July, 2021 at 6.15 p.m.

Absent Governors to be informed.