

# Fulfen Primary School

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in the School on Tuesday 24 January, 2023 at 6.15 p.m.

**Present:** Mr. Boardman (Chair), Mrs. Davies (Headteacher), Mrs. Ballett, Mrs. Witcomb, Mr. Field, Mr. Ritchie, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Copper, Mrs. Kilgallen, Mrs. Poxon, Mrs. Tranter

Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Governors)  
Mrs. Hawkins (School Business Manager)  
Mrs. Waterhouse (Fulfen Club Manager)

### 1 Welcome and Introductions:

Governors were welcomed to tonight's Governing Board meeting by the Chair. The meeting followed the normal conventions with a clear and purposeful agenda; the circulation of pre-meeting documentation to stimulate discussion and debate; a focus on key school improvement issues and governance matters and, finally, a meeting environment which enabled Governors to carry out their three core governance functions linked to vision; holding the SLT to account for educational performance and applying the necessary due diligence to the School finances. There was a healthy level of engagement throughout the meeting as Governors put forward various challenge-based questions and sought points of clarification in relation to the various updates.

The meeting was quorate.

### 2 Apologies:

**Resolved:** That apologies for absence be received and accepted from Mr. Davies and Mrs. Dingle.

*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 Governing Board Matters:

#### Membership

It was pleasing to note that the membership of the Governing Board remains relatively stable at the present time with only one Co-opted Governor vacancy left to fill. The Board will only move to fill this remaining vacancy once an appropriate skill gap has been identified through the audit that is currently taking place. The Vice-Chair has this matter in hand and will liaise with the Chair around next steps to ensure an individual can be recruited who will enhance the skills and attributes of the existing membership.

#### Confidentiality

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

This provoked a general discussion around social media forums and the need for Governors to avoid any 'noise' that can come out of the various What's App and Facebook communities.

Governors were reminded that they should not involve themselves in individual parent disputes and should instead direct any queries/issues from parents to the School in the first instance. Such action will avoid information becoming distorted with the SLT able to react accordingly and sensitively to any parental communication that is received.

One example of where messages can easily be distorted are the recent actions of unions to mobilise as they ballot their members over strike action. The Headteacher confirmed that the leadership team very much respects the decisions of individual staff members if they strike with the necessary actions being taken to keep the School safe and secure on the days of any industrial action. Governors were informed that decisions will be taken at an individual class level with the necessary mitigation put in place to protect the School' vulnerable cohort as and when circumstances dictate it. Governors fully supported staff coming to individual decisions around taking strike action with it being made clear that class cover on strike days would never be entertained as a viable alternative.

### **Declarations**

All Governors were reminded that they should be logging onto Governor Hub in advance of each LGB meeting to ensure their submitted declarations – business and pecuniary – are accurate and up-to-date. Governors should also on an annual basis be making an appropriate declaration on the Hub to confirm they have read and are familiar with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) statutory guidance as well as confirming they have read and understood the Code of Conduct which outlines the behaviour and conduct expected of all school Governors. The Vice-Chair will ensure the full audit of declarations is in place before the next Governing Board meeting.

**Resolved:** That the Vice-Chair progress this action.

In addition, no declarations were made by Governors in respect of any specific items appearing on tonight's agenda.

### **Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct has already been referenced in these minutes. A number of Governors added their signatures to a hard copy of this document at tonight's meeting. This document will be retained centrally for audit purposes.

### **Instrument of Government (IoG)**

The Vice-Chair confirmed the IoG related document has been updated to reflect newly assigned Link Governor roles and terms of office for the newly appointed Governors. A check now needs to take place to ensure there is alignment between the information held in the IoG; GIAS; Governor Hub and the School website.

**Resolved:** That the Vice-Chair arrange a time with the Clerk so this alignment exercise can be completed.

The Vice-Chair was thanked by all Governors for the housekeeping she carries out around Governor admin between meetings. This input is very much appreciated by all.

## **4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 6 December, 2022 (including Confidential Appendix) be approved as an accurate and true record.

The Headteacher did make the following comment in relation to one section of the Minutes:

Page 5 – The Headteacher explained that the overarching judgement of school leaders is that the School is currently judged 1-2 in terms of overall effectiveness.

Following some further advice and guidance from an HMI, the Headteacher confirmed this judgement stands as '2' to ensure there is complete clarity and transparency around this key indicator. As pointed out, this recalibration does not mean the School cannot demonstrate evidence of Outstanding practice which is visible throughout many aspects of daily school life.

**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. Boardman via electronic or hard copy signature.

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

## **5 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:**

The action matrix from the December meeting was reviewed. The Chair/Vice-Chair confirmed how any outstanding actions from the matrix would be progressed following tonight's meeting. Other items within the action matrix came up naturally within the course of tonight's meeting.

In addition:

### **1.1**

The Vice-Chair confirmed that the few remaining skill audit returns are being logged so the results can be analysed. This audit will inform future recruitment and training related actions for the Board.

### **1.2**

Governors were reminded that now all Link Governor roles have been assigned, individuals need to look to schedule visits into school to meet with staff representatives in the designated areas. Link Governor engagement is an important contributor to effective governance with all members of the Board having a vital role to play in this area.

### **1.3**

There was a general discussion around Safeguarding. This included a reminder that all Governors must familiarise themselves with the latest Safeguarding policies in school; that there are a number of Governors who need to complete the e-learning module on Child-on-Child Abuse and, finally, that any Governor who has completed Level 1 Safeguarding CPD or above was asked to forward any certificates onto Mrs. Tranter so they can form part of a central audit. There is one Governor (Mrs. Copper) who will access the Safeguarding CPD delivered by Mrs. Tranter in July.

**Resolved:** That Governors action these requests with the Vice-Chair/Mrs. Tranter ensuring Governors can access the e-learning module through the Key.

## **6 Fulfen Club:**

This was the point in the meeting when Mrs. Waterhouse as invited to talk to Governors about the Fulfen Club and the strategic plans for this provision going forward.

The update began with Governors being provided with some context around the running of the Club through the pandemic. There is no doubt that the provision, like so many other aspects of society, suffered from the damaging impacts of Covid-19 with numbers falling, parents

being quite cautious about their children mixing with peers and parents increasingly working from home which meant the demand for the extended provision was not as strong. As the Country has emerged from the pandemic and some sense of normality has returned to daily lives, numbers are starting to recover in the Club with the latest pupil uplift reported as 30%. Mrs. Waterhouse confirmed this was a good start but this forward momentum now needs to be sustained through a variety of bespoke initiatives.

These indicators have included providing weekly updates to parents focusing on the fun and enjoyment that pupils are experiencing by attending the provision; aligning the 'Star of the Week' initiative in school with pupils being rewarded for examples of outstanding behaviour; using parental engagement sessions such as new intake sessions and parents evenings to promote the benefits of the provision; using physical marketing tools such as boards and banners on the School site to raise the Club's profile; embracing the power of social media to reach out to busy parents; generating a monthly newsletter that will focus just on the extended provision; looking into an electronic booking system to make the end-user experience more effective; using a different softer tone when talking about the Club with parents and, finally, taking a more flexible approach with ad-hoc requests that may come in from parents for use of the extended provision.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors felt this raft of initiatives was impressive and asked whether there is evidence that children accessing the Club are having a positive impact on their peer groups with self-promotion enticing more children in.

Mrs. Waterhouse felt there was some evidence of this taking place with the various initiatives no doubt helping to drive the numbers up even more.

Governors were informed that another exciting initiative will be a movement to introduce extra-curricular club activities from a range of external providers/outside agencies. Discussions are currently taking place with a number of third parties around street dancing, karate, BMX biking and cheerleading which will no doubt enhance the existing provision. Mrs. Waterhouse explained how these activities will sit alongside the BAU offer that is currently in place around the extended provision.

The final part of the presentation from Mrs. Waterhouse focused on numbers and where the future growth is needed; the positive soundings that are coming out of the new intake in terms of accessing the Club from September; the role that statutory grants play in supporting some of the vulnerable cohort accessing the provision and, finally, the role Governors can play in championing the provision at every possible opportunity.

From a Governor perspective, they were enthused by the update and felt there was a genuine plan in place to put the Club on a secure path to profitability in the coming years. Mrs. Copper was equally thanked for all of the input she has provided in this area in recent weeks/months which has been invaluable to Mrs. Waterhouse as she shapes the future of the provision.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors did enquire as to whether the future communication around the Club would benefit from a holistic communications strategy for the next few years. This strategy could target when parents are going to be engaged over the Club and in what form.

The Headteacher felt this was an avenue worth exploring. The approach was finalised once the next agenda item had been covered as the discussions around a communications strategy continued.

**Resolved:** That Mrs. Waterhouse be thanked for her informative presentation. At this point, she gave her leave of absence from the meeting.

## 7 SEF – Quality of Education Judgement:

Governors had agreed that at each meeting the Headteacher would take an area of the Ofsted Inspection framework and showcase what school leaders and staff are doing to move the School on and deliver continuous improvement. At tonight's meeting, Quality of Education was the main focus with the Headteacher's update covering the following key themes:

The Headteacher was realistic in her evaluation of this area of school life, indicating that the provision currently being offered is strong with elements of outstanding practice. There is no doubt that Covid has had an adverse impact on a pupil's academic and pastoral development but staff remain committed to ensuring pupils can recover and fulfil their potential by the end of Key Stage 2.

The School has a warm teaching and learning environment where staff know their pupils and focus on the holistic support package that is required which is bespoke to the needs of each individual.

The School is a large school with a two-form entry. The number of Pupil Premium pupils is below the national average with the catchment being mainly white British. As a result of these demographics, staff work hard on the diversity agenda to broaden pupils' horizons.

Parental surveys indicate that this key stakeholder group is happy with the educational offer that is being delivered to their children.

Moving on from the last Ofsted inspection, school leaders have taken the necessary steps to respond to any feedback and to develop both the core and wider curriculum subjects. There is a focus on triangulating the progress made by pupils in terms of books, data and monitoring activities and also stretching the More Able.

**Governor Challenge:** On the subject of data, Governors asked about the extent to which Ofsted would take this Key Performance Indicator (KPI) into account during a future inspection.

The Headteacher provided the necessary clarification on this matter.

The School has deployed the Chris Quigley curriculum and adapted it for internal use. Work is also underway to produce a D&T curriculum and Computing curriculum that builds on these principles.

Pupils get lots of enrichment opportunities throughout their time at Fulfen. This is known as cultural capital with trips; visits; the ability to play an instrument and singing in a choir all driving aspirations and motivations in young people.

There is a strong focus on vocabulary enrichment, breaking the National Curriculum down into small manageable chunks and ensuring learning is revisited so it is committed to the long-term memory.

Staff continually receive CPD to develop their professional practice. The senior leaders really value professional development for all staff and actively support both online and remote training inputs.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors asked about the extent to which any training is cascaded once the initial input has been received.

The Headteacher confirmed that this mechanism is very much in place as part of a continuous improvement model.

In terms of key strengths, the Headteacher highlighted the quality of teaching; the delivery of exciting and inspiring lessons; the use of technology to enhance curriculum delivery; the use of tailored marking and feedback which makes it crystal clear where improvements need to be made; the inspiring learning spaces around school; the support that is being offered to the vulnerable cohort and, finally, the way parents are engaged with their child's educational journey.

The School actively pursues a love of Reading at every opportunity as Reading and vocabulary enrichment acts as a catalyst to open up other areas of the curriculum.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors enquired as to whether Accelerated Reader is being used in school.

The Headteacher confirmed this to be the case.

In terms of impact, the Headteacher felt that the quality of education should come through in the results at the end of this year. It was reported that the book evidence is really coming along nicely with lots of targeted support being deployed to boost certain areas. It is not just about academic performance though with the Headteacher confirming that staff go beyond the test scores to create an environment within which confident, resourceful young people can operate. Events such as hot chocolate with the senior leaders is just one example of how this environment is cultivated.

**Governor Challenge:** From a Governor perspective, they felt what was shared with them at tonight's meeting was 'gold dust' which should be championed and celebrated at every possible opportunity. There was a question asked as to whether some of this material could be incorporated into a broad communications strategy that could showcase the strengths of the School which would naturally include the extended provision.

Mrs. Copper and Mrs. Poxon confirmed they would be more than happy to investigate what alternative approaches are taken by other schools before starting to think about where the Governing Board might want to take this body of work. The Chair and Vice-Chair confirmed they were happy to work with the two Governors as needed on this initiative.

**Resolved:** That Mrs. Copper and Mrs. Poxon progress this initiative.

**Resolved:** That the Headteacher be thanked for her informative update.

## **8 Reports:**

### **Chair and Vice-Chair Power to Act**

The Chair and Vice-Chair confirmed they had not had to take any actions on behalf of the Governing Board since the last meeting.

### **Link Governor Reports**

Governors were reminded that they need to be scheduling Link Governor visits with staff representatives in their designated areas. Reports need to be completed following each visit so they can be retained for audit purposes.

### **Headteacher Report**

The Headteacher's Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Report was taken as read with the following key updates provided:

## 1.1

Governors received the latest updates on the progress the SLT was making against the School's key priorities. The information was self-explanatory with planned actions; timescales; impacts and next steps clearly identified. It was recognised that Governors will use this information as reference material when carrying out further Link Governor engagement visits in school as they continue to hold senior leaders to account against the focused priorities.

## 1.2

A series of updates were shared around pupil numbers and attendance.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors focused in on attendance and asked various questions around unauthorised absence; how the data compared to national benchmarks; whether the data could be broken down even further to support Governor analysis; the extent to which any significant long-term absence is affecting the School's overall data; what strategies senior leaders are deploying around lateness and persistent absenteeism; whether Mrs. Steele could be invited to a future meeting to discuss this KPI with Governors in more detail; who the accountability sits with for improving attendance levels and whether the School should be making any additional educational provision for families who decide to take their children out of school during term time.

The Headteacher responded to each of these points in turn.

**Resolved:** That the Chair look to invite Mrs. Steele to a future meeting to discuss this KPI.

## 1.3

Governors noted the SEND and vulnerable pupil data; the recent staffing changes in school and the Safeguarding, Child Protection, Welfare and Behaviour update.

## 1.4

**Governor Challenge:** Governors sought a few points of clarification in relation to the data summary for 2021-22. This information was taken from the IDSR which is one of the documents Ofsted will use when preparing for an external inspection in school.

It is important Governors understand the various patterns and trends in this data set with the Headteacher responding to any specific questions and challenges raised by Governors.

**Resolved:** That the Headteacher be thanked for her informative update. She added that Governors can always approach her outside of tonight's meeting if they have any questions in relation to the circulated material.

## Pupil Premium

The Pupil Premium Strategy Statement had been uploaded to the Hub in advance of tonight's meeting. The strategy focused on a three year plan in terms of the spend and impact of this ring-fenced funding stream with Mrs. Tranter having recently reviewed and edited the circulated document.

Governors were taken through the main sections of the Statement. Mrs. Tranter explained who this funding was targeted at; what challenges the disadvantaged cohort face; what the School is aiming to achieve through the targeted spend and how the funding for this year has been allocated to three key areas – teaching initiatives, targeted academic support and wider strategies. Reviews of previous years' spending were also included.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors found the update particularly useful. There were some questions asked around parents reaction to the targeted support; the extent to which the disadvantaged cohort is outperforming its peers; the extent to which the focus of this year's plan is different to previous years and, finally, how the monitoring of this funding stream works in practice so Governors can be assured that the money is well spent and delivers real impact.

Mrs. Tranter responded to each of these points and confirmed the Statement will be published online for all stakeholders to consider at their leisure.

### **Safeguarding Update**

Mrs. Tranter shared the latest Safeguarding update with Governors – *see Confidential Appendix.*

#### **9 Finance Update:**

Mrs. Hawkins had prepared a budgetary update for Governors – *see Confidential Appendix.*

#### **10 Staffing Update:**

The staffing update has already been referenced in the course of these minutes.

#### **11 Headteacher Performance Management:**

The Chair confirmed that the Headteacher's performance management review had been successfully completed since the last meeting. End of year targets had been reviewed with the support of an external consultant and new objectives are being crafted. The Chair confirmed that the Headteacher has had a really successful 12 months at the School with the Head and her team thanked by Governors for all of the recent successes.

The Chair confirmed that he would be looking into some sort of formal recognition for the Headteacher's efforts to date and will confirm with Governors at the next meeting what action has been taken.

**Resolved:** That the Chair progress this action.

#### **12 Parking Issue:**

There was no time to discuss the parking issue at tonight's meeting. The Chair asked that as a minimum Governors consider the risk assessment and associated policy in advance of the next Board meeting where this matter will be discussed as a priority agenda item.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors asked that as part of the discussion, some thought is given to parents who collect/drop off children for the extended provision. Given the sensitive position of the Club Budget, any action taken around parking needs to avoid any adverse impact on possible take up in this area.

**Resolved:** That Governors become familiar with the circulated material so they can contribute effectively to a discussion on parking at the next meeting.

#### **13 Policy Ratification:**

There was a requirement to ratify the following policy at tonight's meeting:

- Equality Policy.



**Governor Challenge:** Other than to query whether other policies are subject to an equality analysis, Governors were happy to ratify the policy.

**Resolved:** That the policy be ratified with immediate effect.

**14 Any Other Business:**

There was no additional business other than to confirm the pipe had been fixed and to enquire as to whether the School has a fully functioning PTA.

On the second point, the Headteacher confirmed this is currently not the case.

**15 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 8 and Minute 9.

There were no further items/materials identified for exclusion.

**16 Dates and Times of Future Meetings:**

The meeting schedule for 2022-23 has been finalised and can be confirmed as follows:

<b>Term</b>	<b>Date and Time</b>
Spring 2	28.03.23 (6.15 p.m. start)
Summer 1	23.05.23 (6.15 p.m. start)
Summer 2	11.07.23 (6.15 p.m. start)

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

The meeting was brought to a close by the Chair.

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**Chair**

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**Date**

## Fulfen Primary School

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in the School  
on Tuesday 24 January, 2023 at 6.15 p.m.**

### Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Action Update
3	Vice-Chair	Ensure full audit of declarations is in place before next meeting.	
3	Vice-Chair	Arrange time with Clerk so alignment check of information can be carried out.	
4	HT	Make December minutes available as a public record.	
4	Chair	Sign ratified minutes.	
5	Various	Pick up Safeguarding related actions.	
7	Mrs. Copper/Mrs. Poxon	Investigate approach taken by other schools to communication. Develop first draft of communications strategy for Fulfen.	
8	Chair	Invite Mrs. Steele to future meeting to talk about attendance.	
11	Chair	Investigate formal recognition of Headteacher's performance management and provide update at next meeting.	
12	Governors	Come prepared for parking discussion at next meeting.	

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 28 March, 2023 at 6.15 p.m.**

Absent Governors to be informed.