

Fulfen Primary School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in the School on Tuesday 14 May, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Mr. Boardman (Chair), Mrs. Davies (Headteacher), Mrs. Ballett,
Mrs. Poxon, Mrs. Roughley, Mrs. Copper, Mrs. Dingle, Mr. Ritchie

Mrs. Hawkins (School Business Manager)
Mrs. Chapman (Staff)

Governor	Role	Term Starts	Term Ends
Mrs. Ballett	Co-opted	05.07.21	04.07.25
Mr. Field	Co-opted	24.05.22	23.05.26
Mrs. Poxon	Co-opted	07.10.22	06.10.26
Mrs. Roughley	Co-opted	12.03.24	11.03.28
Mrs. Witcomb	Co-opted	24.11.22	23.11.26
GAP			
Mrs. Davies	HT	NA	NA
Mr. Boardman	LA	05.04.22	04.04.26
Mrs. Copper	Parent	29.11.22	28.11.26
Mrs. Dingle	Parent	25.01.22	24.01.26
Mr. Ritchie	Parent	25.01.22	24.01.26
Mrs. Wright	Parent	29.11.22	28.11.26
Mrs. Kilgallen	Staff	23.07.22	22.07.26

1 Welcome and Introductions:

Governors were welcomed to tonight's Governing Board meeting by the Chair. Unfortunately, due to the change in date of the meeting, the Clerk could not be in attendance. The decision was taken to record the governance forum with the recording sent to the Clerk post meeting so a set of minutes could be created.

A significant amount of territory was covered in tonight's meeting with key strategic updates being relayed in relation to the EYFS and the school finances. Documentation was uploaded to the usual place (GovernorHub) and there were lots of opportunities taken by Governors within tonight's meeting to fulfil their governance mandate. There was a high level of engagement throughout the meeting with school leaders held to account in key areas.

The meeting was quorate.

2 Apologies:

Resolved: That apologies for absence be received and accepted from Mr. Field, Mrs. Witcomb, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Kilgallen and Mr. Davies.

3 Governing Board Matters:

Confidentiality

Governors were reminded that all discussions that take place at this meeting should remain confidential to the meeting. The usual reminders around social media activity were made.

Membership

A number of membership issues were noted:

It was confirmed that Miss. Smith's name has changed to Mrs. Roughley.

The Governing Board continues to carry one Co-opted Governor vacancy. The Vice-Chair confirmed that once all skill audits have been reviewed, she will discuss with the Chair the areas that need to be covered in the next Governor appointment. From this position, approaches to individuals will be made.

It was reported that no Governor terms of office are set to expire in 2024.

Resolved: That the Vice-Chair chase up any outstanding skills audits. The Vice-Chair/Clerk will also ensure the Hub, website and GIAS are updated with any recent membership changes, thus securing an accurate overview of the Governing Board membership.

Register of Interests

Governors are reminded that they should be going onto GovernorHub in advance of each Board meeting to check any submitted declarations (business/pecuniary) are up to date.

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 is available on GovernorHub for Governors to consider at their leisure.

Instrument of Government (IoG)

The latest IoG is available on the Hub for reference purposes.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 12 March, 2024 (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. 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 March minutes was reviewed. The following progress update can be reported:

Minute	Action
3	The Co-opted Governor vacancy has been referenced in these minutes.
3	The Vice-Chair has ensured Mrs. Roughley has completed all necessary induction tasks.

4	The January minutes have been made available as a public record.
4	The ratified January minutes have been signed.
9	The Headteacher/Chair did have the required follow up discussion in relation to the Parent Code of Conduct and Vexatious Complaints Policy.
10	The SFVS was submitted to the Local Authority (LA) by the required deadline.

6 EYFS Update:

Mrs. Chapman was invited at this point to talk about the EYFS – specifically the successes that have been experienced in recent months, future plans for the setting and the areas for development that will remain a focal point as the School enters another academic year. A copy of Mrs. Chapman’s presentation will in time be uploaded to GovernorHub but for now, the following key highlights can be reported.

6.1

The recent Ofsted feedback linked to EYFS cannot be unminuted. Governors can read the findings for themselves when the final Report is published but one quote is worthy of a special mention – ‘Children in the early years get off to an exceptional start.’ Such a phrase is a great motivation for all staff connected with the setting and a ringing endorsement of their exceptional practices.

6.2

The vision and ethos behind the EYFS curriculum intent was shared with Governors. Mrs. Chapman confirmed the curriculum offer that starts in pre-school and is developed through Reception and into KS1 is ambitious, rich, broad, balanced and packed full of experiences for pupils. When the EYFS curriculum changed in 2021, the School was well placed to tweak its existing model to ensure it was meeting the needs of pupils, whatever their motivations and levels of need. Over time, this approach has become embedded but can equally flex as needed to take account of areas of interest that fascinate pupils.

Some hallmarks of the current curriculum offer that were discussed included the support for the vulnerable cohort, the story/topic based approach that promotes a love of Reading, the use of Rocket Phonics which has delivered real impact, the mastery approach that has been deployed in Maths to deepen knowledge and understanding of core concepts, the focus on improving communication and language skills which has been strengthened through ongoing staff CPD, the pastoral as well as academic focus to ensure pupils development needs are being directly addressed and, finally, the importance of active participation in physical activity to ensure pupils can lead healthy and fulfilling lives. Governors welcomed this holistic offer which is progressive and is delivering a curriculum that fulfils the ‘three i’s’ – i.e. intent, implementation and impact.

6.3

Governors had visibility of how each class celebrates the curriculum in action through picture collages and story folders. These items give a visual representation of a classes learning journey over a 12-month period and are a joy to behold.

6.4

There was an overview of the pedagogical approach that is used in the classroom. Mrs. Chapman outlined the balance that is struck within the teaching and learning environment between adult led and child initiated. Sustained effort is put in by staff to get curiosity into learning and to secure high quality interactions. These interactions take place on several levels (whole class, small group, 1:1) with pupils having lots of opportunities to play and interact with their peers – so much so that they often have no idea that at times they are being

assessed. Staff observe, model and question through the learning journey with the approach being all about keeping up, not catching up with the Early Years Goals.

6.5

Examples were shared of the way vulnerable pupils are supported at Fulfen Primary School. This included working with external agencies/professionals and ensuring where an emerging need is identified, an appropriate plan of support is put in place.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked for the latest metrics for the number of vulnerable pupils across the EYFS and what steps the staff take to identify needs as early as possible. There were also enquiries around the level of need that will be coming into the provision from September.

Mrs. Chapman confirmed with Governors the latest position in the setting on all of these points. She reassured Governors that staff work tirelessly to identify any needs at an early stage and then confirmed the same staff are tenacious at completing all paperwork and carrying out the necessary monitoring to ensure a full audit of need can be shown when pursuing different levels of support for individual children.

6.6

An overview of the pre-school curriculum and associated enrichment activities was shared. French, Art, Yoga – such activities are all available for pupils which go far beyond basic childcare and embed some important life skills at a very early age.

Governor Challenge: Governors welcomed the diversity and scope of offer. They asked questions around the timing of the School day in pre-school, how the funding works for working parents/carers to access the setting, how the offer is currently marketed to parents/carers and how many of the current pupils in the pre-school setting usually make their way to the School's Reception.

Mrs. Chapman provided the necessary clarification on each of these raised points.

6.7

Internal and external visits are another key feature of the EYFS curriculum with any opportunity taken to broaden pupils' experiences and inspire associated learning activities. Examples cited included the services (police, ambulance, fire) being invited in, the animal man, a circus experience and Forest School – all of which tap into pupils curiosity in different ways. To capture the experience, Mrs. Chapman highlighted the role of the scrapbook and she added some thoughts around how this scrapbook could become a point of reference at the entrance to the School so parents/carers could get a feel for the types of experiences pupils are given at Fulfen Primary.

A Parent Governor gave a ringing endorsement of Forest School and commented on how the experience had inspired and motivated her child. This was a pleasant personal anecdote for leaders to hear, particularly given how Forest School has enhanced outdoor education and the associated curriculum.

6.8

A brief overview was given of classroom layouts within the setting. Areas of learning ensure all learning resources have a place and purpose with pupils encouraged to look after their immediate learning environments and ensure everything is put back at the end of a session.

6.9

The role that the story of the week plays within the setting along with the Dojo challenges and wall displays were shared with Governors. All of these initiatives keep things interesting for pupils as they progress with their learning and embrace the curriculum at different levels.

6.10

Parent engagement was discussed. A variety of initiatives are deployed to engage parents/carers in the learning of their child(ren). New initiatives such as story sacks and scavenger hunts are being added all of the time to the current mix. A Governor suggested that another idea staff within the setting may wish to consider is spelling out a pupil's name using the local environment. This idea was welcomed and noted. Overall, Governors felt the bond between parents/carers and the School in the EYFS is strong – so crucial when children take their first formative steps in education.

6.11

An overview of transition arrangements was given. Governors were not surprised to hear that the transition activities are carefully planned with class visits, a staggered start, conversations between teachers, the transfer of records and parental conversations all taking place as part of a well-considered and targeted approach. There is no doubt Fulfen pupils are well catered for when they start their educational journey at the School.

6.12

The current SEND profile of the EYFS cohort was shared. This indicated the diverse level of need within the provision and how this context is manifesting itself in terms of securing the GLD statutory measure.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked some further questions at this point – notable whether SEND need is on the increase nationally, how the current school figures compare with the national benchmark, outcomes that the staff are looking to secure around GLD this year, whether the School has been successful in recent EHCP funding requests submitted and the extent to which all staff have received First Aid training including what additional provision is put in place for the pupil with cystic fibrosis.

The necessary information was shared on all of these issues.

Finally, the Vice-Chair endorsed much of what Mrs. Chapman had shared during the course of her presentation. She had visited the setting with Mrs. Roughley and felt able to align tonight's narrative with what she had seen at first hand.

Resolved: That Mrs. Chapman be thanked for her informative update. She gave her leave of absence from the meeting.

7 Reports:

Chair and Vice-Chair's Actions

The Chair confirmed he had not taken any actions on behalf of the Governing Board since the last meeting.

Although not specific Power to Act actions, the Vice-Chair confirmed she had successfully onboarded Mrs. Roughley to her Governor role. She also reported that she had monitored the procedures around KS2 SATs delivery, feeling that the organisation and facilitation of these tests was well-organised and managed effectively. The Headteacher thanked Mrs. Ballett for carrying out the necessary due diligence in this area.

Link Governor Reports

Three Governors had carried out Link Governor engagement visits in recent weeks – i.e. Mrs. Poxon (finance), Mr. Ritchie (health and safety) and Mrs. Witcomb (not present to comment). It was confirmed that where appropriate reports will be uploaded to GovernorHub as an audit of these engagement visits.

Resolved: That Governors take note of this directive.

Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher was asked to share a verbal report with Governors at tonight's meeting with the formal report to be tabled at Summer 2. The following key points were noted:

7.1

The Headteacher confirmed the new Deputy Headteacher has started in post and has made an extremely strong start. The current leadership team is always open to innovation and fresh ideas and it appears the new appointment will add significant value in this area. Governors were thanked for their support with the recruitment process and those Governors who had met the new post holder were equally complimentary as to her calm and reassuring presence at this early stage.

7.2

Governors were given some information on staff members in school who are showing early leadership potential. The Headteacher explained how these considerations are being factored into class organisation for next year to ensure this talent pool can be grown and developed through the next 12 months. Governors fully endorsed the actions being taken.

7.3

Staff recruitment for 2024-25 was shared which included the appointment of a new ECT. The Headteacher felt the new appointee interviewed really well and will be an asset to the existing workforce. The latest developments with the staff restructure were also shared.

7.4

The Headteacher was pleased to announce that funding for the refurbishment of the EYFS toilets has finally been secured. There was a discussion around how this schedule of works will be managed, the timeline for completion, implications for any movement of learning spaces within the School and the level of financial contribution that the School will still need to make towards this premises-based project. This schedule of works has been four years in the making and it was pleasing that the project is finally coming to fruition.

7.5

Mrs. Hawkins was singled out for all of the hard work she has carried out in relation to the School finances. The budget has been changing pretty much on a daily basis with Mrs. Hawkins working hard to secure a sustainable future for the School in the coming years. This area of the verbal update was covered in a later minute.

7.6

Finally, the Headteacher outlined some of the good news events that are planned for the end of term once SATs are out of the way. The Paris trip, sports day and the Year 6 production were just some of the examples that will make the next few weeks an eventful experience for all those involved.

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

8 Finance Update:

Tonight was a key moment for considering the school finances – both in terms of the outturn position for 2023-24 and future budgetary projections for 2024-25. Mrs. Hawkins covered the following main areas with Governors in her overarching update:

1. There was confirmation that the SFVS had been returned to the LA by the required deadline.
2. There was an acknowledgement of the support Mrs. Poxon had provided in relation to the budget setting process. This due diligence has been applied by Mrs Poxon for some time and everybody is grateful for the time invested in this area.
3. There was consideration of the provisional outturns for the Main School Budget, the Nursery Budget and the Club Budget as at 30.04.24.
4. There was a healthy level of discussion in relation to the key budget variances (both income and expenditure) when analysing the 2023-24 Budgets.
5. There was full consideration of the budgetary assumptions that were used to set the Main School Budget, the Nursery Budget and the Club Budget for 2024-25.
6. **Governor Challenge:** At various points throughout the updates, Governors put forward challenge-based questions. These questions focused on clarifying particular aspects relating to certain budget lines, asking how variables such as pupil numbers and additional funding streams were impacting the bottom line, determining whether sufficient investment is being allocated to particular lines going forward, establishing how the restructuring process has impacted budget setting and where the School was at with its two licensed deficits and, finally, the reasons why the financial outlook is not perhaps as gloomy as first envisaged some months ago. These are just some of the challenge points noted.
7. Governors did consider the 5 Year Budget Modeller as part of the forward-looking budget setting process. There was an element of caution expressed in relation to this financial analysis – i.e. the Modeller only represents a single point in time and does not account for any staff changes or additional income streams coming into the Budget.
8. Governors had sight of a Finance Report that gave further detail around the outturn positions – **see Confidential Appendix.**
9. Governors were asked at the end of the financial update to ratify two key decisions:

Governors were asked to formally ratify the outturn positions for Main School, Nursery and Club for 2023-24 based on the latest income and expenditure analysis provided.

Resolved: That the 2023-24 outturns be ratified with immediate effect.

Governors were asked to formally ratify the balanced budgets and modeller outcomes for Main School, Nursery and Club for 2024-25 based on the income and expenditure analysis provided.

Resolved: That the 2024-25 balanced budgets be ratified with immediate effect.

Mrs. Hawkins will now ensure all financial paperwork is submitted to the LA by the required deadlines.

Resolved: That Mrs. Hawkins take the reported action.

Governors were thanked for their support in coming to these resolutions during tonight's meeting.

9 Policy Ratification:

Two documents were tabled for formal ratification at tonight's meeting. They were:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct.

All Governors confirmed they had considered the documentation including checking the various hyperlinks were working as intended.

Resolved: That both policies be ratified with immediate effect.

10 Any Other Business:

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

10.1

The Chair confirmed that any ideas Governors may have around fundraising for the School would be put on hold until the Autumn Term. This decision was taken primarily out of respect to staff who are currently going through a restructuring process.

10.2

Mrs. Poxon confirmed she had a contact with a charitable organisation who the School might be interested in talking to in terms of any future fundraising-based activities. The Headteacher asked Mrs Poxon to share these contact details so she could follow up on this matter outside of tonight's meeting.

Resolved: That Mrs. Poxon supply the details as requested.

10.3

Mrs. Copper confirmed her school had joined a Safeguarding network which is a resource the leadership team at Fulfen might wish to tap into and explore further. Again, the details of the Safeguarding network were requested.

Resolved: That Mrs. Copper share this information with the Headteacher.

10.4

Governors were asked whether they would consider opening up a part of the School at the end of a school day to accommodate a meeting of local self-employed mums and dads who come together to talk about their businesses.

Having discussed the matter, Governors felt the School cannot currently accommodate this request on the basis of Safeguarding and security challenges that cannot currently be mitigated. Governors did however welcome this form of local enterprise/networking and suggested that a communication channel should be opened up with the group to discuss possible sponsorship/promotion-based activities that the School would be willing to support.

Some ideas would also be shared with the group as to other alternative venues where their meeting could take place.

Resolved: That the Chair provide this feedback to the group in question.

11 Reflection:

Governors were asked to reflect on what has been achieved in tonight's meeting that will improve outcomes for pupils.

Reflections included the presentation on the EYFS and the offer which is tailor made for Fulfen pupils, the continued due diligence that is exercised around the School finances, policy ratification that keeps the School community safe and secure, the role Link Governors play in holding the SLT to account in key areas, the support that staff continue to give to the vulnerable cohort to maximise their life chances and the fact all discussions put the child at the heart of the decision making process.

Governors were thanked for these reflections.

12 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 item be included as a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes:

- Minute 8.

There were no further items/materials identified for exclusion.

13 Dates and Times of Future Meetings:

The date for the final Governing Board meeting of the year is Tuesday 2 July, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

The meeting schedule for 2024-25 has also been finalised (note the change to the Summer 1 date):

Term	Date and Time
Autumn 1	01.10.24 (5.30 p.m. start)
Autumn 2	03.12.24 (5.30 p.m. start)
Spring 1	28.01.25 (5.30 p.m. start)
Spring 2	25.03.25 (5.30 p.m. start)
Summer 1	13.05.25 (5.30 p.m. start)
Summer 2	08.07.25 (5.30 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.

Chair

Date

Fulfen Primary School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in the School on Tuesday 14 May, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Action Update
3	Vice-Chair	Chase up outstanding skills audits.	
3	Clerk/Vice-Chair	Check all platforms have up to date membership information.	
4	HT	Make March minutes available as a public record.	
4	Chair	Sign ratified March minutes.	
7	Governors	Submit Link Governor reports.	
8	Mrs. Hawkins	Submit financial paperwork to LA.	
10	Mrs. Poxon	Supply contact.	
10	Mrs. Copper	Supply information as stated.	
10	Chair	Contact group and relay Board decision.	

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 2 July, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Absent Governors to be informed.