

# Fulfen Primary School

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in a virtual setting on Tuesday 26 January, 2021 at 6.15 p.m.

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

Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Governors)  
Mrs. Lerner (Guest)  
Miss. Chapman (Staff)  
**Miss.** Judge (Staff)

### 1 Welcome and Introductions:

Governors were welcomed to tonight's meeting by the Chair. Meetings continue in a virtual setting to reflect the fact there are restrictions with external visitors coming onto the School site in the current pandemic. Documentation had been made available on Governor Hub in advance of the meeting and the agenda was, as always, strategic and purposeful. There were lots of good discussions and challenge throughout the meeting with some significant territory covered.

The meeting was quorate.

### 2 Apologies:

**Resolved:** That an apology for absence be received and accepted from Ms. Mason.

*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:

#### **Confidentiality**

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

#### **Declaration of Business/Pecuniary Interests**

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

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

At the last meeting, the Governing Board had approved a motion to redraft the IoG changing the term of office for a Governor from two to four years. At tonight's meeting, there was a requirement to ratify this document and ensure every member has sight of the IoG.

It was confirmed the IoG was made available on Governor Hub in advance of the meeting.

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

Any Governor appointment from this point forward will have a term of office of four years. It is hoped this change to the IoG should make it easier to manage membership issues on the Board – previously with a two year term it seemed several membership matters were being raised at each Governing Board meeting – what seemed like an unnecessary burden.

### **Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct was referenced in the Autumn Term 1 minutes. There was no action for Governors to take at tonight's meeting other than to confirm they will continue to abide by the protocols listed in this document. The Code is available on the Hub and can be accessed at any point.

### **4 Nursery Update:**

The agenda was switched around at this point to accommodate a presentation on the Nursery by Miss. Chapman and Miss. Judge. Governors are aware of the financial context the Nursery is operating in at the present time with the presentation focusing on how the current deficit can be overturned and how the provision can improve in the future. Governors were given time at the end of the presentation to offer questions and seek points of clarification in terms of what they had heard. It was also agreed the Nursery presentation would be uploaded to the Hub in the immediate aftermath of tonight's meeting so members could consider its contents at their leisure.

**Resolved:** That the Headteacher ensure the presentation is uploaded to the Hub.

The first question considered by the two staff members is why a change to the Nursery provision was being proposed. There are several reasons why the current model needs to be changed. The demand from parents for the number of pre-school places is high and currently exceeds the number of places being offered; there are difficulties in providing adequately for 2, 3 and 4 year olds in the same space; there is a lack of budget to develop an adequate space/provision for 2 year olds at the present time; the 30 hour children are more receptive and focused in a morning; improving the quality of pre-school provision overall will have a positive impact on the Reception cohort; Fulfen Club will have a dedicated space to operate from and, finally, there is a need to improve the quality of provision and supervision at lunchtime. Governors noted this rationale for change.

So, what will the new offer consist of? The proposal is to have two pre-school classrooms with 48 morning pre-school places and 24 afternoon 'wraparound' places. The afternoon provision will be made up of pre-school children who claim 30 hours funding or more than the 15 universal hours plus children who have turned 3 but are not yet eligible to attend pre-school classes until the following September. Pre-school children who are only funded for 15 hours will be given the opportunity to pay for additional afternoon sessions if they so desire and the wraparound provision will be managed and provided by Fulfen Club. Fulfen Club would use the current pre-school room and outdoor area as its permanent base. The space would be used by pre-school class 1 in the morning and be vacant for interventions and other groups, including the Reception class in the afternoon. The lunchtime provision will be supervised entirely by fully qualified Nursery practitioners.

So, what of the benefits that will result from the new model? Board members were informed that a more consistent high-quality provision for pre-school children will be delivered when they are most receptive in the morning; there will be an exciting programme of activities for children to join in with every afternoon; children will be well prepared for starting in school full-time in Reception the following year; there will be consistent staff/key worker systems in both rooms and lunchtime provision will be smoother and much improved. Fulfen Club will have a dedicated space and staffing costs can be reduced (i.e. by not accepting 2-year olds, limiting

the numbers staying for lunch and amalgamating the afternoon provision into one group). Finally, there was some commentary around how the new offer will reduce flexibility in how parents use their funded hours across the days of the week, thus reducing the number of vacant slots that historically have been hard to fill. There was also confirmation that by making the lunch and afternoon sessions an 'add on' for funded children parent income will increase and the amount of profit made by Nursery will increase. To exemplify two key benefits further, Governors were shown how savings will be made in the new staffing model and the increased profitability of the setting.

To conclude the presentation some projected key long-term successes of the change were shared. A few notable observations included more pupils entering Reception 'school ready'; the spin off benefits for Fulfen Club of more children joining the afternoon wraparound programme, the generation of a more straightforward and simpler offer for parents and, finally, the promotion of the wraparound-afternoon sessions building reputation in the local community.

**Resolved:** That both Miss. Chapman and Miss. Judge be thanked for their informative, detailed presentation.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors raised a number of points of challenge in relation to the Nursery proposal. There was challenge around whether any redundancy costs will be incurred; how staff absence will be managed with fewer staff within the setting; the confidence staff have that all places on offer within the new model will be filled; what promotional activity will be undertaken to raise the profile of the new provision; the timeline for when the proposed model will remove the current deficit position (one of a number of financially-related questions raised by members) and, finally, the likely reaction of parents to the changing emphasis around 2 year olds in the new structure.

All of these questions were responded to in turn with members invited to submit any further questions as and when they come to mind outside of tonight's meeting forum. Members felt that not only had a significant level of due diligence been applied to the Nursery proposal but staff had looked beyond the pandemic to future proof the long-term viability of the provision. Governors look forward to the implementation of the proposed new structure and were more than happy to approve the model put in front of them at tonight's meeting.

**Resolved:** That the new Nursery model be approved with immediate effect. The necessary steps will now be taken to operationalise what has been agreed.

Both Miss. Chapman and Miss. Judge left the meeting at this point.

## **5 Membership Issues:**

The Clerk had been in touch with the Headteacher/Chair in advance of tonight's meeting to highlight several membership issues that needed to be progressed. These issues can be summarised as follows:

### **1.1**

There is a need to ensure the membership details on Governor Hub align with the information on Get Information About Schools (GIAS), particularly when any changes are agreed.

**Resolved:** That the Clerk discuss with Mrs. Steele how this process will be managed between meetings.

## 1.2

It was noted that Mrs. Larnar is assuming 'Guest' status at tonight's meeting. This is due to the fact the application form to appoint Mrs. Larnar as a Local Authority (LA) Governor has yet to be approved by the Cabinet Member for Education. Hopefully, by the Spring Term 2 meeting, this confirmation will have been received.

## 1.3

The term of office for two Parent Governors (Mrs. Ballett and Ms. Burley) is set to expire in 2021. The Board is reminded that these forthcoming vacancies must go out to election to be filled.

## 1.4

The term of office for Mr. Middleton is set to expire on 01.04.21. With this in mind, a nomination was put to Governors to re co-opt Mr. Middleton back onto the Board for another term of office.

**Resolved:** That this co-option be ratified with immediate effect.

It was also agreed Mr. Middleton will continue as Chair of the Governing Board up to the first meeting of the Autumn Term, 2021.

## 1.5

The terms of office for two other Co-opted Governors (Mr. Holmes and Ms. Mason) expire on 13.06.21 and 15.07.21 respectively. Whilst no imminent decision is needed, the Chair/Vice-Chair do need to approach both individuals about their future intentions with regard to their Governor role and determine a strategy for how these forthcoming vacancies will be filled.

**Resolved:** That the Chair/Vice-Chair engage over this matter with an update to be provided at the Spring Term 2 meeting.

## 1.6

The Clerk will contact the Vice-Chair between meetings to ensure the implications of the listed points are followed through.

**Resolved:** That the Clerk follow up on this action.

## 6 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 24 November, 2020 (including Confidential Appendix) be approved as an accurate and true record subject to the following minor amendment:

Minute 6/Action 14 - ...That a full complement of *photos*...

**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.

## 7 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:

As is customary practice, the Clerk had generated an action matrix to the November minutes. The following progress update can be reported.

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Update</b>
3	The LA nomination form is in hand and is being progressed.
3	The new loG was shared with Governors at tonight's meeting.
3	A process for updating GIAS/the School website with membership changes will be agreed in the immediate aftermath of tonight's meeting.
5	The Headteacher confirmed the October minutes have been made available as a public record.
5	A process has been agreed for the signing of ratified minutes between meetings.
6	An update on actions assigned to Mrs. Ballett was provided later in the meeting. Governors were reminded again that they should be using Governor Hub to update any business/pecuniary interests.
7	This item is deferred. The Chair/Vice-Chair still need to revisit the Link Governor matrix and agree a final, definitive list.  <b>Resolved:</b> That this action be progressed.
9	The Headteacher confirmed the ratified policies from the last meeting have been published online.
10	Mrs. Hawkins was not present at tonight's meeting to comment on this action although it is assumed it has been progressed.

## **8 Reports:**

### **Chair's/Vice-Chair's Actions**

The Chair confirmed he had taken the following action on behalf of the Governing Board since the last meeting:

- Worked with the Headteacher on terminating a member of support staff's contract with immediate effect. The circumstances and context surrounding this action were shared with members. The Chair confirmed various stakeholders (including Entrust, HR) had been consulted and ultimately a zero-tolerance attitude has been adopted. Governors fully endorsed the actions that had been taken in relation to this unfortunate staffing incident and thanked the Chair for the level of due diligence that had been exercised.

The Vice-Chair confirmed no action on behalf of the Governing Board had been taken.

### **Link Governor Reports**

It is not that surprising that Link Governors have not been as active in their roles given the challenges of the pandemic and other pressing priorities for school staff. This engagement will return and it has not dropped off completely. The Chair is in regular contact with the Headteacher and other Governors have responded to certain requests from the SLT to ensure key statutory requirements continue to be met (I.e. Safeguarding compliance). Members do support the School wherever they can and it is anticipated that Link Governor will begin again in earnest once the pandemic eases and the Link Governor matrix has been revisited by the Chair/Vice-Chair.

### **Headteacher's Report**

The Headteacher had been asked to provide a verbal update at tonight's meeting. Mrs. Davies confirmed her update would focus on three core themes – covid-related attendance; the on-going well-being of pupils and staff and the quality of home learning provision. The following observations were noted in relation to the verbal update:

## Attendance

Governors were informed that between 02.09.20 and 25.01.21 whole school attendance was running at 97.5%. Absence related to covid is marked separately on the system and does not affect this primary indicator. The figure of 97.5% is also higher than the equivalent period last year. Members were then informed that there are currently three pupils who have an attendance record below 80% and there was some explanation given as to how the School is looking to engage with the families concerned to resolve this situation. Finally, other statistical indicators were shared including the total number of pupils having time off due to a covid encounter over specific time periods; the total number of pupils (including vulnerable children) who are in school during the current lockdown and the number of exclusions that have been implemented by the SLT. Governors welcomed this statistical update and it was agreed the Report will be uploaded to the Hub following tonight's meeting.

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

**Governor Challenge:** Governors challenged over whether the SLT has any vulnerable pupils who they would want to see in school during the current lockdown but instead are accessing remote learning; the likelihood of the fixed term exclusions that have been issued leading to a change in pupil behaviour and, finally, how the data compares to lockdown 1 and the extent to which the School has been inundated with requests from parents to consider their children for key worker places.

The Headteacher responded to each of these points in turn. In relation to the exclusion-related point, the Headteacher confirmed that the issuing of fixed term exclusions does allow children to see the consequences of their actions with the information being used to support the transition of pupils to other educational settings if the behaviour being seen worsens/shows no sign of improvement.

## Well-being of Pupils and Staff

The Headteacher confirmed the School will be supporting Children's Mental Health Week (01.02.21 to 07.02.21). Staff are preparing various engaging activities throughout the week including 'Express yourself with colour, music and story-telling'; a no-tech day and a fancy-dress opportunity. Governors were reassured that the staff are aware of the types of mindfulness strategies/techniques that can be deployed in the classroom and assemblies are also being used to put these different approaches into practice.

When it comes to staff, a caring and supportive culture exists at Fulfen where colleagues look out for one another. One cannot underestimate the challenges that come from running a dual system during the current lockdown but there is no doubt staff have stepped up admirably to the task in hand.

There was an interesting discussion around the need for staff to switch off in the evening and put some distance between themselves and schoolwork. This is always a balancing act for the SLT as whilst there is a clear need to protect the mental health and well-being of staff, some staff feel less stressed if all the feedback from the current day is sent back to children. The focus has to be on maintaining effective communication with staff so these kinds of issues can be discussed in an open forum and to remind parents of what they can expect in this area so expectations surrounding feedback remain appropriate. Those Parent Governors who are on the receiving end of the feedback thanked the staff for its tireless effort and hard work in this area. Compared to other schools, the view of Parent Governors is that Fulfen staff have gone above and beyond when it comes to fulfilling their responsibilities around feedback and the delivery of the dual educational offer.

## Remote Learning Provision

The Headteacher confirmed a document will be uploaded to the Hub following tonight's meeting which will indicate the preparation that has gone into home learning; the successes of the current provision and, looking into the future, possible areas for development.

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

In terms of the preparation the School has been ahead of the curve since the start of term, setting all pupils (Y1-6) up on Seesaw in September and ensuring all staff get to grips with the functionality of this online tool. Tapestry is continuing to be used for the Early Years setting. The School has worked hard to ensure any technological barriers have been removed and each member of staff has been issued with a 'best practice principles' document to support the rollout of this remote provision.

Benefits have been numerous. Engagement is good across the School with 90-96% of pupils accessing tasks most days. A new system is being set up to monitor engagement levels and families are being contacted where there are issues. The scope of activities is varied and Fulfen staff are excelling in their creative side. TA's are setting intervention work for those pupils who require it, the Art lessons on Wednesdays are proving to be extremely popular and work is also being celebrated on social media platforms.

Looking ahead, virtual learning walks are being rolled out to ensure staff are providing consistency in the quality of teaching across the School. Zoom will be implemented in the coming weeks to facilitate classroom interaction, there will be an added push on non-tech lessons and the wider curriculum subjects will also become a focus (specifically RE, Spanish and Computing).

**Governor Challenge:** Governors congratulated the SLT on the quality of the home learning programme that has been rolled out. A Governor suggested the SLT might want to look at 'Red Ted Art' as a possible additional creative resource, there was real support for the non-tech days that were being suggested and a Governor finished by asking the Headteacher what her number one challenge/issue is at the present time.

On this last point, the Headteacher confirmed it was the learning gaps that are being created as a result of national lockdowns with pupils missing a significant chunk of face to face education. This is why the remote learning provision has to remain strong and high-quality to ensure any gaps in learning are minimised as far as possible.

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

## 9 Finance Update:

Mrs. Hawkins is currently absent from school and so the usual finance update could not be provided. The Headteacher did reassure Governors that financial support is being accessed (to cover Mrs. Hawkins' period of absence) to ensure the appropriate level of due diligence is being applied to the School accounts. On this point, Mrs. Poxon offered her services if there are any financially related activities that would benefit from some Governor input. The Headteacher thanked Mrs. Poxon for this kind offer and may be in touch outside of tonight's meeting.

**Resolved:** That the Headteacher follow up on this action.

Governors can expect to receive a financial report in the coming weeks once the Budget has been scrutinised to a satisfactory level. This interim report will be uploaded to the Hub once it is available.

**Resolved:** That this task be completed between meetings.

For now, there was one financial virement that needed to be authorised by Governors – **see Confidential Appendix.**

## **10 Safeguarding Update:**

Mrs. Tranter provided Governors with the latest Safeguarding update. This included the latest Safeguarding profile of the School which is significant and takes up at least 50-60% of Mrs. Tranter's current hours. There was clarification that Malachi has lost its contract to offer family support services in Staffordshire with referrals now needing to be made to Action for Children. Work on the Training Register continues to ensure the SLT is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities in this area and some examples of how the more vulnerable pupils are accessing particular support services during lockdown were shared. Mrs. Tranter confirmed how staff meetings are being used to cascade certain Safeguarding-related updates and Governors were informed that some training for staff is being planned around mental health and, in time, online safety. Finally, Mrs. Tranter confirmed the School website has a dedicated Safeguarding page with more work to follow in this area and there is also an update that certain families are being supported through the home delivery of food parcels every week as the pandemic continues to affect the local community. Governors offered their support with home deliveries if Mrs. Tranter requires additional support.

**Resolved:** That Mrs. Tranter reach out to Governors on this offer if needed.

There is no doubt the work of Mrs. Tranter and others is crucial in keeping the pupil population safe and members thanked Mrs. Tranter and her team for everything that is being done around on-going Safeguarding provision.

## **11 Any Other Business:**

There were a number of matters that were discussed at the end of the meeting.

### **1.1**

The Vice-Chair confirmed the funding for Governor Space has been paused. It is unlikely therefore the Governing Board will be able to access this training in the short-term.

### **1.2**

It was confirmed that newly appointed Governors have received a CPD input into their role.

### **1.3**

Photos are still required from certain members of the Governing Board for the School website. Members were asked to comply with this request at the first possible opportunity if they have not done so already.

**Resolved:** That Governors take note of this action.

### **1.4**

The Vice-Chair asked that the action matrix is uploaded to the Hub once the draft minutes from tonight's meeting have been produced. This way, actions can be progressed in advance of the next meeting.

**Resolved:** That the Clerk action this request.



**1.5**

**Governor Challenge:** The Vice-Chair challenged whether there is any kind of Governor matrix that can be used to log the completion of certain governance-based activities (i.e. skills audits, DBS clearance, etc.)

**Resolved:** That the Clerk pick this matter up with the Vice-Chair outside of tonight’s meeting.

**1.6**

A final staffing matter needed to be discussed – **see Confidential Appendix.**

Mrs. Tranter left the meeting before the item was discussed.

**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 items be included as a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes:

- Minutes 9 and 11.

There were no further items/materials identified for exclusion.

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

The dates for meetings for 2020-21 have already been finalised. These can be confirmed as follows:

<b>Term</b>	<b>Date and Time</b>
Spring Term 2	30.03.21 at 6.15 p.m.
Summer Term 1	25.05.21 at 6.15 p.m.
Summer Term 2	06.07.21 at 6.15 p.m.

Governors were at this point thanked for their meaningful contribution at 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 26 January, 2021 at 6.15 p.m.**

### Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Action Update
4	HT	Upload Nursery presentation to Governor Hub.	
5	Clerk	Discuss with Mrs. Steele how information on Governor Hub/GIAS will be aligned.	
5	Chair/ Vice-Chair	Determine strategy for how forthcoming Co-opted Governor vacancies will be filled.	
5	Clerk	Contact Vice-Chair to discuss implications of membership issues.	
6	HT	Publish November minutes.	
6	Chair	Add signature to ratified minutes.	
7	Chair/Vice-Chair	Revisit Link Governor matrix and agree definitive list.	
8	HT	Upload attendance report to Governor Hub.	
8	HT	Upload home learning report to Governor Hub.	
9	HT	Seek financial support from Mrs. Poxon if needed.	
9	HT	Upload interim financial report to Governor Hub before next meeting.	
10	Mrs. Tranter	Reach out to Governors if additional support is needed around home deliveries.	
11	Governors	Submit photos for school website.	
11	Clerk	Upload action matrix to Governor Hub.	
11	Clerk	Address Vice-Chair challenge outside of tonight's meeting.	
CA	Various	Progress actions as indicated.	

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 30 March, 2021 at 6.15 p.m.**

Absent Governors to be informed.