**Fulfen Primary School**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in the School**

**on Tuesday 2 July, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Mr. Boardman (Chair), Mrs. Davies (Headteacher), Mrs. Ballett,

Mr. Field, Mrs. Roughley, Mrs. Copper, Mrs. Dingle, Mr. Ritchie,

Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Kilgallen

Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Governors)

Mrs. Hawkins (School Business Manager)

Mrs. Sturch (Staff)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **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 the final Governing Board meeting of the year by the Chair. The agenda for tonight’s governance forum contained the usual strategic updates along with a verbal overview from Mrs. Sturch who talked about her early tenure at Fulfen Primary School including the priorities for the next 12 months. Governors asked their usual questions and offered various points of challenge in relation to the documentation that had been uploaded to GovernorHub. Governors also offered their best wishes to Mrs. Poxon who is currently unwell and could not attend tonight’s meeting.

The meeting was quorate.

**2 Apologies:**

**Resolved:** That apologies for absence be received and accepted from Mrs. Poxon and Mrs. Witcomb.

**3 Governing Board Matters:**

**Membership**

It was confirmed that the Governing Board is currently carrying one Co-opted Governor vacancy. Mrs. Ballett made it clear that any new appointment should complement the skills and attributes of the existing membership. With this in mind, Governors were informed that having undertaken a skills audit the skill set across the membership is strong in all critical areas with no obvious gaps to fill. The three lower scoring areas for the minute record were identified as health services, environmental management and construction/premises with both the Chair/Vice-Chair open to any nominations from Governors in these particular areas or indeed others (given the critical areas have been covered). The Chair/Vice-Chair will keep this matter under review and should no nominations be forthcoming, a direction of travel to fill this vacancy will be agreed in the Autumn Term.

**Resolved:** That the Chair/Vice-Chair take note of this action.

There are no other Governor terms of office set to expire in 2024.

**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 shared.

**Register of Interests**

Governors have been logging any new business/pecuniary interests on GovernorHub over the course of the last 12 months.

There will be a requirement to revisit these declarations in the Autumn Term, particularly as the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) is being updated. The Vice-Chair will email Governors with a reminder to revisit these declarations at the start of the Autumn Term.

**Resolved:** That the Vice-Chair take account of 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 is available on GovernorHub for Governors to consider at their leisure. This agenda item will be revisited again in the Autumn Term but for now Governors simply confirmed they were prepared to abide by the protocols listed in this document.

**Governor Spreadsheet**

All of the Governor information is maintained by the Vice-Chair on a spreadsheet. This spreadsheet is up-to-date and includes the categorisation of Governor; email addresses; term of office information and any Link Governor roles that have been assigned. Should there by any change in membership this spreadsheet will be updated by the Vice-Chair.

**4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 14 May, 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 May action matrix was reviewed with the following progress update reported:

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| --- | --- |
| **Minute** | **Action** |
| 3 | It was confirmed all skill audits have been returned with the matter referenced during tonight’s meeting. |
| 3 | It is assured GIAS, GovernorHub and the School website reflect the latest Governor membership information. |
| 4 | The March minutes have been made available as a public record. |
| 4 | The ratified March minutes have been signed by the Chair. |
| 7 | Any outstanding Link Governor reports have been submitted. |
| 8 | The financial paperwork was submitted to the LA. |
| 10 | It is assumed Mrs. Poxon has shared the contact details of the charitable organisation referenced at the last meeting with the Headteacher. |
| 10 | Mrs. Copper has shared the details of the Safeguarding network with the Headteacher. |
| 10 | The Chair confirmed he had contacted the local self-employed mums and dads group to pass on the feedback that was agreed at the last Board meeting. |

It is pleasing to note that all actions from the May meeting have been suitably progressed – a sign of effective governance in action.

**6 Reports:**

**Chair and Vice-Chair’s Actions**

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

**Link Governor Reports**

Having produced a verbal health and safety update at the last Board meeting, Mr. Ritchie confirmed his formal Link Governor report had been uploaded to the Hub on 29.04.24. Governors can take in this written report at their leisure.

**Headteacher’s Report**

The Headteacher’s Report had been shared with Governors in advance of the meeting. It was presented in the usual format that facilitates effective levels of strategic challenge from Governors. The following overview can be reported:

**6.1**

The first part of the Report focused on progress that has been made against school improvement plan (SIP) priorities for 2023-24. Governors could see impact statements relevant to each objective with some excellent progress seen. Governors were informed that the SIP for the new academic year is currently being drafted with the underpinning action plans to be finalised for the start of the Autumn Term.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors focused on Key Priority 3 and enquired as to the success of the ‘Feel Good Friday’ initiative. There were also questions asked as to how Governors should use the newly authored SIP into the new academic year.

The Headteacher responded to both of these points in turn. On the second point she confirmed that Governors should be using the SIP as part of their Link Governor visits as they triangulate what they read, what they hear and what they see on the ground at a local level.

As soon as a new SIP is available, the Headteacher confirmed she would upload the document to GovernorHub.

**6.2**

The NOR as of March 2024 was shared.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors noted the year groups that are under PAN (i.e.Y2 and particularly Y4) and asked what action the School could take if any to boost these inflight numbers. Questions were also asked about the new Reception intake for September.

The Headteacher confirmed that whilst there is an unwritten rule around the degree to which schools can ‘poach’ pupils from other schools, the Outstanding Ofsted judgement and excellent reputation of the School should help to drum up interest in in-year places in the years ahead. As for the incoming Reception cohort, the Headteacher reported the PAN of 60 was being realised with a waiting list already in place for September and a number of appeals currently being addressed by the SLT. Governors welcomed this update, particularly given the importance of a healthy NOR for the future sustainability of the School.

**6.3**

The latest attendance metrics were shared including comparisons to previous years and the relevant national benchmarks. Governors are aware that the SLT invests heavily in this area of school life with a focus on removing any barriers that families may be facing in this particular area and rewarding positive attendance as pupils are actively encouraged to be in school accessing the curriculum on a daily basis.

The attendance metrics do make for pleasant reading although the attendance profile is not without its own challenges – i.e. the pressure caused by families taking their children on holiday during term time and the long-term absence of pupils that can skew the data (one such example was shared). The Headteacher reported that from August there will be a tightening of restrictions around attendance from the DfE. Governors wait to see with interest how these changes around attendance are received by the parent/carer community and whether they cause any changes/modifications in behaviour into the new academic year.

**6.4**

The pupil mobility in year was noted. This is always a challenge that the SLT will need to meet year on year as children come onto roll at different points. When these scenarios play out, Governors were reassured that any new arrivals are supported fully from the moment they come into school with any needs identified at an early stage and relationships developed with peers as soon as is practically possible.

**6.5**

The latest SEND profile of the School was shared. Many of the reported categories of SEND come in below national benchmarks although capacity that is needed to support this vulnerable cohort cannot be underestimated. It was confirmed that the SEND Link Governor regularly visits school to catch up about vulnerable groups and how their academic/pastoral needs are being met on a rolling basis. Governors know how much time and energy is put in by Fulfen staff to support vulnerable groups – an inclusive culture that was clearly identified during the last Ofsted inspection.

**6.6**

There has been a large amount of staff mobility as the School prepares for a new academic term in September. The Headteacher outlined the latest position in relation to staff resignations, maternity and other leaves including sickness absence and new appointments/changes to working hours. This update included confirmation that changes to supply contracts relating to the business case will be implemented form 01.09.24.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors enquired as to the current status of staff moral given the recent restructuring process that has been undertaken.

The Headteacher gave her perspective on this matter reiterating the point that nobody wants to see staffing redundancies in any setting. Unfortunately, the budgetary position and context outlined in the business case meant some difficult resource-based decisions have had to be taken. Governors fully sympathised with the SLT over this situation.

**6.7**

There were no significant health and safety updates to share with Governors beyond what was documented in the Report.

**6.8**

Various premises related updates were shared. Governors were informed that in terms of the parking challenges around the School site, the SLT intends to go out to pass holders in advance of September to determine why they need to retain the pass for a new academic year. Decisions will then be taken based on the information received.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors asked whether the preventative measures around parking are working and also recounted some unacceptable parental behaviour that had been observed around the barrier.

The Headteacher felt the preventative measures are working with no immediate plans to ramp up/escalate the approach being taken. As for individual pockets of behaviour, the Headteacher confirmed she would follow up on the reported matter outside of tonight’s meeting.

**Resolved:** That the Headteacher take account of this action.

Governors were also informed at this point about the Early Years toilet refurbishment and when the schedule of works is set to get underway. The Headteacher confirmed there will be some logistical challenges to overcome but was pleased to see that this capital-based project is being taken forward for the benefit of pupils within the setting.

**6.9**

The final section of the Report focused on leadership and management with some key highlights noted – i.e. the continued implementation of the WalkThrus Strategy for CPD and the strengthening of leadership roles across the School which is so crucial to successful and effective succession planning.

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

**Governor Challenge:** Before moving on, a Governor asked for more details around the Y4 ‘camp’ initiative and what was the thinking behind this enrichment opportunity.

The Headteacher explained such an initiative gives pupils the chance to experience a night away from home in a controlled environment. This is very much a precursor to the residential trip and the Paris adventure that come later in KS2, all of which are crucial to a pupil’s ongoing personal development.

**7 Safeguarding Update:**

Governors received the Summer Safeguarding Report with an accompanying verbal narrative provided by Mrs. Sturch (Designated Safeguarding Lead). She confirmed that whilst Safeguarding is a whole school accountability impacting all stakeholders, her focus since coming to Fulfen has been on ensuring all training and Safeguarding knowledge is up to date.

She reassured Governors that there has been a focus in CPD on listening and capturing the voice of the child which is essential for effective Safeguarding practice. The point of this training is to help teachers understand children’s living experiences, hear their views and take effective action to support or safeguard them.

There was also confirmation that a Wellbeing Survey has been carried out this half-term with some positive data metrics – i.e. 96% strongly agree/agree they are happy in school and 94% strongly agree/agree that they feel safe in school. Mrs. Sturch reassured Governors that any data requiring a follow up within the survey has been taken up with the relevant stakeholders as necessary.

In terms of areas of development, there has been a focus on supporting support staff who will be moving into new year groups/a different Key Stage for the new academic year. This transition-based work is important to ensure staff can spot/identify a different pattern of Safeguarding-related triggers when interacting with a younger/older cohort.

There was confirmation that all statutory requirements are being met when it comes to the checking of the Single Central Record (SCR) and the ongoing monitoring of the Training Register, Safeguarding records and staff personnel files.

The data relating to referral patterns and incidents of bullying were shared. The number of reportable incidents was low but the SLT explained this was largely as a result of the inclusive culture at Fulfen with problems/challenges often nipped in the bud well before they get to the reportable phase. Governors were also pleased to see that a number of pupils have a multi-agency support plan which is not a given in the current SEND climate.

There were also some discussions around attendance that also falls under the Safeguarding banner in the form of educational neglect. Governors could see the various actions that are being taken by the School to address issues around attendance and punctuality.

Finally, the latest position in relation to EHCPs was shared.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors asked how these numbers may change with the new Reception cohort starting in September and any knock-on implications for funding.

Mrs. Sturch outlined the latest position in this matter.

Resolved: That Mrs. Struch be thanked for her verbal update.

**8 Finance Update:**

The finance update was not as extensive as previous meetings – partly because all of the important budgetary information had been relayed at the Summer 1 meeting and partly because Mrs. Hawkins is currently in the middle of a finance-based audit. In terms of key updates:

**8.1**

Governors were asked to formally ratify the School Fund Audit that had been undertaken by an external third party to cover the period September 2022 to August 2023. There were only a couple of recommendations from the Audit to implement from this point forward.

**Resolved:** That the School Fund be formally ratified with immediate effect.

**8.2**

There was a general discussion around the need to review the Scheme of Financial Delegation which needs to be tweaked in line with reviewing various spending limits. Governors agreed that following further discussions with the external auditor and SLT, Mrs. Hawkins would upload a new version of the Scheme to GovernorHub so it can be signed off remotely with any ratification of the document to be formally captured in the Autumn minutes.

**Resolved:** That Mrs. Hawkins progress this course of action.

**8.3**

Mrs. Hawkins relayed her experiences from the Finance Audit to date. She shared with Governors the categorisation system for the Audit outcome which is entirely self-limiting in nature. Governors will be able to see the Audit Report for themselves in the Autumn Term which will no doubt involve Mrs. Hawkins implementing any actions suggested.

For now, Mrs. Hawkins was thanked for all of the due diligence she has exercised in relation to the School finances over the course of the last 12 months.

**9 Premises Update:**

The premises update has already been referenced in these minutes and was included in the Headteacher’s Report.

**10 Deputy Headteacher and Role:**

Mrs. Struch was invited at this point to talk about her early days in the Deputy Headteacher role and the areas of focus she will be taking forward from September.

She began by talking about how the work around curriculum intent, implementation and impact will be sustained into the new academic year. This will include ensuring Subject Leads have effective action plans in place for their subject areas; focusing on whole school training around research/pedagogy to ensure the high quality teaching being deployed in the classroom aligns with the SLTs continuous improvement agenda; analysing the impact and deployment of interventions to ensure they fully support the learning process and can move pupils on at pace with their academic development and, finally, ensuring the investment that has been put into the WalkThrus Strategy continues to be sustained. Mrs. Struch was quick to point out that the curriculum intent at Fulfen is one of the strengths of the School. What is needed going forward are the tweaks/modifications to the existing framework that one would expect to find as the DNA in any first class, high quality educational provider.

Another key area (as already referenced in these minutes) will be Safeguarding.

**Governor Challenge:** Governors did request that Mrs. Struch liaise with the Vice-Chair to ensure the minimum requirements around Safeguarding are being met for all Governors including the need to undertake Safer Recruitment and Prevent-based CPD.

**Resolved:** That Mrs. Sturch/the Vice-Chair follow up on this matter outside of tonight’s meeting. This will include clarifying the situation if Governors have already accessed Safeguarding-based training in their professional roles and what additional action, if any, they need to take.

The Headteacher felt that given the focus on the curriculum and Safeguarding, it is evident to all staff that Mrs. Sturch is a natural fit in this leadership role. She felt Mrs. Sturch has settled really quickly into her new role with already a clear vison and plans in place to take the progressive steps needed in her designated areas. Mrs. Sturch added that as part of her ongoing work around the curriculum and Safeguarding, she is very keen to take in stakeholder voice and to listen to the views of the School community as and when new initiatives are deployed.

Governors look forward to hearing about the successes realised in these two areas over the course of the next 12 months.

**11 KCSIE Update:**

Governors were informed that a new version of KCSIE will be coming out in September. Significant changes are planned in 12 months’ time but for the 2024-25 academic year any changes generally relate to the tweaking of the statutory guidance – i.e.

* Updated definition of ‘Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.’
* References to abuse and neglect have been changed to abuse, neglect and exploitation.
* Terminology changes.
* Data protection updates.

It was confirmed the draft version of KCSIE 2024 will come into force in September 2024 with Governors needing to familiarise themselves with the relevant parts of the statutory guidance as and when it becomes available.

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

**12 Change to Date:**

Governors were asked to note the change to the Sumer 1 Governing Board meeting date. This information is referenced at the end of these minutes.

**13 Any Other Business:**

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

**13.1**

Governors were asked to ratify the following policy at tonight’s meeting:

* Online Safety Policy 2023-24.

Other than asking some questions around the use of mobile phones in school, Governors were happy to ratify this policy.

**Resolved:** That the Online Safety Policy be ratified with immediate effect.

**13.2**

Governors spent some time discussing the future relationship that is wanted between the PTA and school which is crucial for creating and supporting an effective educational environment. Whilst the PTA and school are entirely separate entities, it was noted that the two stakeholders can have common goals – i.e. in the areas of wish lists; shared goals (for example, promoting the curriculum through fundraisers tied to learning activities); community engagement (for example, organising events that benefit both the School and local community) and pupil enrichment (for example, involving pupils directly in agreed initiatives).

Some Governors had some concerns that the focus for the PTA fund raising may not currently be targeted against the most worthwhile cause. It was suggested that the PTA could be approached to see if they would like to come to a meeting in the Autumn Term and share their funding priorities. This would allow both stakeholders to engage on this matter and to ensure the suggestions put forward have a wide, holistic benefit for as many Fulfen pupils as possible. The key point as far as the Headteacher was concerned was that both stakeholders work together for a common purpose and in the best interests of the pupils.

**Resolved:** That Mrs. Dingle/the Vice-Chair relay this message to the PTA and arrange a time in the Autumn Term when PTA representatives can meet with Governors – either as part of a Governing Board meeting or as a separate ad-hoc discussion.

**13.3**

Finally, Governors spent some time reflecting on the 2023-24 year. What a year it has been!

Notable successes have included the Outstanding Ofsted judgement; the onboarding of new Governors who are committed to the cause; the ongoing support and due diligence offered by all Governors; the leadership exercised by the Chair and Vice-Chair to move the Board forward; the fact the Board has remained strategic not operational in its intent; good quality minutes that capture the discussions taking place; the curriculum and teaching and learning offer that is afforded Fulfen pupils (Sports Day was one such example shared); the tireless work and dedication of staff to make every day a motivational one for Fulfen pupils and, finally, the leadership of the Headteacher who is focused on improving the life chances for children whenever the opportunities present themselves.

The whole School community should be proud of what has been achieved in 2023-24. Roll on 2024-25…

**14 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 no items needed to be included as a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes.

There were no further items/materials identified for exclusion.

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

The meeting schedule for 2024-25 has also been finalised.

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| --- | --- |
| **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.

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**Chair Date**

**Fulfen Primary School**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in the School**

**on Tuesday 2 July, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.**

**Action Matrix**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Minute | Owner | Action Required | Action Update |
| 3 | Chair/Vice-Chair | Progress outstanding Co-opted Governor vacancy. |  |
| 3 | Vice-Chair | Issue reminder to Governors around declarations at start of Autumn Term. |  |
| 4 | HT | Make May minutes available as a public record. |  |
| 4 | Chair | Sign ratified May minutes. |  |
| 6 | HT | Take up parental issue around school barrier. |  |
| 8 | Mrs. Hawkins | Upload revised Scheme of Financial Delegation to GovernorHub. |  |
| 10 | Vice-Chair/Mrs. Sturch | Ensure all Governor-related Safeguarding CPD is up to date. |  |
| 11 | HT | Issue revised KCSIE to Governors once published. |  |
| 13 | Mrs. Dingle/Vice-Chair | Invite representatives from PTA to attend a future Governing Board meeting or equivalent. |  |

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 1 October, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.**

Absent Governors to be informed.