

Fulfen Primary School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in the School on Tuesday 1 October, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Mr. Boardman (Chair), Mrs. Davies (Headteacher), Mrs. Ballett,
Mr. Field, Mrs. Poxon, Mrs. Roughley, Mrs. Witcomb, Mr. Ritchie,
Mrs. Kilgallen

Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Governors)
Mrs. Hawkins (School Business Manager)
Mrs. Sturch (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 the first Governing Board meeting of a new academic year by the Clerk. The Autumn Term is always a busy time for governance with a number of procedural matters to be closed off (i.e. election of Chair/Vice-Chair; capture of business/pecuniary interests; acceptance of Code of Conduct, etc.) alongside the standard strategic updates provided by the SLT.

Standard governance protocols were in evidence with a clear and purposeful agenda circulated in advance of the meeting; documentation uploaded to the online portal GovernorHub and the usual opportunities afforded Governors to ask questions/seek points of clarification in relation to the published agenda.

The meeting was quorate.

2 Apologies:

Resolved: That apologies for absence be received and accepted from Mrs. Dingle, Mrs. Wright and Mrs. Copper.

3 Election of Chair/Vice-Chair:

There was a requirement to elect a Chair at tonight's meeting. Nominations were sought and Mr. Boardman was put forward – a role he was more than happy to carry out for the next 12 months.

Resolved: That Mr. Boardman be appointed Chair of the Governing Board up to the first meeting of the Autumn Term, 2025.

There was a requirement to elect a Vice-Chair at tonight's meeting. Nominations were sought and Mrs. Ballett was put forward – a role she was more than happy to carry out.

Resolved: That Mrs. Ballett be appointed Vice-Chair of the Governing Board up to the point her term of office expires (04.07.25) when this matter will need to be revisited.

Both Mr. Boardman and Mrs. Ballett were thanked for taking on these key leadership roles on the Governing Board.

4 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.

5 Governing Board Matters:

Membership

Governors noted that there is still one Co-opted Governor vacancy to fill on the Board. It is important that whoever is appointed complements the skills and attributes of the existing membership. The point was made that the Board will carry the vacancy until the right skill match can be found. As always, Governors were invited to put forward any nominations if they felt they had a network contact who could make an effective contribution to Fulfen governance.

It was reported that the next Governor term of office to expire is Mrs. Ballett on 04.07.25. The Clerk recommended that Governors consider the re co-option of Mrs. Ballett back onto the Board in the Summer Term. This item will need to be added to the appropriate agenda in 2025.

Code of Conduct

A copy of the Fulfen Primary Code of Conduct 2024-25 was shared with Governors in advance of the meeting. This document sets out the behaviour and conduct expected of all school Governors with all attendees confirming they were prepared to abide by the protocols within the Code. The Vice-Chair ensured all Governors signed a hard copy of this document with absent Governors to be chased up for their signatures post meeting.

Resolved: That the Vice-Chair ensure this task is completed.

Instrument of Government (IoG)

The IoG was shared with Governors for reference purposes. This legal document outlines the constitution of the Board and when the current governance structure came into effect. The Clerk noted clause 6 of the document that states 'The term of office of all Governors is two years' and will check with Entrust that this is the latest version – i.e. in most schools the term of office is listed as four years.

Resolved: That the Clerk take account of this action.

Register of Interests

The Autumn Term is when all Governors must submit their annual declarations on GovernorHub which include noting any business/pecuniary interests; confirming that they have read and understand the latest changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and acknowledging that the Code of Conduct and latest Prevent guidance has been read and understood. The Vice-Chair confirmed she would ensure before the Autumn Term 2 meeting that a full audit of these declarations is in place. Any changes to business/pecuniary interests will also be updated on the School website.

Resolved: That the Vice-Chair ensure the appropriate action is taken.

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

The Vice-Chair also discussed the latest training requirements for Governors and asked that attendees complete/engage with any CPD requests that are sent their way – the latest two being a Safeguarding input and an overview of the key changes to the KCSIE statutory guidance. Governors confirmed they would engage with these two areas before the next Board meeting.

Link Governors

This was the point in the meeting when the Link Governor roles were reviewed for 2024-25. Whilst all Governors were happy with the roles to which they have been assigned, Mr. Field enquired as to whether he could take on SEND and the vulnerable cohort groups for the next 12 months. The Clerk suggested this was good practice in terms of splitting Safeguarding and SEND – not only to ensure the responsibility for these two critical areas is split across the Board membership but also to ensure the necessary due diligence and forensic analysis can be applied to these statutory areas, ideally on a termly basis.

The Vice-Chair will now inform Mrs. Copper of the change and update the Governor Information document so it remains accurate and up to date.

Resolved: That the Vice-Chair take this action.

Governors were asked to contact their staff representatives and schedule in their Link Governor visits in the coming weeks/months. Attendees asked that the SLT notify them of any school-based events that they could attend and Mrs. Roughley confirmed she was more than happy to assist the Vice-Chair with a compliance check of the School website if this additional support was required. Finally, the SLT reminded Governors that when they come into Fulfen they can request a walk around school to see the teaching and learning environment in action. Such action will enable Governors to triangulate what they hear in meetings, what they read in documentation and the reality on the ground.

Resolved: That Governors action the various points as highlighted above.

6 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 2 July, 2024 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.

7 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:

The action matrix from the July meeting was reviewed. The following progress update can be reported:

Minute	Action
3	The Co-opted Governor vacancy has already been referenced in these minutes with next steps agreed.
3	A reminder to Governors on the need to submit declarations was raised at tonight's meeting.
4	The May minutes are available as a public record.
4	The ratified May minutes were signed.
6	It was confirmed there have been no developments around the highlighted School barrier issue with the parent/carer. A watching brief is being kept in this area.
8	Mrs. Hawkins did upload the revised Scheme of Financial Delegation to GovernorHub.
10	Safeguarding CPD has already been referenced in these minutes with the Vice-Chair ensuring all Governor training is up to date.
11	Governors have received both the revised KCSIE statutory guidance for 2024-25 and the Autumn Term Governor Information Pack which includes a useful overview of the key changes.
13	The referenced meeting involving the PTA did not go ahead. It is expected fund raising discussions will ramp up again this term with parents and Governors coming together to discuss future events. An update on any progress will be shared at the next Board meeting.

Governors were thanked for progressing the above actions between meetings – a sign of effective governance in action.

7 Reports:

Chair and Vice-Chair's Actions

The Chair confirmed he had taken no actions on behalf of the Governing Board since the last meeting.

The Vice-Chair reported that she is currently handling a parent/carer complaint and reassured Governors that the matter is being dealt with in full accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.

Link Governor Reports

It is too early in the term for Link Governors to have met with their staff representatives and submitted reports. That said, Mr. Ritchie did confirm he had met Mrs. Hawkins to undertake a health and safety desktop exercise which both individuals had found particularly informative. Mr. Ritchie added that he will look to arrange a health and safety learning walk around the School site before the end of the Autumn Term as part of his ongoing due diligence around this critical area of school life.

Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher confirmed that she would deliver a verbal strategic update to Governors at tonight's meeting to be followed up with a more formal report at the Autumn Term 2 meeting. The following key headlines were reported:

7.1

Governors were informed that a full data analysis of 2023-24 performance outcomes will be provided in the Spring Term. For now, Governors were given the baseline statistics for KS2:

	Exp+	GDS
Reading	89%	31%
Writing	94%	16%
Maths	92%	26%

The Headteacher confirmed that the outcomes do demonstrate an improvement on previous years and take account of the cohort specific characteristics of last year's Y6 cohort. Governors wanted to put on record their thanks to the SLT and staff (across the School) for achieving such successful results which validates the teaching and learning environment at Fulfen – an environment which gives every pupil the chance to fulfil their academic potential.

7.2

The Headteacher confirmed that last year's School Development Plan (SDP) has been reviewed using a RAG system to highlight the progress that has been made against key priorities. In addition, Governors have also received the SDP for the new academic year (2024-25) which indicates how the SLT aims to build on last year's successes. It is recommended that Governors use the SDP as reference material when carrying out their Link Governor activities – both to inform the dialogue that takes place but also to use the material as the basis for challenge-focused questions around key priorities/initiatives and how they are being progressed over the course of the next 12 months. Governors welcomed this advice about the use of this strategic documentation.

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

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

Mrs. Sturch took the opportunity at this point in the meeting to discuss the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement with Governors – a document that will be published online and which indicates how the School will use Pupil Premium (and Recovery Premium) for the 2024 to 2025 academic year to help improve the attainment of Fulfen's disadvantaged pupils.

The document is produced to a template and covers the amount of funding available (significant drop this year); the challenges that the School is trying to overcome; the outcomes that will be secured by the end of the latest investment cycle and how the funding will be allocated across three distinctive strands – i.e. teaching; targeted academic support and wider strategies. There was also an update on how the Pupil Premium related activity impacted the 2023-24 cohort in terms of their performance outcomes as well as the nature of enrichment activities that are available to this vulnerable cohort.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked a number of follow up questions – notably whether there was enough capacity in the system (staff resource) to deliver the stated initiatives; the extent to which the information in the Statement has changed that much for the new academic cycle or whether the new Statement is very much a continuation of existing priorities; the anticipated impact of the stronger Phonics offer and the new Maths intervention on pupil

progress; the nature of the specific focus that is being afforded the bottom 20% of Readers; whether anything is being done to actively target those parents/carers who might be entitled for Pupil Premium funding and, finally, any scope that exists for Governors to support some of the Pupil Premium related initiatives – for example listening to pupils read. On this final point, Mrs. Witcomb confirmed she is already volunteering on this basis and spoke really positively about some of the improvements she had seen in pupil confidence/literacy through recent in-school activities.

Mrs. Sturch thanked Governors for these questions and gave her perspective on each of the points raised.

Resolved: That Mrs. Sturch be thanked for her informative update.

8 Governor Housekeeping:

The Governor Housekeeping section of the meeting has already been covered off through an earlier agenda item. There was nothing more to add at this particular point in the meeting.

9 SDP:

Governors' attention was drawn to two key strategic documents – the SDP for 2023-24 which included a RAG rating overview (outlining progress that has been made against the stated actions) and the new SDP for 2024-25 which included this year's priorities.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked what action is being taken by the SLT to address any outstanding RED actions from the 2023-24 SDP and whether the AMBER actions have been carried over into this year's plan.

The Headteacher provided the necessary clarification on this matter. She reassured Governors that the SDP is always a working, fluid document within which certain actions go up and down the priority list depending on capacity needs; a refocusing of priorities or unexpected changes in the external environment.

Governor Challenge: Governors welcomed the new look plan for 2024-25. They asked whether staff representatives could be invited to future meetings to discuss different priority areas. There are many benefits to this including the Governing Board becoming more visible to staff members, a chance for staff to deliver their update to a different audience and, finally, the opportunity for staff members to gain valuable experience by responding to challenge from Governors.

A suggestion was made that the first presentation should focus on enrichment activities with the relevant staff representative invited to talk to Governors about some of these experiences beyond the taught curriculum (for example Gardening Club).

The Headteacher confirmed she would set up this staff/Governor engagement session for the next LGB meeting.

Resolved: That the Headteacher progress this action.

Linked to the SDP and the need to ensure there is a consistent ambition for children with SEND, a Governor asked about the academic performance of vulnerable groups and in particular KS2 SEND data.

The Headteacher confirmed that group data analysis will be covered off as part of the 2023-24 data update that is shared with Governors in the Spring Term. In the meantime, the

Headteacher confirmed she would share some initial findings with Mr. Field in the Autumn Term to inform his Link Governor activities.

Resolved: That the Headteacher take account of this action.

10 Pay Committee:

There was a discussion around setting up a Pay Committee to hear and one would hope endorse the performance management recommendations for teaching staff that will be presented by the Headteacher. The Clerk confirmed that the Pay Committee, having been satisfied that the necessary level of due diligence has been applied to this process, should recommend to the full Governing Board that it ratifies these recommendations.

It was agreed in the meeting that Mr. Boardman, Mrs. Ballett and Mrs. Roughley would sit on the Pay Committee. A date for this governance forum will be agreed outside of tonight's meeting so this matter can be progressed.

Resolved: That the Headteacher finalise the date with committee members and circulate all necessary paperwork.

Resolved: That this item be carried forward to the Autumn Term 2 meeting to ensure the formal ratification of the performance management recommendations is effectively captured in a set of minutes.

11 Financial Update:

As is now standard practice, Mrs. Hawkins shared her usual financial update with Governors – **see Confidential Appendix.**

12 Premises Update:

The latest premises update was shared with Governors. This included an overview of any work that has been completed to improve the School site; any challenges that are currently being faced (there was some discussion around the toilet block refurbishment) and any future premises related projects that are planned. Governors were reassured that even where particular challenges are being faced, the relevant external stakeholders are being held to account. Governors also asked the SLT to come back to them if additional leverage needs to be exercised in this area.

Governor Challenge: A Governor did comment on the water issues on the playground and the need to consider the implications of puddles freezing in the inclement weather – i.e. whether any additional contingencies/risk mitigations need to be put in place.

Mrs. Hawkins thanked Governors for this observation and will now take this matter forward following tonight's meeting.

13 Policy Ratification:

The following policies were shared with Governors in advance of the meeting:

- Charging and Remissions
- Complaints
- Health and Safety
- Parent Code of Conduct

- Privacy Notice
- Safeguarding
- SEND and Information Report
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Vexatious Complaints.

Governors had been supplying various forms of feedback in relation to these policies on What's App in advance of tonight's meeting. The Headteacher asked that any other feedback points are shared via this route.

Resolved: That all listed policies be ratified subject to the Headteacher actioning any feedback points received. The tweaked policies will be published on the School website.

Governors also at this point made some suggestions as to how the Code of Conduct could be made more visible with the parent/carer community. This document is of critical importance as it lays out very succinctly how parents/carers and the School can develop a collaborative relationship. Governors fully endorse this Code with one sentence in the document particularly standing out – that parents/carers (along with staff) are expected to model the behaviour that are expected in the School's children.

14 Any Other Business:

There were a number of items of additional business that were shared at this point in the meeting.

14.1

The Chair asked whether Governors were happy for Mr. Spencer (Governor at St. Luke's C of E (C) Primary School Cannock) to attend a future Board meeting so he could observe effective governance in action at the School.

Governors were more than happy to support this request with the Autumn Term 2 meeting seen as a good meeting to welcome an observer.

Resolved: That the Chair contact Mr. Spencer and invite him to the next meeting.

14.2

The Chair checked with Governors whether it would be a useful exercise to revisit the 'founding words' that had been put together when the new look Governing Board formed. A lot has happened since this initial discussion some years ago with all attendees agreeing it would be a good idea to revisit this area and identify whether the words needed to adapt/change/evolve in any way.

Resolved: That the Chair arrange for this reflective exercise to take place.

14.3

Governors asked whether there had been any significant filtering/monitoring issues since the Board had received an update in this area.

The Headteacher was pleased to report that whilst the associated procedures continue to be followed there was nothing of concern to draw to Governors attention.

14.4

Governors were prewarned that the School is having some issues with its server which will mean some remedial action is going to have to be taken in the near future. Mrs. Hawkins confirmed she would provide an update (along with cost implications) at the next meeting.

14.5

Governors reflected on the fact it was great to be back for another governance cycle. There was a really positive vibe to governance at Fulfen at the present time with the whole School community settling well into the Autumn Term. Governors look forward to their forthcoming Link Governor visits and any further opportunities that may be available to come into school and interact with staff/pupils. The Headteacher echoed these thoughts and acknowledged all the work Governors do to support the work of the SLT and to act as critical friends as and when required.

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

- Minute 11.

There were no further items/materials identified for exclusion.

16 Dates and Times of Future Meetings:

The meeting schedule for 2024-25 has been finalised.

Term	Date and Time
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 1 October, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Action Update
5	Vice-Chair	Chase up absent Governors for signatures – Code of Conduct.	
5	Clerk	Check term of office on IoG with Entrust.	
5	Vice-Chair	Ensure all declarations are logged in GovernorHub.	
5	Vice-Chair	Inform Mrs. Copper of change in Link Governor responsibility. Update Governor Information document.	
5	Various	Progress actions as listed.	
6	HT	Make July minutes available as a public record.	
6	Chair	Sign ratified July minutes.	
9	HT	Invite staff representative to next meeting.	
9	HT	Provide snapshot of data to SEND Link Governor.	
10	HT	Organise date for Pay Committee.	
10	Clerk	Make sure pay recommendations formally ratified at Autumn Term 2 meeting.	
14	Vice-Chair	Invite Mr. Spencer to next meeting.	
14	Chair	Revisit 'founding words' at next meeting.	

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 3 December, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Absent Governors to be informed.