

Fulfen Primary School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in a virtual setting on Tuesday 29 March, 2022 at 6.15 p.m.

Present: Mr. Middleton (Chair), Mrs. Davies (Headteacher), Mrs. Ballett, Mrs. Poxon, Mrs. Dingle, Mr. Ritchie, Miss. Green, Mrs. Tranter, Mrs. Lightfoot, Mrs. Witcomb

Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Governors)
Mrs. Hawkins (School Business Manager)
Mr. Boardman (Guest)

1 Welcome and Introductions:

Governors were welcomed to the second Governing Board meeting of the Spring Term by the Chair. This meeting is likely to be the final meeting that takes place in a virtual capacity before Governors meet again in school. Documentation as per normal had been uploaded to the Hub in advance of tonight's meeting along with a clear and purposeful agenda. There were the usual updates on school improvement related issues and governance matters with healthy levels of engagement and challenge present throughout the meeting.

The meeting was quorate.

2 Apologies:

Resolved: That an apology for absence be received and accepted from Mrs. Connock.

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.

A formal welcome was extended to Mr. Boardman who was attending tonight's meeting in a Guest capacity. Mr. Boardman's formal appointment as Local Authority (LA) Governor will hopefully be confirmed in advance of the Summer Term 1 meeting.

3 Confidentiality:

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

4 Declarations:

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

5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 25 January, 2022 (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. Middleton via electronic or hard copy signature.

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

6 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:

The Chair had read through the January minutes and picked out the following items for further reflection:

Specifically:

1.1

Governor Challenge: The Clerk was asked whether Entrust had been updated with the latest membership changes on the Board.

The Clerk confirmed this to be the case. There will now be the need to ensure the information on Governor Hub aligns with the School website and Get Information about Schools (GIAS). It is assumed this matter is in hand.

1.2

Governor Challenge: There were some questions around Link Governor roles and whether a definitive list had been agreed.

It was confirmed this listing would be finalised at the Summer Term 1 meeting where the various roles and areas of responsibility will be discussed.

Resolved: That this matter be progressed at the Summer Term 1 meeting.

1.3

The Vice-Chair was thanked for all of her efforts in ensuring members are accessing relevant CPD and responding to various information-based requests. She confirmed that most of the records are up-to-date and will be following up any matters with individual Governors as appropriate.

Resolved: That the Vice-Chair take account of this action.

1.4

Governor Challenge: Governors challenged whether the traffic problems that are being seen at the start/end of the School day are calming down and what action the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is taking in relation to any repeat offenders.

Mrs. Hawkins explained the latest picture in this area with there still being examples of poor parental behaviour on a fairly regular basis. The School does have a link with the local PCSO and there was agreement that Mrs. Hawkins would check whether there is any further recourse for action in this area before reporting back to Governors.

Resolved: That Mrs. Hawkins take account of this action.

1.5

The Chair wanted to pass on his thanks to all members of the School community who have recently been involved in fundraising events to procure a defibrillator for the School community. The funding target had been reached with the question now remaining where this crucial item of equipment will be located. Mrs. Dingle was particularly singled out for the work and effort she has expended in this area.

1.6

It was confirmed that any other matter listed in the action matrix has either been suitably progressed or will come up naturally during the course of tonight's meeting.

7 Reports:

Chair Power to Act

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

- Supported the Headteacher's performance management alongside an external third part. The meeting had gone well with the Headteacher confirming she was happy with the level of challenge and outcome from the meeting. It was confirmed new performance objectives have been agreed with the Headteacher and she was thanked for all of the work she has carried out over the course of the last 12 months to progress various aspects of school improvement despite the operating context of a global pandemic

Although not specifically linked to the governance function 'Power to Act', the Vice-Chair confirmed she had taken the following actions since the last meeting:

- Posted various messages on the Governor Hub Noticeboard. On this point, Governors were asked to acknowledge a comment when it is posted, even if they decline to comment in words. This way, the Vice-Chair will know all Governors are accessing the most relevant and up-to-date information linked to their Governor role

Resolved: That Governors take note of this action.

- Sounded out whether Governors would be happy to set up a What's App Group. Following unanimous approval at tonight's meeting, the Vice-Chair will now progress with this action.

Resolved: That the What's App Group be implemented in advance of the Summer Term 1 meeting.

- Attended a CPD course around strategic leadership. This course was recorded and will be uploaded to the Hub following tonight's meeting.

Resolved: That the Vice-Chair progress this action.

- Reminded Governors that they have free access to Governor Space and the training modules that exist within this governance e-portal. Governors are strongly encouraged to access some of the modules at their leisure.

- Sought clarification from the Clerk as to what steps need to be taken to fill the one remaining Co-opted Governor vacancy on the Board. The Clerk confirmed that the vacancy should only be filled when the Board identifies an individual with a particular skill set who can complement the skills and attributes of the existing membership. This point was noted and will be acted on in due course.

- Engaged with the School Council and key compliance requirements in relation to the School website. Any important points of feedback in relation to these two areas have been shared with the Headteacher/Chair as appropriate.

Link Governor Reports

Any Link Governor reports that have been produced since the last LGB meeting have been made available on Governor Hub for attendees to consider at their leisure. It is hoped that once roles and responsibilities are finalised at the next meeting that more Link Governor visits can take place before the end of the Summer Term.

Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher was asked at this point in the meeting to provide a verbal update on different aspects of school life and how they have progressed since the last governance forum. The following summary can be reported:

1.1

Governors were informed that the SLT has been seeking out various forms of external validation in relation to its day-to-day practice. It is crucial that when it comes to Ofsted Readiness the SLT has taken steps to quality assure its approach in relation to the Ofsted Inspection Framework and also to pick up any new approaches that can enhance existing practice. Governors were given details of the network contacts that have been established to date, the visits that took place in the Autumn Term and how the School has benefited from the various engagement sessions that have taken place – for example, facilitating a renewed focus on maths modelling and looking into strategies that ensure knowledge is being secured in the long-term memory of pupils. Governors welcomed these developments and the proactive stance the SLT has taken in this area.

1.2

The Headteacher reported that a significant amount of territory has been covered in relation to both Safeguarding and the curriculum. Both areas are referenced separately in the course of these minutes.

1.3

Governors were informed of the events that surrounded the official opening of the School's new library. The event had appeared in the press and had been attended by a number of local dignitaries. All Governors were encouraged to pop into school and to see this motivating and innovative reading space for themselves. From a pupil voice perspective, the Headteacher reported that children are loving the new facility with a timetable having been put in place to ensure all classes can access this new reading environment on a regular basis.

1.4

Governors were informed what mitigation the SLT has put in place to manage a staff absence in Year 6. With this year group set to take their SATs at the end of the current academic year and the extended disruption of the pandemic, the focus has been on ensuring pupils remain as settled as possible with the recent staffing changes. Governors were reassured that this year group is very much on the SLTs radar as its time at Fulfen comes to an end with various interventions being deployed at various levels to ensure pupils have every opportunity to fulfil their academic potential.

1.5

Governor Challenge: Governors asked for an explanation of maths modelling and the extent to which it is a new concept.

The Headteacher confirmed that maths modelling is a strategy deployed by teaching staff to explain how to tackle a particular maths problem in a variety of different ways. It requires pupils to develop their own mathematical ideas and processes and to form a system of relationships that are reliable in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts. Whilst the concept is not new, the Headteacher wants staff to become experts in this field as a result of the CPD

input that has been provided. Over time, it is felt this approach will have a significant impact on a pupil's ability to problem solve and to apply logic and reasoning in this core curriculum area.

1.6

Governor Challenge: Governors also queried the use of journals and what purpose they served in a primary school setting.

The Headteacher confirmed that the journals are essentially the books pupils write in as they respond to various teaching and learning activities. The focus for the SLT is to ensure these journals are being used in a consistent manner across all classes/year groups to showcase the progress in learning that pupils are making.

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

8 Financial Update:

The next agenda item focused on a budget update that was delivered by Mrs. Hawkins – **see Confidential Appendix.**

9 School Financial Value Standard (SFVS):

The SFVS helps to provide schools with assurance that they are meeting the basic standards necessary to achieve a good level of financial health and resource management.

Mrs. Hawkins confirmed that this statutory self-assessment has been completed and submitted in advance of the deadline. There was no further specific action to take at tonight's meeting.

10 Safeguarding Update:

Mrs. Tranter confirmed that a Safeguarding Report to the Governing Board had been uploaded to Governor Hub for Governors to consider in advance of the meeting. The Report covered Safeguarding training that has been accessed; the current Safeguarding profile of the School (which is significant); the number of referrals/incidents that have been logged; attendance and exclusion related data; Safeguarding strengths and areas for development at the School.

Governors heard from Mrs. Tranter that the last 12 months have been an extremely challenging period from a Safeguarding perspective. The demands on Mrs. Tranter and her team have been extensive and whilst not needing to go into specifics, some of the cases have been extremely difficult to manage from an emotional and wellbeing perspective. Governors know that that the School is continually praised for its strong Safeguarding culture by a range of external stakeholders and successfully completed audits but the impact on resources and overall capacity is significant.

The Chair wanted to take a moment to personally thank Mrs. Tranter and her team for everything they do to keep children within the School community safe and secure despite the challenges that are faced from time to time when dealing with certain professionals/external agencies. Whilst Mr. Tranter admitted at times her actions can open her up to criticism and complaints, she has complete conviction in her need to pursue a line of enquiry if an individual child's safety and wellbeing are being put at risk. This approach will never change and Governors fully endorsed the actions that Mrs. Tranter takes in this critical area of school life.

Governor Challenge: Governors enquired as to whether Mrs. Tranter now has the extra resources that she needs to meet the Safeguarding demands of the School. There were

discussions and clarification provided as to how Governors can support the work of Mrs. Tranter and her team in their on-going approach to Safeguarding and, finally, a Governors asked that an outsourced debrief process is made available to Mrs. Tranter and others so they have the opportunity to mentally work through cases from a wellbeing perspective to avoid burnout and to ensure they can move on from particular incidents, no matter how challenging they may have been.

The Headteacher/Mrs. Tranter provided their perspectives on each of the points raised. On the last point, the Headteacher will liaise with Mr. Boardman about the possibility of outsourcing some external support for Mrs. Tranter and her team.

Resolved: That the Headteacher take this action forward.

For the minute record, it is worth noting that Mrs. Tranter has found the on-going support from Mrs. Mason particularly useful. Mrs. Mason is Head of School at Chase Terrace Academy and has been extremely supportive of the Safeguarding work taking place at Fulfen Primary School over an extended period of time. It is expected that this collaborative relationship will exist for a considerable period of time to come.

11 School Development Plan (SDP):

The Headteacher was invited to share with Governors the progress that has been made against the focused priorities in the SDP. She confirmed that progress has been significant in many areas and reported the following:

1.1

There has been a relentless focus on Reading as the School community has set out its stall early on to embed a reading culture and to promote a love of reading at every possible opportunity. As the Headteacher explained, if children are reading more they are accessing more words and expanding their vocabulary. This vocabulary enrichment can only have spin off benefits for writing and other areas of the curriculum as pupils develop a real thirst for knowledge and to express themselves more freely in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts. There has been a real focus on ensuring book content and classroom activities are intrinsically linked with children given ample opportunity to talk about and share their passion for the books they are reading. The Headteacher confirmed that if Governors or any other external stakeholder comes into school, they will see this love of reading at first hand.

1.2

The Headteacher confirmed that the new library will make a significant difference which is supplemented by mini libraries in each of the classrooms. Resources are plentiful and staff put as much of a focus on reading at home as well as at school. Staff continue to access CPD opportunities around reading interventions and the overall monitoring that takes place by the SLT has demonstrated this is a real area of strength for the School.

1.3

The Headteacher shared the benefits of precision teaching and how this has benefited Fulfen pupils to consolidate knowledge and/or overcome particular barriers to learning. As well as ensuring there is appropriate differentiation being built into lessons, the Headteacher confirmed there has been an additional focus on the bottom 20% of pupils to ensure their progress is being accelerated at every possible opportunity through the teaching and learning taking place in the classroom alongside other bespoke interventions.

1.4

The steps the English team has taken to choose an accredited Phonics scheme that will meet Fulfen pupils' needs were noted. There has also been good progress made with the catch-up premium funding with the impact of the funding now needing to be measured in terms of a

pupil's academic recovery. This impact data will be added to the SDP once it becomes available.

1.5

The CPD that staff have accessed around maths modelling skills was noted. There has been an increased focus on the effective deployment of maths resources and also the need to secure real consistency in the maths books pupils are working in. These are areas a Link Governor may want to scrutinise further during one of their scheduled engagement visits.

1.6

It was reported that the work on curriculum intent, implementation and impact has been extensive, not just in core curriculum subjects but in wider curriculum subjects such as the Humanities and Art. The SLT is firmly committed to the expressive arts and more creative subjects and providing opportunities for pupils to showcase their creative flair.

1.7

A Parent Governor felt that all of the positive soundings that are being made by the SLT are being seen at home. It was felt that many of the areas of improvement are being seen, both in the conversations parents are having with their children but also are being translated into some of the homework activities that are coming through. The Headteacher thanked the Governor in question for these kind words.

1.8

Governor Challenge: Governors enquired as to where the School feels it would end up if Ofsted came in tomorrow, based on the SDP update provided.

The Headteacher confirmed that Ofsted should see that Fulfen is a Good school with some Outstanding features. As the Headteacher explained, the school improvement that takes place is not for the benefit of Ofsted, rather it is to ensure the pupils at Fulfen directly benefit. Of course, if there is then subsequent positive external validation, of the innovations that are put in place, then the whole School community naturally benefits as a result.

1.9

Governors were reminded that they should be using the SDP as a reference point for their Link Governor engagement visits.

Resolved: That Governors take note of this point.

12 Policies:

There were two documents that had been circulated in advance of tonight's meeting:

- Fulfen Primary School Code of Conduct 2021-22
- Dealing with Abusive and Vexatious Complaints Policy.

Resolved: That both documents be ratified with immediate effect.

13 Health and Safety:

It was not the intention of Mrs. Hawkins to take Governors through the Health and Safety Report at tonight's meeting. The Report had been uploaded to Governor Hub in advance of tonight's governance forum. The Report demonstrates both the level of due diligence that is applied to this area of school life by the SLT but also indicates how the SLT is securing compliance in key statutory health and safety areas. Governors will note that the Report does include the mitigation that the SLT has looked to put in place following the last Health and

Safety Audit – i.e. accessing various forms of training and ensuring all required CPD is up to date. Governors noted the supplied information.

14 School Reorganisation:

Governors were informed as to the latest position with regard to the School reorganisation. Following a period of consultation, staff have made a number of decisions about their future employment status and the number of hours that needed to be cut as detailed in the business case have now been secured. There have been no appeals to date.

Governor Challenge: Governors enquired as to staff morale at the present time given the events of the last few months.

Staff were commended by the SLT for the way they approached this challenging period and the levels of communication between staff and the SLT have remained strong throughout. Now the new structure has been shared and staff have come to terms with the changes that are required, it is hoped the staff body can move forward on a positive footing for the remainder of the current academic year and beyond. Those Governors who were involved in this process were thanked for their time and dedication to the task in hand.

15 Any Other Business:

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

1.1

The Headteacher confirmed that the School is looking to recruit and appoint an Assistant Headteacher, a post that is very much needed at the present time. The interviews are planned for 10.05.22 with the Chair confirming he would support the SLT with this recruitment and selection process.

Governor Challenge: Other than clarifying the difference in role between a Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher, Governors confirmed they were available to support the interview process if needed.

1.2

It was confirmed the Summer Term 1 meeting will take place in school. It was agreed that meetings from this point forward will start at a new time of 5.30 p.m.

1.3

The Vice-Chair confirmed she will be accessing some Ofsted Readiness training. Once a recording of the training has been taken it will be uploaded to Governor Hub for Governors to access at their leisure.

Resolved: That the Vice-Chair take account of this action.

1.4

Governor Challenge: A Governor both complained about issues she had faced from cars tailgating her onto the School premises and queried whether there was any mileage in resourcing a 'walking bus' at the start and end of the School day.

It was confirmed that as well as on-going monitoring of the tailgating situation, the School is looking for volunteers to support a walking bus initiative. The Governor in question was asked to contact the School Office to progress this matter.

Resolved: That the Governor in question take account of this action.

16 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.

17 Dates and Times of Future Meetings:

The meeting schedule has already been confirmed for 2021-22 with the following dates agreed:

Term	Date and Time
Summer 1	24.05.22 at 5.30 p.m.
Summer 2	12.07.22 at 5.30 p.m.

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 a virtual setting on
Tuesday 29 March, 2022 at 6.15 p.m.**

Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Action Update
5	HT	Publish January minutes.	
5	Chair	Sign ratified minutes.	
6	Chair	Revisit Link Governor roles at Summer Term 1.	
6	Vice-Chair	Follow up any outstanding matters with individual Governors as needed.	
6	Mrs. Hawkins	Check with PCSO whether any further action can be taken over car parking issues.	
7	Governors	Respond to messages on Governor Hub Noticeboard.	
7	Vice-Chair	Implement What's App Group.	
7	Vice-Chair	Upload CPD recording to Governor Hub.	
10	HT	Liaise with Mr. Boardman about extra support for Mrs. Tranter and her team.	
11	Governors	Use SDP when undertaking Link Governor visits.	
15	Vice-Chair	Upload CPD recording once available.	
15	Governor	Contact School Office about walking bus initiative.	

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 24 May, 2022 at 5.30 p.m.

Absent Governors to be informed.