**Fulfen Primary School**

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

**on Tuesday 12 December, 2023 at 5.30 p.m.**

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

Mr. Field, Mr. Ritchie, Mrs. Poxon, Mrs. Kilgallen, Mrs. Copper,

Mrs. Tranter, Mrs. Witcomb, Mrs. Wright

Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Governors)

Mrs. Hawkins (School Business Manager)

**1 Welcome and Introductions:**

Governors were welcomed to tonight’s meeting by the Chair. The usual governance arrangements played out within this governance forum with Governor Hub used to circulate documentation in advance of the meeting; the usual opportunities being afforded Governors to ask questions/seek points of clarification in relation to the circulated material and, finally, the use of a clear and purposeful agenda to ensure all relevant school-based issues and governance matters are covered.

The meeting was a little shorter than usual but with good reason. The School had recently gone through an Ofsted inspection and once the main business connected with the meeting had been concluded, there was an opportunity for Governors to reflect on the Ofsted inspection and the successful outcome that has been received.

The meeting was quorate.

**2 Apologies:**

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

*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:**

**Membership**

There were no membership updates to report at tonight’s meeting other than to confirm there is a still a requirement to fill the one remaining Co-opted Governor vacancy.

It was agreed that the Board will not rush to fill this vacancy. Whoever is appointed must have the skills and knowledge that compliment those of the existing membership. The successful individual must also be able to work collaboratively with others as part of a collective approach. Governors were remined that if they wish to nominate an individual for the post, they can approach the Chair/Vice-Chair as appropriate. The Vice-Chair will also reflect on the Skills Matrix to establish where any gaps in knowledge/skills currently exist on the Board.

**Resolved:** That Governors/the Vice-Chair act on this directive

**Confidentiality**

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

This included the usual reminder around social media and the need for Governors to be mindful of their position on the Board when engaging in any social media related activity.

The Chair also added that should an individual on the Board be approached for a refence, they should not disclose the fact that they are a school Governor. This advice was given as a result of some local intelligence and the latest published guidance on this matter.

Finally, Governors were advised that if they are approached by a parent who has a specific enquiry/wishes to make a complaint, the parent should be signposted to the School in the first instance.

Governors welcomed this clarification.

**Declarations**

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

**4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 10 October, 2023 (including Confidential Appendix) be approved as an accurate and true record.

**Resolved:** That the Minutes, Agenda and all reports and other papers considered at the meeting be made available for inspection.

A copy of the Minutes will be retained for audit purposes and signed by Mr. Boardman via electronic or hard copy signature.

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

**5 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:**

The action matrix from the October minutes was reviewed. The following progress update can be reported:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Minute** | **Action** |
| 5 | It is assumed all Governor declarations have been made on Governor Hub. |
| 5 | The Governance Matrix continues to be updated between meetings by the Vice-Chair. |
| 6 | The July minutes have been made available as a public record. |
| 6 | The ratified July minutes have been signed. |
| 14 | Governors have had the opportunity to take in and consider the SDP and SEF. These documents were referred to extensively during the recent Ofsted inspection. |

**6 Reports:**

**Chair and Vice-Chair’s Actions**

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

Authorised the pay progression recommendations for teaching staff so any financial uplifts could be include in the December pay run. A copy of these pay progression recommendations had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

**Resolved:** That this decision be formally ratified at tonight’s meeting.

The Vice-Chair confirmed she had taken no action since the last meeting.

**Link Governor Reports**

Link Governor engagement is implemented in a robust manner at Fulfen Primary School with three individual reports circulated in advance of the meeting – Staff Wellbeing; Pupil Wellbeing and Website Compliance. The Vice-Chair had carried out all three visits on this occasion with Governors asked to take in the contents of the Reports at their leisure.

In summary:

**Staff Wellbeing** – The Vice-Chair discussed the mitigation that is being put in place to train staff as Mental Health First Aiders due to existing staff with this CPD leaving the School. In terms of ongoing staff wellbeing, a staff survey is imminent which should give a clearer picture in this area. Governors were reassured that the surveys will be given the necessary attention to ensure any improvements to working practices can be implemented or trialled in the coming months. It goes without saying that Fulfen is a very supportive school with access to support and an open-door policy for staff to approach the Headteacher or other members of the SLT if they need to discuss an urgent issue or just need some time out.

The Vice-Chair also found out that the staff room is sectioned into different areas for different uses which has been well received and there are also different staff-based initiatives that go on throughout the year – at the moment the focus is on the Menopause. Overall, the Vice-Chair commended Mrs. Fierro-Hammond for her passion in wanting to make a huge difference around mental health improvements for both staff and pupils.

Mrs. Ballett looks forward to hearing more about the various successes that will naturally follow in this area over the course of the next 12 months.

**Pupil Wellbeing** – The most significant update in this area is the fact the SLT has purchased a new package called ‘One Goal.’ The package will be branded as ‘Feel Good Friday’ and will run over six separate Fridays – one each term. Surveys will be completed by the pupils at the start and end of the programme with the intention being that each individual pupil will be a champion for their own mental health. Mrs. Ballett looks forward to hearing about the roll out of this scheme and what kind of impact it has on the pupil cohort. Already, some staff are thinking that they would be capable of delivering the One Goal pre-recorded videos next year as an example of some early reflection that has taken place.

In terms of other updates, Governors were reassured that pupils will know who the Mental Health First Aiders are once they are trained; there has been a focus on the SDP to ensure wellbeing runs as a golden thread through this document and, finally, there is continued work with the School Council to promote Lead Ambassadors for wellbeing throughout the School. The Vice-Chair added that currently the Nurture Group has a waiting list as it is both very successful and required. It is hoped that as the One Goal initiative helps the children to understand themselves better that some of them will no longer require the Nurture Group and this will ease the burden on staff, thus reducing or removing the waiting list.

Overall, the Vice-Chair as with staff wellbeing, is confident that a robust framework is in place to support staff as they go about their daily practices at Fulfen Primary.

**Website Compliance** – The Vice-Chair commended Mrs. Malcolm for the due diligence and ongoing scrutiny that is applied to the School website. Governors were reassured that all statutory measures are being met in terms of published information with Mrs. Malcolm agreeing with the Vice-Chair that as and when the site is updated with any changes, these changes will be shared.

Other updates included the work that is going on to keep the Staff/Governor information up to date; the improvements that continue to be made to the SEND and British Values pages; the focus on the Fulfen Club page to market this provision; the new enrichment area of the website which champions the clubs, sports and trips that the SLT puts in place; the updated staff information and videos for the September intake (well received); the focus on the EYFS to ensure parents can see the excellent work that is going on in this setting and, finally, establishing a link between the website and social media channels.

Future initiatives are also planned with the Vice-Chair really pleased with the progress that is being made in this area of school life.

**Resolved:** That Mrs. Ballett be thanked for her Link Governor update. It is hoped other Governor will arrange their own engagement sessions with staff representatives in the Spring and Summer Terms.

**Headteacher’s Report**

The Headteacher’s Report had been shared in advance of the meeting. The Report was taken as read with the Headteacher pulling out one or two comments from her supplied narrative.

**1.1**

The Report began with Governors receiving a summary of Ofsted feedback from the inspection which had taken place in school on 21.11.23 and 22.11.23. The bullet point feedback reflected the positive soundings that were relayed to the School throughout the two day inspection with some amazing statements being shared – for example high ambition for SEND and Disadvantaged; Teachers have high expectations; Rocket Phonics is being followed with fidelity; Retrieval practice is demonstrated across school; Clearly sequenced curriculum with a clear rationale; Ambition for all; Strong pedagogy across the School; Personal development is not a text book approach at Fulfen; There is EXCEPTIONALITY to the behaviours and attitudes within school; There is clear leadership at all levels and, finally, Pupils get an EXCEPTIONAL start to their education.

Governors welcomed this feedback and although this matter was revisited later in the meeting, Governors commended leaders and the whole school community for the quality of feedback that has been received.

**1.2**

The usual Key Performance Indicator (KPI) data was included in the Report.

**Strategic Challenge:** Governors focused in on the attendance data and asked whether the SLT was happy with the current attendance statistics; whether issues remain with families taking holidays in term time; whether the tweaks that were made to the Attendance Policy are delivery any kind of impact and, finally, whether the current Persistent Absenteeism rate (10%) is currently a cause of concern for the SLT.

Whilst Mrs. Tranter confirmed that the statistics at this time of year can be skewed (the full 12 months has yet to run) the reality is that school leaders will never get complacent in this area. It was noted that the Ofsted Inspector was pleased by the proactive stance the School is looking to take around attendance with the various initiative deployed. Governors were reminded that even having an overall attendance level of 93% (above the persistent absenteeism threshold) still means a pupil has missed almost three weeks of learning which constitutes around 67 hours of educational input.

Governors welcomed the due diligence in this area of school life and confirmed they will continue to do what they can to champion the positive benefits of a healthy attendance record.

**1.3**

Given the focus on Ofsted, there were no further matters requiring discussion by Governors at tonight’s meeting.

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

**Pupil Premium Update**

Mrs. Tranter took the opportunity to talk to Governors about the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2023-24 that needs to be published online by 31.12.23. The School is coming to the end of a three-year plan of targeted spend and impact with 2023-24 being the final year.

Governors were informed that whilst the School has slightly more funding allocated in 2023-24 to the previous year, the Pupil Premium cohort only makes up 13% of the entire school cohort. In addition, the Statement includes the School’s use of the Recovery Premium funding (a small amount of funding) that is aimed at supporting those pupils whose education has been impacted by Covid-19.

Mrs. Tranter talked Governors through the Statement which included a statement of intent; the challenges to achievement that have been identified in disadvantaged pupils; the outcomes that the SLT is aiming for by the end of the current strategy plan; the spend of £35 180 on teaching initiatives and what this entails; the spend of £27 280 on targeted academic support and what this entails; the spend of £16 000 on wider strategies and what this entails; a review of outcomes from 2022-23 for the Pupil Premium cohort; an audit of the access pupils have had to wider opportunities at Fulfen and a list of clubs that were available in 2022-23 – many of which have been attended by disadvantaged pupils.

The key point as far as Mrs. Tranter was concerned is that any spend must deliver real impact and break down the barriers to achievement. The SLT also uses a research-based approach to determine what initiatives should be used and there is always a willingness to change direction should a particular initiative prove not to be successful.

There was some good discussion as Mrs. Tranter talked Governors through some of the key highlights in the Strategy Statement for 2023-24.

Topics included whether interventions as part of the Strategy are delivered in class/outside of class to the vulnerable cohort; the focus on scaffolded learning as part of an adapted learning approach and how this plays out in practice; the attention that is given to ensure all pupils can read by the end of Y1 and what additional interventions are deployed should this not be the case and the enrichment offer and how it can be specifically targeted at the Pupil Premium cohort.

Other lines of enquiry included the use of the Boxall profile which comes as part of the positive play initiative and how this profiling can inform next steps; the training that staff will receive in the New Year around ‘Walkthrus’ which will develop staff expertise in supporting all pupils’ learning in lessons and the wider curriculum; the focus on the pastoral development of pupils (in particular social, emotional and wellbeing needs) to get them in an appropriate mindset for learning; how this year’s Pupil Premium cohort compares to last year in terms of the level of need and any other specific cohort characteristics ; the financial support that is given pupils to ease pressure around equipment, uniform and trips and the ongoing focus on attendance and creating a school environment where all pupils are motivated to embrace it at every possible opportunity,

Governors thanked Mrs. Tranter for her comprehensive update. It is pleasing to see the scope and range of initiatives that are deployed around the Pupil Premium cohort as well as the steps that the SLT takes to ensure the overall strategy is coherent and impactful.

**Safeguarding Update**

The SLT was informed by Ofsted that it has an effective Safeguarding culture in place. Governors were not surprised by this feedback given the due diligence that is exercised by Mrs. Tranter and her team in this critical area of school life.

Focusing specifically on the Report, Mrs. Tranter confirmed there will be a focus on CPOMS to improve how the categorisation of incident within this online monitoring tool works with whole staff training to be delivered on 26.02.24.

Governors were informed that the Ofsted inspection had seen the necessary scrutiny of the Single Central Record (SCR); the Training Register; Safeguarding records and Staff personnel files with school leaders commended for the additional external review on Safeguarding procedures and practice that had been commissioned prior to the November inspection.

Governors also asked about the alleged racist incident as reported in the Report and what steps the SLT had taken to resolve this situation with the pupils involved.

Discussion then moved to a general overview of bullying incidents.

**Strategic Challenge:** Governors asked what denotes bulling in a school context, particularly given the definition can often be misinterpreted by parents.

Mrs. Tranter was clear in her mind that bullying very much links to a level of persistency and habitual action where the victim can be on the receiving end of name calling, physical attack; rumour spreading or threatening/intimidating behaviour. Mrs. Tranter reassured Governors that Safeguarding meetings are held every week where staff with accountabilities in this area get around a table and discuss the data that has been logged in CPOMS. This data analysis could include a reflection on chronology where a series of events has been recorded about an individual pupil. Mrs. Tranter acknowledged that the categories of data could be changed, based on the ensuring discussions that take place. This process of due diligence ensures the data in the system is not being skewed when categorised which is crucial from an auditing/reporting perspective.

Finally, there was a discussion of the attendance related metric as Governors asked for some clarification surrounding pupils who are listed as severely absent from school. Mrs. Tranter explained what challenges the School continues to face with Ofsted again commending the SLT for not skirting their responsibility in this area.

Governors thanked Mrs. Tranter for her Safeguarding update.

**7 Finance Update:**

Governors received the latest financial update – ***see Confidential Appendix.***

**8 Car Parking:**

The only premises/health and safety update related to the current situation with the car park. School leaders were asked whether the various mitigations are delivering the required impact in terms of traffic calming measures in and around the vicinity of the School. Governors were reassured that at the moment the situation remains manageable based on the initiatives that have been implemented. School leaders will continue to remain vigilant and confirmed they will bring the car parking issue back to the Board if the situation deteriorates at any point to unacceptable levels. Governors were pleased to see there has been progress with parents just needing to be aware of their responsibilities when it comes to behaving in a sensible and safe way around the School premises.

As an aside a premises/health and safety update was also given as part of Mrs. Hawkins’ finance update. Governors noted this information.

**9 Ofsted Outcome:**

This was the point in the meeting when discussion turned to the recent Ofsted inspection outcome – ***see Confidential Appendix***.

**10 Any Other Business:**

There was only one item of additional business. The Vice-Chair shared some CPD resources she had picked up from a training input at Chase Terrace Academy around online safety. She added that the SLT might want to consider approaching the training provider to see if they would be interested in delivering a training session to parents/Governors next year. The Headteacher thanked the Vice-Chair for this information and will look into the matter.

**11 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:

* Minute 6 and Minute 9.

There were no further items/materials identified for exclusion.

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

The schedule for 2023-24 has also been finalised and can be confirmed as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Date and Time** |
| Spring 1 | 23.01.24 (5.30 p.m. start) |
| Spring 2 | 12.03.24 (5.30 p.m. start) |
| Summer 1 | 21.05.24 (5.30 p.m. start) |
| Summer 2 | 02.07.24 (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 12 December, 2023 at 5.30 p.m.**

**Action Matrix**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Minute | Owner | Action Required | Action Update |
| 3 | Governors/Vice-Chair | Approach Chair/HT if they would like to nominate anybody for Co-opted Governor vacancy on Board. Vice-Chair to review Skills Audit. |  |
| 4 | HT | Make October minutes available as a public record. |  |
| 4 | Chair | Sign ratified October minutes. |  |

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 23 January, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.**

Absent Governors to be informed.