

Fulfen Primary School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in the School on Tuesday 3 December, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Mr. Boardman (Chair), Mrs. Davies (Headteacher), Mrs. Ballett,
Mr. Field, Mrs. Poxon, Mrs. Dingle, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Copper,
Mr. Ritchie, Mrs. Kilgallen

Mrs. Hawkins (School Business Manager)
Miss. Sturch (Staff)
Mr. Spencer (Guest)

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 second Board meeting of the academic year by the Chair. A warm welcome was extended to Mr. Spencer, the Vice-Chair at St. Luke's C of E (C) Primary School Cannock who was attending today's meeting to witness another governance forum at first hand and to pick up any areas of best practice. The Clerk could unfortunately not be present at today's meeting due to car troubles but he did generate a set of minutes from the shared meeting recording.

Governance practices are seamless at Fulfen Primary School with information shared on GovernorHub in advance of the meeting along with a purposeful agenda. Governors as one would expect as an Outstanding school asked questions and sought points of clarification in relation to various agenda items throughout the meeting. It was clear that Governors are highly engaged in their roles and are clearly committed to their strategic governance mandate.

The meeting was quorate.

2 Apologies:

Resolved: That apologies for absence be received and accepted from Mrs. Witcomb, Mrs. Roughley and Mr. Davies.

3 Confidentiality:

The usual reminders were issued around confidentiality. Governors were informed that all discussions that take place at this meeting should remain confidential to the meeting. Reminders about the use of social media were also shared.

4 Governing Board Matters:

Membership

The situation with regard to Board membership has not changed since the last meeting with the Board currently carrying one Co-opted vacancy. The Board will only move to fill this vacancy when a skill set can be identified that will complement the skills and attributes of the existing membership. At present a recently completed skills set indicates the right blend of Governors is currently in place, albeit Governors can step forward and nominate individuals as they see appropriate.

The next term of office that is set to expire is Mrs. Ballett on 04.07.25 This situation will need to be revisited at the start of the Summer Term.

Resolved: That this item be added to an appropriate agenda.

Register of Interests

Aside from Mrs. Hawkins, the Vice-Chair confirmed the Compliance Tab on GovernorHub has been completed for all Governors.

Resolved: That Mrs. Hawkins complete this audit following today's meeting.

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

Code of Conduct

The three absent Governors from the last Board meeting were asked to add their signatures to the hard copy Code of Conduct. This document will be kept in school for audit purposes.

Governor Matrix

Governors were informed that the Governor matrix has been updated to include the changes to Link Governor designation. Although Mrs. Copper was not present at the last meeting, she confirmed she was happy for Mr. Field to take on the Link Governor role for SEND and the vulnerable cohort groups for the next 12 months.

There were no other changes to report with the updated document circulated in advance of today's meeting. The information will also be published online.

5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 1 October 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.

6 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:

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

Minute	Action	RAG
5	The capturing of signatures in relation to the Code of Conduct was completed at today's meeting.	GREEN
5	The Clerk can confirm that the term of office for any newly appointed Governor is four years.	GREEN
5	Declarations have already been referenced in today's minutes.	GREEN
5	The Link Governor change in responsibility has already been referenced in these minutes.	GREEN
5	It is assumed the Link Governor actions as listed in the last set of minutes have been progressed.	GREEN
6	The July minutes have been made available as a public record.	GREEN
6	The ratified July minutes were signed by the Chair.	GREEN
9	Although the staff representative could not be present at today's meeting, a verbal overview on her part was provided.	GREEN
9	SEND-related data will be made available to the Link Governor when they carry out their next engagement visit in school.	GREEN
10	The Pay Committee (including the associated pay progression recommendations from the Headteacher) will be dealt with outside of today's governance forum.	AMBER
14	Mr. Spencer was in attendance at today's meeting.	GREEN
14	The 'founding words' for the Board will be revisited at a future meeting.	AMBER

Resolved: That the AMBER actions be progressed in advance of the next Board meeting.

7 Reports:

Chair and Vice-Chair's Actions

The Chair and Vice-Chair confirmed they had taken no specific actions on behalf of the Board since the last meeting.

Link Governor Reports

The Vice-Chair enquired as to where all Governors are up to with their Link Governor visits. Aside from the pupil and staff wellbeing and health and safety updates that were shared at today's meeting, Governors linked to Finance; SEND; Safeguarding and the School Council confirmed they have either visits scheduled in the coming weeks/start of the Spring Term or contact with staff representatives was still being pursued.

Mrs. Ballett took Governors through the key highlights from her pupil and staff wellbeing report - (visit on 18.10.24). The overarching purpose of her visit was to understand how wellbeing initiatives support staff and pupils in their daily practices.

Highlights from the visit included hearing that a parents survey has been planned for the Spring Term; that pupils are picking up new skills and experiences through initiatives such as the Y6 Junior Cadet program, for example; that yoga (Mindful Movement) and netball have been introduced into the curriculum offer; that staff are continuing to be supported with carrying out some of their PPA at home and that real time marking strategies are being looked at when giving feedback to pupils on any work undertaken. There were also discussions around fundraising initiatives, the plans to continue the trim trail from the current tyres and the concept of a mental health walkway in school. On this point, the Headteacher confirmed that the current trim trail may need to be fenced off as there have been some incidents involving children not being supervised on this equipment at the start/end of the School day.

Mrs. Ballett confirmed she had been most impressed by her engagement session and will visit the School again later in the year to understand more as to how these key themes have been progressed/embedded.

Before moving on, a Governor outlined a possible network contact in the community who could potentially support some mental health/wellbeing/mindfulness training in school. The Headteacher confirmed she would follow up on this contact post meeting.

Resolved: That the Headteacher take account of this action.

Mr. Ritchie confirmed that he had visited the School on two occasions – firstly on 30.09.24 to carry out a desktop review and secondly on 11.10.24 to undertake a site walk to cover all matters health and safety. These two visits were also a precursor to a Teams meeting with Staffordshire County Council (SCC) on 16.10.24. This meeting saw the School receiving an update on various aspects including regulatory aspects; policy updates; reporting changes and team changes.

Overall, Mr. Ritchie was pleased to report that there was nothing of significant concern to share with Governors. He added that he has undertaken various CPD courses in recent weeks which will further support him in his Link Governor role. This training input will not stop with both Mr. Ritchie and the Headteacher down to attend an Asbestos Management course in December/February to take account of recent changes in this area.

Governor Challenge: Governors explored the asbestos situation in Fulfen a bit more in terms of where it is currently located. Governors asked about what asbestos management actually entails and there were questions around the Local Authority's (LA's) accountabilities in this area. Governors attention was also drawn to the Asbestos Management Plan that has been posted on GovernorHub in advance of today's meeting.

Mr. Ritchie responded to both of these issues in turn.

8 Safeguarding:

Safeguarding is a critical component of daily life at Fulfen Primary School. The Deputy Headteacher shared a verbal overview with Governors based on the Safeguarding Report that had been shared in advance of the meeting.

Miss. Sturch confirmed that a significant focus this term has been making sure staff remain confident with Safeguarding practice and protocol when they cross Key Stages/change year groups. This includes a focus on the voice of the child to ensure the necessary levels of escalation are in place (i.e. not everything is being flagged up to the DSL). Governors were informed that the Link Governor visits will continue to take place with regularity in this area with a review of the Single Central Record (SCR) scheduled for the Spring Term. The current Safeguarding profile of the School was also shared along with school attendance data which

can quickly descend into a Safeguarding concern if pupils are off school for extended periods of time.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked for a little more information as to how the positive play sessions cater for pupils; the benefits that the EWO has brought to managing attendance-related issues; the hotspots for when parents/carers seem to be taking pupils out of school for holidays (recorded as unauthorised absence); the impact of the Heroes initiative that has recently been launched by the SLT and, finally, how parents/carers react to leaders when potential concerns around Safeguarding (even low level concerns) are raised with them. Finally, Governors asked what the current trends in the CPOMS system seem to be indicating around Safeguarding and the possible areas of concern.

The Deputy Headteacher responded to each of these points in turn. She confirmed that when it comes to engagement with parents/carers, families are generally receptive to the SLT reaching out to them. Governors were reassured that leaders are appropriately sensitive in these situations but ultimately the needs of the child will always come first. The Deputy Headteacher added that often this interaction with parents/carers is a requirement to unlock further support with professionals and external agencies.

Governor Challenge: Governors went on to ask whether the current Safeguarding profile at Fulfen is increasing in severity or in a state of decline. There were questions around 'lates' and what quick wins leaders are looking to put in place to tackle any ongoing issues in this area. Governors asked about the rewards scheme and whether there is scope for further tweaks/refinements in this area including whether leaders look to the practices used in other schools to inform their own practice at Fulfen. Governors asked whether it is worth issuing reminders to parents/carers around attendance, particularly given the prospect of some children missing the start of the Spring Term. Finally, Governors asked about Early Help and where it fits within the overall Safeguarding approach at Fulfen and whether those families eligible for Pupil Premium have filled in the relevant documentation to ensure these monies can be claimed.

Governors were thanked for all of these lines of enquiry with the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher providing their perspectives on all matters raised.

9 Headteacher's Report:

The Headteacher's Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was shared in a format which is very much welcomed by Governors. The following items were identified from the Report for further discussion:

9.1

The first part of the Report focused on the impact Subject Leads in the English, Maths and PSHE/Product Development delivered across the Summer Term. Whilst there has been evidence of innovative practice; consistency of application of key themes; a focus on curriculum intent; the harnessing of technology in the classroom areas for development have also been identified which have been carried across into the start of the new academic year. The three impact statements within the Report are worthy of particular mention:

The English Leads have made significant progress, particularly in the lower key stages. Writing outcomes have improved, but further attention is needed in upper key stages, particularly in curriculum coverage and grammar consistency in Year 4.

The Summer term of 2024 saw strong progress in embedding mastery-based mathematics teaching. Key achievements include improved MTC results, enhanced support for SEND pupils, and increased engagement with concrete resources. Moving forward, the focus will be on refining teaching strategies, ensuring consistency in mastery teaching, and continuing to support SEND and disadvantaged pupils.

The Summer Term 2024 has seen significant progress in promoting mental health, British Values, and Personal Development. Moving forward, the focus will be on ensuring consistency across the school in these areas, refining PD initiatives, and strengthening community links to support the holistic growth of all pupils.

It is important Link Governors carry this impact forward into their Link Governor visits as they triangulate what they hear in meetings, what they read in documentation and what they see at a local level.

9.2.1

Another key section of the Headteacher's Report focused on data. The KS2 statutory results make for extremely positive reading:

Area	Results	Benchmark – Staffordshire Average
Combined	82.5% (Meeting expectations)	61.1%
Combined	7.9% (Greater depth)	6.5%
Reading	88.9% (Meeting expectations)	75.0%
Reading	31.7% (Greater depth)	28.2%
Writing	93.7% (Meeting expectations)	73.5%
Writing	15.9% (Greater depth)	11.4%
Maths	92.1% (Meeting expectations)	73.7%
Maths	28.6% (Greater depth)	22.3%

The whole School community should be proud of what has been achieved. These results are not just above the Staffordshire benchmark – they in places blow the comparative benchmark out of the water and vindicate all of the initiatives and curriculum approach that have been applied and sustained over an extended period. Governors asked that a personal thanks be passed on from Governors to the staff collective in celebration of these outcomes.

Resolved: That the Headteacher action this request post meeting.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked how these tremendous results influence the approach being taken this year to performance data.

The Headteacher confirmed that specific cohort characteristics mean the SLT can never get complacent in this area. The Headteacher confirmed the team always wants more but acknowledged it is only right to pause and reflect on what has been a strong year for Fulfen in so many different ways.

Governor Challenge: As an aside, a Governor noted the outcome in Reading (greater depth standard) and asked whether this had anything to do with the School not continuing with the Accelerated Reader program.

The Headteacher confirmed that there is a causal link. Proven through research, the aim of the Accelerated Reader program is to improve students' reading skills through reading practice and by providing frequent feedback on students progress teachers. The greater depth standard in Reading standard focuses much more on the literacy deep dive with a focus on drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motivations from their actions, justifying inferences with evidence. This greater depth standard is explored through

exposure to a range of texts with the depth elements to be investigated/discussed by teacher/pupil. Governors thanked the Headteacher for this clarification.

9.2.2

EYFS data was then considered.

Governor Challenge: Governors noted the GLD outcome is below the Staffordshire average and asked what leaders are doing to address the current shortfall.

The Headteacher confirmed that the GLD outcome has to be reviewed against the level of need within this cohort with a high level of vulnerability present. That said, the Headteacher reassured Governors on two points – firstly, that the EYFS Lead has a laser like approach to where the incremental improvements need to come within the setting and secondly that there will be a focus moving forward on improving Understanding the World and Prime Learning goals to increase the overall GLD percentage. This is a line of enquiry that the Link Governor might want to follow up in future school visits.

9.2.3

The Y1 Phonics data was shared with it being reported that the School outperformed the National benchmark (92% v 82%).

9.2.4

The Y4 Multiplication Tables Check data was shared. Again this is a strong area with Fulfen's performance steadily increasing over the past three years; national averages being exceeded and, finally, the rise in full marks and average score indicating effective teaching and increased fluency in multiplication facts.

Governor Challenge: Governors thanked the Headteacher for the strategic way in which the data set was presented. The narrative was particularly welcomed which gave additional substance to the raw data being shared.

9.3

The key trends in last year's attendance data were shared. The School fares well against all indicators with it being noted that strong attendance, particularly amongst SEND and FSM-eligible pupils highlights the effect of the School's support mechanisms. Governors had no further questions in relation to this section of the Report.

9.4

Various key performance indicators (KPIs) were shared relevant to the reporting of any incidents (i.e. bullying, racist); pupil mobility; the NOR and SEND and vulnerable groups.

Other than noting the financial impact of the 48 pupils currently in Y4, Governors had no further concerns in relation to these KPIs.

9.5

Whilst staffing is not the operational remit of Governors to determine, the Headteacher did share the latest updates surrounding resignations; maternity; other leavers; new appointments and vacancies.

Governor Challenge: Other than enquiring as to whether any trends lie behind the resignations of lunchtime staff, Governors were happy that where needed the SLT will put in place the appropriate mitigation to ensure the capacity of the staffing resource is not compromised.

9.6

Health and safety has already been referenced in this meeting. There was nothing to add beyond the update in the Report.

9.7

Governors noted the site and premises update as detailed in the Report.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked whether there have been any further developments around the EY toilet saga – particularly around timeframes and the potential for ongoing disruption. Governors also asked whether the relocation of Fulfen Club creates any additional capacity in this area and the extent to which the School will need to finance the roof, the replacement of the vehicle barrier and the perimeter fencing.

The Headteacher gave her perspective on each of these matters.

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

10 PSHE and Healthier Lives:

Although Mrs. Steele was not present at today's meeting she did ask for some key themes to be shared with Governors. These themes included:

An overview of the new rules and regulations around attendance penalty notices; the nature of the fines and the escalation process that could ultimately result in parents/carers receiving a criminal record/custodial sentence. If Governors want to get up to speed with more of the specifics around these recent changes and general tightening of procedures they can refer to the updated Attendance Policy that was tabled for formal ratification at today's meeting.

The success of the 'walk/scoot to school initiative.' Parents/carers were invited to change/modify their current behaviours through this initiative with nearly 200 children taking part and prizes awarded at the end of what was a successful week. Other travel-based initiatives have followed including active participation in the 'Be Bright Be Seen' campaign (a national campaign aimed at keeping everyone as bright and as visible as possible on their school journey) and Road Safety Week (17.11.24 to 23.11.24) which is an initiative of Brake (the road safety charity). The SLT will continue with these initiatives with parents/carers again reminded of their responsibilities when it comes to the entrance to the primary school.

The outstanding practice that has been seen through the Gardening Club initiative. Governors were given information on pupil participation; the learning opportunities that have been accessed; the chickens which have become household favourites; the offshoot events coming from the Club including the School Garden Party; the delicious food that has been created from produce grown in the garden and the possible acquisition of a goat in future – watch this space!

Governors loved to hear about these enrichment activities and were so pleased to see Fulfen pupils are getting enrichment opportunities of this nature.

11 Finance Update:

The usual financial update was provided by Mrs. Hawkins – *see Confidential Appendix.*

12 Policies:

The following policies were shared with Governors for formal ratification:

- Pay and supporting documentation
- Attendance
- Complaints
- Data Protection
- Disciplinary
- Legionella Health and Safety
- Sickness Absence.

All changes had been highlighted within the policy documentation.

Resolved: That Governors ratify these policies with immediate effect.

13 Headteacher's Performance Management:

The Chair confirmed that the Headteacher's performance management review has been completed with the Vice-Chair and Mr. Ritchie thanked for their input into this process. Governors were informed that all panel members were in agreement that the Headteacher's objectives were successfully realised with new goals also set. The Chair thanked the Headteacher on behalf of all Governors for the outstanding leadership she has demonstrated over the course of the last 12 months with her relentless focus on driving the School forward at every possible opportunity.

14 Any Other Business:

There was no additional business other than to ask Mr. Spencer for any observations from today's meeting. He congratulated Governors on the way the governance forum had played out citing areas such as all attendees having a voice; the laser like focus on the Budget; the different skills Governors bring to table; the outstanding performance data and the tightness of process/procedure in his final analysis. He also shared some information linked to body cameras that might support the SLT with the ongoing issues that are being experienced with traffic around the School site. Governors thanked Mr. Spencer for his kind words, confirming they would follow up on the traffic-related next steps.

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
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)

The Vice-Chair has also looked to organise dates for 2025-26. These can be shared as follows:

Term	Date and Time
Autumn 1	30.09.25 (5.30 p.m. start)
Autumn 2	02.12.25 (5.30 p.m. start)
Spring 1	27.01.26 (5.30 p.m. start)
Spring 2	24.03.26 (5.30 p.m. start)
Summer 1	12.05.26 (5.30 p.m. start)
Summer 2	07.07.26 (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 today'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 3 December, 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Action Update
4	Clerk	Ensure re co-option of Mrs. Ballett is on agenda for Summer Term.	
4	Mrs. Hawkins	Complete all declarations.	
5	HT	Make October minutes available as a public record.	
5	Chair	Sign ratified October minutes.	
6	Vice-Chair	Ensure all AMBER actions are closed off.	
7	HT	Reach out to network contact around wellbeing.	
7	HT	Pass on thanks to staff for performance outcomes.	

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 28 January, 2025 at 5.30 p.m.

Absent Governors to be informed.