

Fulfen Primary School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in the School on Tuesday 28 January, 2025 at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Mrs. Ballett (Vice-Chair), Mrs. Davies (Headteacher), Mr. Field, Mrs. Roughley, Mrs. Witcomb, Mrs. Copper, Mr. Ritchie, Mrs. Kilgallen

Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Governors)
Mrs. Hawkins (School Business Manager)
Mrs. Steele (Staff)
Miss. Chapman (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 tonight's Governing Board meeting by the Vice-Chair who was deputising in the Chair's absence. Warm wishes were extended to Mrs. Poxon who is currently dealing with some challenging personal circumstances. Staff members Mrs. Steele and Miss. Chapman were also present at tonight's meeting as they were delivering key strategic updates related to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the initiatives that have been deployed around PSHE and healthier lives.

The processes around governance continue to play out effectively at Fulfen Primary School with documentation made available on GovernorHub in advance of the meeting along with a clear and purposeful agenda. Governors continue to exercise their governance mandate as they asked questions and sought various points of clarification in relation to the updates given. There was a healthy level of engagement throughout the meeting.

The meeting was quorate.

2 Apologies:

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

3 Governing Board Matters:

Membership

There were no significant membership updates to share at tonight's meeting other than to confirm the re co-option of Mrs. Ballett will need to be discussed at the next governance forum and that the Board continues to carry one Co-opted Governor vacancy.

Resolved: That the re co-option of Mrs. Ballett be added as a discussion point to the Spring Term 2 full Governing Board agenda.

Confidentiality

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

Register of Interests

It is assumed all Governors have completed the Compliance Tab on GovernorHub. The Vice-Chair will chase up any outstanding issues with Governors following tonight's meeting.

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

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct was covered off at the start of the academic year. Governors simply confirmed they were prepared to abide by the protocols as listed in this document.

Governor Matrix

There were no changes in relation to the Governor constitution document that needed to be reported on at tonight's meeting.

4 EYFS Update:

The agenda was switched around to include an update from the two invited members of staff. Miss. Chapman began by talking about key advancements that have been taken in the EYFS.

Governors were given various strategic updates in relation to the provision which included recent building work within the setting; the development of the outdoor provision; the support that is offered vulnerable pupils within the setting; current numbers within the pre-school provision; the success of the recent Open Morning and, finally, the sharing of class stories that really do showcase the experiences that Fulfen children are experiencing every day when they access the EYFS curriculum and wider enrichment opportunities.

Miss. Chapman is clearly a credit to Fulfen Primary School in terms of the enthusiasm for her job role and Governors have no doubt that her approach and general levels of motivation would rub off on staff and pupils accessing the excellent provision that is available.

Miss. Chapman went through each of the areas in turn. She showed some pictures of the building enhancements within the setting and encouraged Governors to pay a visit to the area at some point following tonight's meeting. She added that positive feedback has been received on the structural improvements to date with the setting now displaying a 'wow' factor for any prospective family who is interested in taking up a place within the provision. Miss. Chapman was keen to point out that the improvements have been a team effort with everybody involved in the planning/design stage thanked for bringing the ideas to fruition.

The outdoor provision was singled out for a special mention. Miss. Chapman confirmed that the focus has been on creating an authentic outdoor space which has been enhanced by the use of recycled material rather than always going for the 'shiny and new.' Such an approach plays to the School's sustainable mandate which Governors very much welcomed.

Miss. Chapman confirmed that everything that can be done is done to support vulnerable children within the setting. This involves the identification of any early barriers to learning; seeking the support of external agencies/professionals where they are needed; sharing resources with parents/carers so children can continue to be supported with their learning in the home environment and ensuring no child gets a label just because a different form of inclusive support is being provided alongside their peers.

When it comes to numbers, Miss. Chapman confirmed the current trends and patterns in children accessing the morning/afternoon sessions. Despite the birth rate being down in the local area and parents often putting their children into private Nursery settings near to where they work, it was confirmed that numbers still look healthy for September with further promotional/marketing activities to take place in the coming months to sustain the forward momentum seen in recent years.

One key marketing/promotional opportunity will be the pre-school Open Day scheduled for 04.03.25. Already 22 people have expressed an interest in attending this event which will continue to be communicated through social media and other outlets. Miss. Chapman reassured Governors that once families come through the doors and see the setting in action, they are unlikely to opt for a different setting for their children.

Finally, the class stories were circulated with Governors having the opportunity to look through them throughout tonight's meeting.

Governor Challenge: Governors followed up on a number of key lines of enquiry in relation to they shared presentation. They asked about how receptive parents/carers of vulnerable pupils are to the support offered by EYFS staff; the extent to which pupils with SEND needs come onto and off any list/Register that exists; the extent to which pre-school pupils move through to the School's Reception intake and how long it takes for pupils to catch up if they don't come from within the Fulfen setting and, finally, whether staff need any support from Governors to attend the March Open Day.

Miss. Chapman responded to all of these points in turn. She confirmed wholeheartedly that she would welcome Governor support at the forthcoming promotional event if anybody can give a couple of hours.

As a final point, the Vice-Chair confirmed she had a sun canopy that she was more than willing to donate to the setting.

Miss. Chapman thanked the Vice-Chair for this kind offer which will now be taken forward.

Resolved: That Miss. Chapman be thanked for her informative presentation.

She gave her leave of absence from the meeting.

5 PSHE and Healthier Lives:

Mrs. Steele spoke to Governors about a series of exciting updates linked to the PSHE curriculum and healthier lives agenda. Again, her enthusiasm for the different areas was infectious with Governors really welcoming the ways in which pupils experiences were being broadened and enhanced at Fulfen Primary School.

5.1

Mrs. Steele began by discussing all of the recent initiatives that have been taken around attendance – an area that has seen heightened coverage on a national scale. Governors were given information on the Little Heroes campaign; the way attendance is covered in assemblies with lots of incentivisation around healthy attendance; the physical prizes that are handed out to celebrate success; the reminders that are issued in school newsletters that any holidays taken in term time will be unauthorised; the focus on excellent attendance (which is not just about celebrating 100% attendance); how the School's statistics compare to the national benchmarks (favourably!) and why it is imperative the staff continue with their operating mandate – i.e. that 'children should be in school and ready to learn on time.'

Governors welcomed Mrs. Steele's passion for ensuring this area of school remains a healthy and positive Key Performance Indicator (KPI).

Governor Challenge: Governors asked whether the SLT is seeing a dip in attendance at this point in the year given the winter bug and flu season; whether any immunity issues linked to the pandemic are still being seen in pupil absence; whether the more restrictive guidelines around attendance are modifying parental behaviour and, finally, the extent to which any pupils are taking their birthdays away from school and what action is taken if this scenario does play out.

Mrs. Steele gave her perspective on each of these points.

5.2

The next area discussed was road safety. Mrs. Steele talked to Governors about the 'scoot to school' initiative and participation levels in this initiative; the importance of Road Safety Week and what pupils did to ensure the local community gets focused on this key issue; the activities that will be taking place in the forthcoming Walk and Wheel initiative (24.03.25 to 04.04.25) and, finally, ongoing engagement with the School Run Revolution and how this can support pupils both coming to school in September and Y6s taking the next step to secondary school. Mrs. Steele also raised the possibility of relaunching the walking bus initiative albeit this will again very much depend on volunteer support and buy in.

Governor Challenge: Governors welcomed the focus in this area and how parents/carers will be directly challenged over their movement in and around the vicinity of the School site at peak drop off/collection periods. Governors did just check whether pupils can still participate in the walking to school initiatives if they access the wrap around provision at the start/end of the School day.

A number of suggestions were made as to how pupils could still participate in these schemes with a bit of creative thinking on the part of staff/parents.

5.3

The gardening club has been an outstanding success and Mrs. Steele was pleased to inform Governors of the plans that will take effect for the next 12 months. Essentially pupils in Y3 going into Y4 will experience a whole season of growing where they will have the chance to grow and harvest crops before sampling the fruits of their labour – exciting times. Y5 and Y6 will be brought in to mentor ongoing activities and the sense of community cohesion will no doubt flourish within this setting.

Mrs. Steele also highlighted a future project that will evolve some work in the School's Orchard to create an alternative area where pupils and staff can access relaxing spaces and learning opportunities. There are plans to harvest the fruit falling from the trees with Mrs. Steele also

making a number of other notable requests if money can stretch – i.e. gardening tools and a lawn mower. This is an area that Governor fundraising activities could support.

5.4

Finally, Mrs. Steele finished this section of the meeting by discussing engagement opportunities she is pursuing with third parties. She discussed a range of activities that are possible including talks on sustainable practices, a visit to a recycling site (The British Ironwork Centre) through a VR headset and the installation of sculptures on the School site to promote sustainable practices – for example ‘Coral the Clown Fish.’ This kind of engagement sets Fulfen apart from other settings which is to be commended.

Governors thanked Mrs. Steele for her update and look forward to hearing about future successes in this area.

Mrs. Steele gave her leave of absence from the meeting.

6 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 3 December, 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 Mrs. Ballett via electronic or hard copy signature.

Resolved: That Mrs. Ballett add her signature to the ratified minutes.

Before the action matrix was reviewed the Vice-Chair confirmed the membership of the Pay Committee which will be Mr. Boardman, Mrs. Ballett and Mr. Ritchie should this governance forum need to convene in the future.

The Vice-Chair also confirmed she had revisited the founding words for the Governing Board and considered them still to be appropriate. Of course new words can still be added but it was felt the words agreed a number of years ago still represent the Board’s operating ethos. No further changes were recommended at this time.

Governors were informed that the meeting schedule for 2025-26 has already been agreed to guarantee the Clerk’s availability. The dates were referenced again at the end of these minutes.

7 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:

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

Minute	Action	RAG
4	The need to re co-opt Mrs. Ballett has already been referenced in these minutes.	GREEN
4	It is assumed all declarations are up to date.	GREEN
5	The October minutes were made available as a public record.	GREEN
5	The ratified October minutes were signed by the Vice-Chair.	GREEN
6	The AMBER actions were referenced in these minutes.	GREEN

7	It is assumed the Headteacher reached out to the network contact around wellbeing.	GREEN
7	The Headteacher did pass on thanks to staff on behalf of Governors for the end of year 2023-24 performance outcomes.	GREEN

8 Parental Complaint:

The Vice-Chair confirmed that there is an ongoing parent/carer complaint at the School that has reached Stage 3 and the convening of an independent Governor panel. The Vice-Chair confirmed that the membership of this committee has to take account of individuals who have not been part of the process to date, who have not investigated any related evidence to the case and who have no potential conflicts of interest. The Vice-Chair thanked Governors for stepping forward but on this occasion the panel will be Mr. Ritchie (Chair), Mr. Field and Mrs. Roughley. A professional clerk will also be used.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked what will happen post Stage 3 hearing and what options remain open to the parent/carer.

The Clerk confirmed he would approach Entrust to gain clarification on this issue and report back to the Governor panel direct.

Resolved: That the Clerk take account of this action.

9 Reports:

Chair and Vice-Chair's Actions

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

The Chair was not present to comment.

Link Governor Reports

Link Governor engagement is a critical area of school life. Whilst a number of Governors need to upload their report to GovernorHub, the following verbal updates were shared:

Mr. Field spoke warmly about his recent Link Governor visit which focused on English and Literacy. He reported that subject leaders have a really good grasp of this core curriculum area; that staff remain continually reflective of their practice to deliver incremental improvements on an ongoing basis; that resources that are used to support this curriculum area are always of a high quality and that there is a constant focus on delivering consistency in teaching and learning across the Key Stages/year groups with any monitoring activity always looking to be supportive in any improvements that are needed.

As an aside Mr. Field added that a SEND report will be uploaded to GovernorHub before the next meeting.

Mrs. Copper provided some brief headlines around her recent Safeguarding related Link Governor visit. She outlined some of the characteristics of the provision which all point towards a robust and rigorous Safeguarding culture. Processes and procedures are well embedded, staff CPD has been actioned, there is no evidence of any knowledge gaps and the focus is very much on ensuring the child's voice is heard in any Safeguarding-related matters.

Governors briefly revisited Prevent and L1 Safeguarding training from a Governor perspective and there was some discussion as to whether additional CPD needs to be pursued. The Vice-Chair will take this matter forward if any gaps exist. Finally, there was also a reminder about the Link Governor procedure that individuals need to follow – i.e. checking finalised report content with the Headteacher before reports are published online.

Resolved: That the Vice-Chair/Governors take account of these actions.

Safeguarding Update

Miss. Sturch was not present at tonight's meeting. As a result she will present a Safeguarding update at the next full Governing Board meeting.

Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher will deliver her formal Headteacher's Report at the Spring Term 2 meeting. For now, she delivered a verbal update which focused on how the SLT and staff will retain momentum across all aspects of school-based life given the Ofsted inspection. Governors were reassured that certain mechanisms (i.e. Pupil Progress meetings) have facilitated this refocusing activity which through an analysis of data trends/patterns have given a steer for further incremental improvement – for example the planning that is put in place to support Reading which has resulted in some CPD being shared with staff.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked whether the impact of this focused CPD has already been seen.

The Headteacher confirmed this to be the case based on the triangulation of book evidence, lesson monitoring and staff voice.

Governor Challenge: Governors also asked how receptive staff are to this refocusing of efforts.

The Headteacher felt staff remain motivated to deliver their daily practice, to support the pastoral development of pupils and to ensure every child has the opportunity to fulfil their academic potential. This underpinning philosophy will always remain, regardless of the odd bump in the road and any external challenges that have to be faced.

Governors welcomed this input and were pleased to hear that despite the Ofsted outcome, staff remain committed to renewing their practice and delivering a high-quality provision – long may this continue.

10 Finance Update:

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

In addition to this update the following comments were made:

There was a discussion around lunchtimes and breaktimes and how the staffing resource is being deployed to support these parts of the School day. Despite some teething troubles and supporting some staff members with the change process, the current arrangements are working well. The SLT reassured Governors that the visible presence of leaders has helped staff to see that the current arrangements can work as long as staff get themselves to their required location at the right time. A Governor who is a lunchtime supervisor echoed these

points, feeling that the current arrangements would not work if it wasn't for staggered lunchtimes and all staff pulling in the same direction.

Governors were given the latest position on a number of SLAs that are up for renewal. Mrs. Hawkins confirmed she is open to the School changing some of the SLAs once the current terms expire – particularly if the supplied service has not been up to standard or an alternative provider can be sourced who can offer the same service at a more competitive price. Governors fully echoed these sentiments.

The latest saga with the internal financial audit was shared. The Report has only just been received six months after the audit activity was completed and is full of factual inaccuracies.

Governor Challenge: Governors felt strongly that rather than meet with the Auditor to go through the Report line by line, representation should be made to highlight a sample of the feedback, point out any inaccuracies and then convene a meeting so these inaccuracies could be discussed. Picking out a representative sample was felt to be a better use of Mrs. Hawkins' time rather than going through the feedback in detail. It was also not appreciated that 'apparently no school passes the Audit.' Again this makes no sense and questions the overall validity of the exercise.

Resolved: That Mrs. Hawkins act on this Governor recommendation.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked some questions around how the size of the Nursery/Club contributions to the main School Budget are determined and how these figures are represented in the financial accounts. There was also some discussion around what the 'fluidity of income' means in a budget monitoring context and what the School's strategy for HAF will be this year given the challenges experienced in 2023-24. Finally, the impact of national insurance increases and food price increases were highlighted in relation to future budget setting and there was a request that Mrs. Hawkins looks to book in some Link Governor meetings with Mrs. Poxon to discuss all matters finance related.

Mrs. Hawkins responded to all of these lines of enquiry from Governors. She confirmed she would schedule in visits with the Link Governor in question.

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

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

11 Policy Ratification:

There was one policy that required formal ratification at this point in the meeting – The Lockdown Policy.

Resolved: That the Lockdown Policy be ratified with immediate effect.

12 Fundraising Activities:

Mrs. Roughley provided an update on where a number of Governors had taken the discussion involving fundraising activities. A number of potential ideas had been floated including a parent/child yoga class; an old school dinner; a quiz night and a Fulfen run around the School grounds to name but a few examples.

Governor Challenge: It was felt that the group should start with a simple idea which is low cost and can be supported by volunteers. It was suggested an idea should be run past Mrs. Steele who it was felt has a good grasp for the practicalities and logistics of these kinds of

events. In time there may also be the opportunity to involve the PTA in these engagement-based events as part of wider collaborative activities.

Resolved: That Mrs. Roughley follow up these discussions with Mrs. Steele to scope out an initial idea. Governors will be kept updated as to any progress that is made in this area.

13 Any Other Business:

There were two items of additional business that were raised at this point in the meeting.

A number of health and safety updates were shared with Governors. This included confirmation that the Health and Safety and Wellbeing Audit was submitted to the LA by the required deadline; that Asbestos Management Training has been completed by the Headteacher; that a COSHH course has been accessed by Governors and, finally, that within the next 24 hours Entrust is visiting the School to discuss remedial action needed on the KS1 roof.

Governor Challenge: Governors were pleased to see that progress is being made on the roof. They also asked about the ongoing sink saga and the perimeter gates.

Mrs. Hawkins provided the latest updates in these areas.

Governors were asked to take account of the interactive newsletter that the School uses to communicate with the parent/carer community. This is again evidence of the School looking to use technological advancements that are available to improve the School's existing products.

14 Confidentiality:

Governors were asked to identify if there were any items/materials, which needed to be excluded from any Agenda, Minutes, reports or other papers discussed at the meeting, which would normally be made available for inspection following the meeting.

Governors were also asked to identify any items included on the Agenda, which require recording in a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes.

Resolved: That it be identified that the following item needed to be included as a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes:

- Minute 10.

There were no further items/materials identified for exclusion.

15 Dates and Times of Future Meetings:

The meeting schedule for 2024-25 has been finalised.

Term	Date and Time
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 tonight's meeting.

The meeting was brought to a close by the Chair.

Chair

Date

Fulfen Primary School

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Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Action Update
3	Chair	Ensure co-option of Governor is on Spring 2 agenda.	
6	HT	Make December minutes available as a public record.	
6	Vice-Chair	Sign ratified December minutes.	
8	Clerk	Check guidance point with Entrust and report back to panel.	
8	Link Governors/Vice-Chair	Progress actions as listed in minutes.	
10	Mrs. Hawkins	Follow Governor recommendation in relation to Finance Audit.	
10	Mrs. Hawkins	Set up Link Governor meetings with Mrs. Poxon	
12	Mrs. Roughley	Contact Mrs. Steele for a further discussion around fundraising ideas.	

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 5 March, 2025 at 5.30 p.m.

Absent Governors to be informed.