

FOWLMERE PRIMARY SCHOOL
MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Wednesday 14 March 2018
7.00pm in School

MINUTES

Present:

Sarah Burge (SB), Chair
Philip Atkin (PA), Head Teacher
Bruce Gilliam (BG)
Gill Heathcote (GH)
Chris Martin (CM)
Andrew Page (AP)
Sue Raven (SR)
Nico Schonken (NS)

Lisa White (Camclerk) in attendance.

1. Apologies for absence

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.00pm. Apologies were received and accepted from Ashley Meggitt (AM) and Hayley Woods (HW).

2. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations on interest in relation to the agenda.

3. Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2018 were circulated prior to the meeting and were approved by the Governing Body and signed by the Chair as a true record.

Matters arising from the meeting held on 20 September 2017

Report to be uploaded to the governors' section of the school website. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Matters arising from the meeting held on 6 December 2017

Item 4 Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising

Circulate Confidential Minutes from this meeting to governors. *Circulated during the FGB meeting on 14 March.* **ACTION COMPLETE**

Approve the Confidential Minutes at the FGB meeting in March. **ACTION COMPLETE**

An update on the matter covered by these Confidential Minutes was provided at the meeting. This discussion is covered by a further Confidential Minute.

Signed  Date 9/5/2018

Item 6 Head Teacher's Report

a. Governor Monitoring Visits

Liaise with other local schools to discuss what they do with regards to governor visit reports, consider sharing governor visits and observe how they operate as a Governing Body. **ACTION SB ONGOING**

Ask Naomi Whitworth for her input when she starts in January. **ACTION SB ONGOING**

Item 11 Any Other Business

Chair to provide attendance information to the Clerk for the Autumn Term Committee meetings so that the termly governor attendance information can be updated. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Matters arising from the meeting held on 5 February 2018

Item 3 Welcome of New Governors

Forward a new governor form and Annual Declaration of Pecuniary Interest form to CM for completion. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Forward the relevant paperwork to AM for the role of LA Governor. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Confirm the two committees that he would like to be a member of. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Item 8 Policies

Amend Attendance and Punctuality Policy to reflect what happens regarding a pupil not arriving at school. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Provide a word version of the governor visit report template to governors. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Item 9 Parent Questionnaire

Consult with both school and playgroup parents. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Carry out a formal consultation with staff. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Include a specific question in the parent questionnaire regarding extending the school day. **ACTION COMPLETE**

An electronic version of the questionnaire to be forwarded to PA/SB. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Include data to explain why the school is proposing to extend the school day. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Include a question on the new homework policy and upload the new Homework Policy to the school website. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Follow up Pupil Voice. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Item 10 Governor Training

Look in to alternative training provides. **ACTION COMPLETE. See item 10 of FGB agenda.**

Signed  Date 9/5/2018

4. Appointment of LA Governor

The Chair proposed that Ashley Meggitt (AM) be elected to the Governing Body as Local Authority Governor following his nomination by the Local Authority. The Governing Body unanimously elected AM as Local Authority Governor.

The Clerk to write to AM to confirm his appointment as LA Governor. ACTION LW

5. Safeguarding

It was noted that there was nothing significant to report at this time.

6. Subcommittee minutes

It was noted that minutes of the Finance and Premises sub committee meeting were shared with governors for their review prior to the meeting. The Chair advised that there had not been a Standards sub committee meeting since the last FGB meeting.

Governors noted and accepted the sub committee minutes.

The Chair advised that on checking the Terms of Reference for the Personnel sub committee, the minutes can be brought to the FGB for review by the Governing Body.

7. Policies

The following policy was circulated to governors for their review prior to the meeting:

- After-School club: Admissions and Fees Policy

A discussion took place with regards session fees and hours.

A governor asked whether the school should consider taking children from Foxton given that the previous After-School Club at Thriplow did this, and the Head advised that only one child from Foxton Primary School attended the Thriplow After-School Club. In addition, the Head explained that there would be a difficulty in getting the children to Fowlmere and if the school wished to pursue this, an official discussion would need to take place with Foxton Primary School first. The Head stated that he does not believe it is an issue at the moment and should one arise, Foxton Primary School would likely contact Fowlmere.

It was noted that subject to a minor typographical error on page 4 of the Policy, the Governing Body approved this Policy.

8. Parent Questionnaire

The Chair advised that an updated Parent Questionnaire is in progress and will include some additional questions, including the proposed extension of the school day and on the change in format of homework. In addition, it was noted that the wording of the first question has been amended slightly.

The Chair explained that the intention is to circulate the questionnaire week commencing 19 March giving parents two weeks for completion. The Head stated that there will also be paper copies available for those parents who do not have access to email or who prefer hard copies.

**It was noted that data will be collated and circulated for the next FGB meeting in May.
ACTION PA/SB**

Signed  Date 9/5/2018

9. Academisation

It was noted that at the last FGB meeting, a governor asked that the Governing Body discuss academisation and the different options for Fowlmere Primary School. The Chair provided a brief recap of previous academisation discussions and confirmed the three options available:

- Do nothing;
- Join an existing Multi-Academy Trust (MAT);
- Set up own MAT with other local schools.

The Head then gave a presentation on the risks and rewards for Fowlmere if the school was to academise (previously given at interview).

During the discussion that ensued, the following was noted:

- Economies of scale are a myth and academisation will not give the school increased finances;
- The school is now paying more for services from the Local Authority than previously – certain services were free but are now chargeable;
- The level of workload involved in setting up your own MAT is a concern and could mean the Senior Leadership Team no longer have the capacity to focus on pupils' achievement and progress;
- If a small school such as Fowlmere were to academise, the likelihood is that the Head would have to be shared across more than one school. The funding would not be sufficient to cover the cost of a Head teacher as the core amount drops significantly;
- It is important that the school continues to perform well and that pupils' achievement and progress improves, whilst at the same time maintaining an awareness of what is occurring with regards to academisation;
- The school to continue to aim towards achieving 'outstanding' which will in turn improve pupil intake. Increased pupil intake will lessen the financial difficulties involved in funding four classes. **Further information is required with regards to the budget over the next few years and it was agreed that the Head talk to Rob Cottle on this matter; ACTION PA**
- Wider and more promotion of the school is needed to ensure it is the default school for the catchment area and a detailed strategy / plan is required as to how to do this, including but not limited to:
 - PTFA events outside of the village;
 - Articles in Little and Great Chishill newsletters/magazines;
 - Electronic school prospectus.

At the end of the discussion, it was noted that whilst academisation continues to be considered, building the school's reputation and focusing on pupils' achievement is the current focus.

10. Governor Training

The Chair advised that she had spent some time researching alternative training providers to the Local Authority and established that the other options are the likes of Fischer Family Trust (FFT) and The Key, both of which are on-line providers. The Chair advised that as a guideline, subscription to The Key costs in the region of £350.

Following a brief discussion, it was noted that no changes in training provider were agreed.

Signed  Date 7/5/2018

11. Any Other Business

There were two items of other business:

i. Termly Briefing

It was noted that AP attended the recent Termly Briefing. AP advised that the main topic of discussion was the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and what schools should be doing to ensure they are compliant with this regulation.

The Head advised that the ICT Service will be visiting the school week commencing 19 March to carry out a review and audit of the school's data.

ii. Extension of the School Day

NS advised that at a previous FGB meeting, the concern was raised that extending the school day may have an impact on the Fowlmere Playgroup. NS explained that following a discussion with the Chair of the playgroup, it was noted that due to a rolling pickup operated by the playgroup, the Chair did not foresee an issue if Fowlmere Primary School were to extend the school day.

It was noted that the Head will still formally write to the playgroup to inform them if this change is made.

12. Time/date of next meeting:

Finance and Premises 7.00pm with FGB meeting to follow at 7.45pm, Wednesday 9 May 2018.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm.