



## Minutes

### Approved by the Governing Body

### Meeting of the Full Governing Body (FGB) of Fowlmere Primary School

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024 – 6.00pm

**In School**

#### Present

Kym Rouse (KR), Head of School  
Phil Butterworth (PB), Co-Chair  
Hayley Woods (HW), Co-Chair  
Abi Clarke (AC)

#### Apologies for Absence

Sue Wright, Executive Head Teacher

#### In attendance

Lisa White (LW), Clerk

No.	Item	Action
1.	<b>Welcome and Apologies for Absence</b> HW opened the meeting at 6.05pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting.  Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Sue Wright.  Prior to the rest of the agenda, KR provided governors with an overview of the recent changes with regards to areas such as the inclusion room, nurture nook and reading area, adding that this work has been done to provide more spaces for children who need time out of the classroom.	
2.	<b>Declaration of Interests in relation to the Agenda</b> It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in relation to the agenda.	
	<b>Standing Items</b>	
3.	<b>Membership of the Governing Body</b> As noted at previous meetings, there are the following vacancies on the Governing Body: ➤ 4 x Co-opted Governor vacancies and 1 x LA Governor vacancy	

	<p>A detailed discussion took place during which governors agreed that with the ongoing delays in joining the Cam Academy Trust, these vacancies now need to be addressed as with the current number of governors, the Governing Body is at risk of not covering everything it needs to cover.</p> <p>Governors recognised that one of the reasons why it can be a challenge to recruit new governors may be the level of commitment and workload involved.</p> <p>A governor pointed out that in its current form, the school website would not attract prospective candidates and KR explained that the decision was previously taken to wait to update the website once the school is in the Trust. KR acknowledged however that this is now something that needs to be done.</p> <p>Governors then considered how best to approach the current recruitment issue and agreed that contacting local businesses, friends and acquaintances, and promoting the school further needs to be part of the recruitment campaign. In addition, it was noted that the school Facebook page would also be updated to advise of the current governor vacancies.</p> <p><b>The following actions were therefore proposed and agreed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Governors to contact local businesses, friends and acquaintances to ask for volunteers to take on the role of governor. ACTION</b></li><li>○ <b>Update the school Facebook page. ACTION</b></li></ul> <p><b>A governor then asked:</b> <b>Question:</b> <b>What is the plan with regards to the school website, as it does need updating and improving?</b> <b>Answer:</b> Until we join the Trust, we have to use the current platform which is E-Schools, and I have just had to renew our contract with them.</p>	<p><b>All HW</b></p>																												
4.	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising from the previous meetings</b> Draft standard minutes and one set of Confidential minutes from the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 were shared with governors for their review prior to the meeting and were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair after the meeting.</p> <p><b>Matters Arising from previous meetings:</b></p> <table><tr><th>Item</th><th>Action</th><th>Who?</th><th>Status</th></tr><tr><td colspan="4">10 July 2023</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>Head Teacher to make some enquiries within the community to establish if the pool can be sold and relocated elsewhere in the village in order for the community to continue to benefit from it.</td><td>KR / SW</td><td>Action ongoing.</td></tr><tr><td colspan="4">1 May 2024</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>School to arrange a survey on the school dinner provision for children to complete once a stable member of staff is in post.</td><td>KR</td><td>Action ongoing.</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>Share updated RAG rated SIP and Writing review for the July FGB meeting.</td><td>KR / SW</td><td>Some actions are ongoing. Action complete.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Clerk to add an item to the July FGB meeting agenda to review the updated RAG rated SIP</td><td>LW</td><td>Action complete.</td></tr></table>	Item	Action	Who?	Status	10 July 2023				7	Head Teacher to make some enquiries within the community to establish if the pool can be sold and relocated elsewhere in the village in order for the community to continue to benefit from it.	KR / SW	Action ongoing.	1 May 2024				6	School to arrange a survey on the school dinner provision for children to complete once a stable member of staff is in post.	KR	Action ongoing.	9	Share updated RAG rated SIP and Writing review for the July FGB meeting.	KR / SW	Some actions are ongoing. Action complete.		Clerk to add an item to the July FGB meeting agenda to review the updated RAG rated SIP	LW	Action complete.	
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10	Share the Trust's monitoring visit template with governors.  HW / KR / SW to propose further visits for the Summer term.  AC / SW to arrange a Safeguarding monitoring visit for the Summer term.	SW  HW / KR / SW  AC / SW	Action c/f  Action ongoing.  Safeguarding visit to be undertaken by the end of the term.
11	Link governors to Smartlog once the school joins the Trust.	SW	Action pending the school joining the Trust.
12	Clerk to share the link to the LA policy tracker and a copy of the statutory policy list.  Share updated Uniform Policy with governors.	LW  KR / SW	Action complete.  Action complete.

In addition, more detailed discussion took place on the following:

#### Swimming pool

KR advised that she has researched online the cost for the swimming pool to be dismantled and taken away, with quotes ranging between £0.5k and £3k, adding that she will continue to investigate whether there is anyone locally who could do this. KR advised that once the swimming pool has been removed, the school can use the space for either a temporary or permanent structure.

Governors briefly discussed which parts of the swimming pool could be sold, noting that it would just be the frame.

**A governor then asked what communications have been shared with regards to the swimming pool and KR advised that parents were informed that the pool had been decommissioned before swimming lessons were due to start this academic year.**

#### School dinner survey

KR advised that although feedback from the recent survey on the school meals provision was positive, the current cook has only been with the school for 6 weeks and she understands that this may not be a permanent appointment by Herts Catering Limited (HCL).

**A governor asked what has changed to result in this positive feedback and KR explained that the current cook is being more creative with existing recipes to make them more appealing to the children, adding however that there is still quite a high uptake for packed lunches.**

**In addition, KR advised that they are very efficient when serving the school lunches, plates are very presentable, with the cook also putting systems in place to improve the provision.**

Governors noted that quality school lunches can have a huge impact on a child's relationship with food and their energy levels and behaviour.

#### School Development Plan (SDP)

**Governors asked:**

**Question:**

**What is your current view with regards to improving pupil outcomes in Writing?**

	<p><b>Answer:</b> I think that because we are still working with Hamilton Trust there is not enough cross-curricular writing to support pupils' English Writing learning, so this will be a target for next year.</p> <p>The aim is to link the English Curriculum with the other topics that our children are learning and there will be a huge push on ensuring that whenever there is an opportunity for writing in other lessons, this is linked to pupils' Writing learning.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> <b>How confident are staff in doing that given they have to teach several subjects?</b></p> <p><b>Answer:</b> Staff are confident with the year groups they have but not always as confident teaching the Curriculum in other year groups and this is an area that we will be working on. In addition, we will be looking at moderation in staff meetings to help build expertise going forwards.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> <b>That was a target this year, has that happened?</b></p> <p><b>Answer:</b> No, because the focus has been on getting things ready to join the Trust, which unfortunately has not happened. We have been in a holding pattern, but we cannot do this any longer.</p>	
	<b>Main Discussion Items</b>	
5.	<p><b>Head Teacher's Report</b> A Head Teacher's report was shared with governors for their review prior to the meeting and covered the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Executive Summary</li> <li>➤ Admissions and Number on Roll</li> <li>➤ Attendance</li> <li>➤ Safeguarding</li> <li>➤ Health and Safety</li> <li>➤ Property, Compliance, Finance, and ICT</li> <li>➤ Staffing</li> <li>➤ Vulnerable Pupils</li> <li>➤ Leadership and Governance</li> <li>➤ Curriculum Promise</li> <li>➤ Progress and Assessment</li> <li>➤ Parents / Carers / Community</li> </ul> <p>During the meeting, KR provided a verbal report on the following areas: Executive Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Since the last meeting, several events have taken place including Early Years Foundation Stage / Key Stage One (EYFS/KS1) visit to Woburn, Key Stage Two (KS2) Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs), attendance at the village fete and the end of year production.</li> <li>○ Completion of Domestic Abuse training (KR)</li> </ul> <p><b>A governor asked:</b> <b>Question:</b> <b>Does any of that training get shared with staff or does it sit with you as Head Teacher?</b></p> <p><b>Answer:</b> It sits with me, but this means I can support staff as Safeguarding Lead if there are any concerns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Finalising end of year reports to parents.</li> </ul>	

#### Admissions and Number on Roll

- 82 pupils on roll, with 2 new joiners since September and 7 leavers.
- 1 child is currently being home-schooled but still on the school's roll as the family has not sent an official notification that they have opted for Elective Home Education, but merely informed the class teacher.

KR then provided governors with an overview of the reasons why this is the case and what the school has done and is currently doing in relation to taking this pupil off roll.

KR also explained that she has contacted the Children Missing Education team at the Local Authority (LA) but has not had a response.

#### **A governor asked:**

##### **Question:**

**What communication has taken place with the family to date?**

Answer:

We have made phone calls, sent emails and had conversations and have explained the process that needs to be followed, but the family does not want to engage with the school.

#### **Governors also asked:**

##### **Question:**

**Does the school have an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) or access to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)?**

Answer:

No. I have been told that an EWO will be in place from September, but because we are planning to join the Trust, engagement and support from the LA has unfortunately been minimal.

##### **Question:**

**Does the family have a social worker assigned to them or are they supported by the Early Help team?**

Answer:

No, as they do not want to engage with these agencies.

During a discussion that followed on this, it was noted that governors reiterated the importance of following the correct process, with the agreement that KR would escalate the situation to the LA again.

##### **Question:**

**What are our numbers on roll for September?**

Answer:

74 which is low, but it is worth noting that this is not Fowlmere specific with several other local schools in the same situation.

##### **Question:**

**Is there a point when the current structure of 4 classes is no longer viable?**

Answer:

Based on our numbers, we should be moving to 3 classes next academic year, but we have gone past that point.

If our numbers do not improve going forwards, we will have to consider a reduction in the number of classes, but we are hoping with the improvements we are making to the building and its environment, we can attract more children, and this will then not be necessary.

**Question:****How many places were allocated?**

Initially 15, but we have 10 places accepted.

A positive thing is that we offer wraparound care, however numbers for Breakfast Club are reducing and if Kidzchoice pull their provision, the school will have to take this on as we must provide wraparound care.

Governors briefly considered the reasons for dwindling numbers and agreed that one contributory factor was where the school is situated, with many parents driving through the area to work and therefore sending their children to schools in the vicinity of where they work.

Governors also noted that the viability of small schools is a major concern, with many local schools now considering academisation in order to remain viable.

**Question:****Will promotion of the school / increasing pupil numbers be a School Development Plan (SDP) priority?**

Answer:

Yes. We will include this and offer the usual open morning events.

**Question:****Could you also offer an open evening so that working parents can attend?**

Answer:

Yes. That is something we can look explore.

KR then advised that, if possible, she would like a group of volunteers to help decorate the school over the summer holidays, and it was proposed and agreed that she would draw up a list of what cosmetic works need doing and share this with governors.

**Put a list together of what cosmetic works need doing and share with governors. ACTION**

KR

**Attendance**

- Current year to date Attendance of 95.7% which is broadly in line with national average.

**Safeguarding**

- One prejudiced related incident since the last meeting.

**Governors asked:****Question:****Can you confirm that the correct procedure was followed when dealing with this incident?**

Answer:

Yes.

**Question:****Was this the same child as the previous incident?**

Answer:

Yes.

**Question:****What is the school doing to address this issue?**

Answer:

The child is on a part-time timetable to support their mental health, as requested by the parents and they are now being collected from school before lunchtime as issues usually occur during that time, and when the child is heightened.

We will increase the time to 1pm if things improve.

**Question:****Is there support for the other children involved?**

Answer:

Yes.

**Health and Safety**

- Ongoing work to update the school's Risk Assessments.
- A fire drill will be scheduled for next half term and will take place during play or lunchtime.

**Property, Compliance, Finance and ICT**

- Now working to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 for conversion date.

**Staffing**

- Slight change in structure following the resignation of the school's Forest School teacher and Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) cover.
- Ongoing discussions with regards to finalising the contract of another teacher who is currently employed by an agency, with the Trust supporting the school in this matter.

Due to the content of the nature of the remainder of this discussion, the rest of this item is covered by a separate Confidential minute.

**Vulnerable Pupils**

- Nothing significant to report although pupils are not where they should be in terms of their attainment.

**Leadership and Governance**

- Focus of the work this term has been continuing towards the conversion of the school into the Cam Academy Trust.

**Curriculum Promise**

- No notable changes to the Curriculum in preparation for conversion however from September there will be changes to the Maths Curriculum as the school moves to using Maths Mastery.

**A governor asked:****Question:****Where is the funding from for this?**

Answer:

There is no cost to us as it is a Trust wide approach.

- Work is in progress to develop a two-year Foundation Curriculum, linked to Jeavons Wood Primary School.

**A governor asked:****Question:****Are all Subject Leadership responsibilities finalised for September?**

Answer:  
Yes.

KR then provided an overview of external schemes of work that the school subscribes to and advised that the Phonics Screening Check results indicate that the current Phonics programme is not having the necessary impact. KR added that the Trust is considering implementing Read Write Inc across all their schools and explained that her plan is to wait for this rather than buying in another programme.

#### Progress and Assessment

KR referred governors to the Steps Attainment Summary included in her report.

#### **Governors asked:**

##### **Question:**

**What are your concerns about what this is showing you?**

Answer:

Our Writing outcomes. I also do not think pupils are making enough progress in Years 3 and 4 in Reading.

##### **Question:**

**What is changing in those areas?**

Answer:

The new Curriculum for Writing is being developed with a plan of units created, with each unit having a lead text. The next stage is to create a supporting reading spine.

We are moving away from Hamilton Trust to the Literacy Shed which will support in unit planning, with Reading supporting Writing and vice versa.

Based on our KS2 SATs data today, I am also concerned about our Maths attainment at 60%, compared to 73% Age Related Expectation (ARE) in Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar and 86% ARE in Reading. However, Maths is in line with last year, but I am worried it will be below national average.

In addition, our Combined score is much lower.

##### **Question:**

**What was our Combined score last year?**

Answer:

60% and national average was 59%. Based on our data we are in the bottom 5% at 38%.

##### **Question:**

**How has the teacher responded to those results?**

Answer:

They are disappointed, as I am.

##### **Question:**

**Why is the data low as a problem was not identified when tracking attainment for Year 6 throughout the year?**

Answer:

No, but there was a lack of confidence. Some pupils also did not fully answer the questions and children's arithmetic skills are an issue.

There are some anomalies as some children did better on the harder Maths paper and I think the issue is that some of them are unable to do arithmetic at speed.



	<p><b>Question:</b>  <b>Will there therefore be a change in approach as to how we prepare our pupils?</b>  <b>Answer:</b>  There will need to be and part of the reason why we are moving to Maths Mastery is to improve children's arithmetic ability.</p> <p>KR then advised that the pass rate for the Phonics Screening Check is 32 and out of the 5 pupils who did not pass two scored 28, one scored 19, one scored 25 and one child who is on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Register scored 2. KR added that with the exception of this child, who has a processing and retention issue, the others should pass when they retake the test in Year 2.</p> <p>Following this robust questioning, governors noted that Phonics and Maths need to be a priority for their monitoring next academic year.  <b>A governor then raised a concern regarding the fact that some pupils are sometimes left to their own devices and in effect teaching themselves and KR agreed that this is not acceptable given this year's data.</b></p> <p><b>This governor then asked why this is happening and KR explained it is because of behavioural issues in class which takes up the teacher's time.</b></p>	
6.	<p><b>Academisation Update</b>  As noted under Item 5 of the agenda, the school is now working towards a conversion date of 1<sup>st</sup> September, with meetings and negotiations ongoing with regards to the incomplete property capital projects and ownership of part of the land.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged however that a back-up plan is needed should academisation not be possible and HW explained that she is continuing to liaise with the LA with regards to future support.</p>	
7.	<p><b>School Improvement Plan</b>  It was noted that the 2023/2024 School Development Plan (SDP) was shared with governors prior to the meeting, with a discussion on school priorities taking place under Item 5 of the agenda.</p> <p>It was also noted that a draft SDP for the 2024/2025 academic year will be shared for the September FGB meeting.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Self-Evaluation Form</b>  It was noted that this item will be deferred to a future meeting.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Safeguarding</b>  As noted earlier in the meeting, a Safeguarding Link Governor monitoring visit will be undertaken before the end of term.</p> <p>In addition, it was noted that the LA Safeguarding Monitoring report has been completed by SW, but in her absence will be shared at the next FGB meeting.</p> <p><b>Share the LA Safeguarding Monitoring report for the September FGB meeting.</b>  <b>ACTION</b></p>	SW
10.	<p><b>Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Report</b>  It was noted that this item will be deferred to a future meeting pending a Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo) appointment.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Strategy for Home Learning 2024/2025</b>  A discussion took place regarding the strategy for home learning for the 2024/2025 academic year with governors noting the need to ensure a consistent approach is in</p>	

	<p>place across the whole school. Governors also considered how to maximise parental engagement, including the suggestion to hold parent workshops.</p> <p>It was therefore proposed and agreed that the Head Teacher will consider the school's Home Learning Strategy for the next academic year and share this with governors.</p> <p><b>Head Teacher to consider the school's Home Learning Strategy for the next academic year and share this with governors. ACTION</b></p>	KR
12.	<p><b>Governor Monitoring and Evaluation</b></p> <p>As noted at previous meetings, governor monitoring has been a challenge due to low governor numbers.</p> <p>However, AC provided the Governing Body with an overview of her recent monitoring visit on Kidzchoice, advising that this was a positive visit overall.</p> <p>In addition, as noted earlier in the meeting, a Safeguarding Link Governor will take place before the end of term.</p>	
13.	<p><b>Governor Training</b></p> <p>It was noted that there was nothing to share on this item for this meeting.</p>	
14.	<p><b>Annual Governance Statement</b></p> <p>It was noted that an Annual Governance Impact Statement needs to be produced by the end of the academic year and shared with the LA.</p> <p>PB advised that he and HW are in the process of completing this document with a draft to be shared with AC in due course.</p> <p><b>Co-Chairs to produce an Annual Governance Impact Statement for publication on the school website and sharing with the LA. ACTION</b></p>	HW / PB
15.	<p><b>Mental Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <p>It was noted that the following link to guidance on Mental Health and Wellbeing was shared with governors for this meeting:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-in-schools-and-colleges">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-in-schools-and-colleges</a></p> <p>KR advised that she has completed Mental Health Lead training and will continue to focus on staff wellbeing and mental health. KR added that she is currently ensuring that staff are not overloaded with any changes to the Curriculum, as well as developing the nurture nook to support children's wellbeing.</p> <p>KR further advised that this will be a target for next academic year with more on this subject being built into the school's Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Curriculum.</p>	
16.	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p>The following policy was shared with governors for their review prior to the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ School Uniform Policy</li> </ul> <p>KR referred governors to the updated School Uniform Policy and advised that there will be a greater focus on children wearing the correct uniform next year, adding that one of the points raised during Cluster meetings is a potential joint approach for uniform.</p> <p><b>Question:</b>  <b>Have our uniform expectations been communicated to existing and new parents?</b></p>	

	<p>Answer: Our uniform expectations will be shared in due course.</p> <p><b>Subject to a minor amendment to some wording, the Governing Body approved the School Uniform Policy.</b></p>	
	<b>Routine Business</b>	
17.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>It was noted that there was one other item of business added to the agenda:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Use of Balances – Advisory Notice HW referred governors to the letter received from the LA regarding the significant reduction in the school's revenue balance over the next year and the percentage forecast change of -83% since March 2023. Governors noted however that all small schools in Cambridgeshire will have received the same advisory notice, with KR explaining that the biggest issue small schools have is the decrease in funding over recent years. KR added that previously schools received a bulk funding amount plus a per pupil amount, but that this is no longer the case, meaning schools must find a way to set a balanced Budget and subsequently use their revenue balance to do so.</li> </ol> <p>KR further advised that the proposed 3% increase for the Teachers' Pay Award has not been factored into any funding and if that is approved, lots of small schools will be significantly impacted.</p> <p><b>A governor asked:</b> <b>Question:</b> <b>Is some of our funding being used towards the cost of the Executive Head Teacher?</b> <b>Answer:</b> We are not currently covering this cost as we are not part of the Trust. I think going forwards we may see a reduction in the amount of time she spends with us if there are further delays to the conversion.</p> <p><b>Governors then asked:</b> <b>Question:</b> <b>In terms of SENDCo support, what is the Trust currently providing?</b> <b>Answer:</b> They are providing support in respect of background assessments and ensuring the necessary evidence is in place for Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) applications and completing these for our pupils.</p> <p>However, I am not sure what the level of support will be going forwards.</p> <p>Although, a member of Fowlmere staff is keen to take on the role of SENDCo, they will still need support.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> <b>Could we get specialist SEND support from the LA?</b> <b>Answer:</b> Again, I think the issue is that the LA are less engaged with us as they think we are part of the Trust.</p> <p>The following two other items of minor business were also discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. External PE provider KR advised that the external provision of PE has been paused and provided governors with some background information as to why.</li> </ol>	

	<p>ii. <b>Communication</b>  A governor raised a minor concern over the platform the school currently uses to communicate with parents and asked that consideration is given as to how best to ensure parents always receive the relevant information.</p> <p>During the brief discussion that followed on this matter, governors noted that as is usual, forms will be sent to parents at the start of the academic year to collect personal details.</p> <p>In addition, KR advised that this year, school reports will be printed to simplify the process.</p> <p>Governors also recommended that checking and proof-reading of any communications is undertaken as any errors reflect negatively on the school.</p>	
18.	<p><b>Proposed Dates and Times of Future Meetings</b>  <b>Dates of the FGB meetings for the 2024/2025 academic year were proposed and agreed as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Wednesday 25 September 2024</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Wednesday 4 December 2024</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Wednesday 5 February 2025</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Wednesday 26 March 2025</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Wednesday 30 April 2025</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Wednesday 9 July 2025</i></li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Close of Meeting</b>  There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.40pm.</p>	