

Minutes

Approved by the Governing Body

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

Wednesday 4th December 2024 - 6.30pm

Via Microsoft Teams

Present

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

Apologies for Absence

None

In attendance

Lisa White (LW), Clerk Sue Wright (SW), Executive Head Teacher Holly Frassall (HF), Special Educational Needs and Disability (SENDCo) (until 6.50pm)

No.	Item	Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence	
	HW opened the meeting at 6.30pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
	HW also welcomed Holly Frassall, Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-	
	ordinator (SENDCo) and thanked her for joining the meeting.	
	There were no apologies for absence.	
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2.	Declaration of Interests in relation to the Agenda	
	It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in relation to the agenda.	
	It was then proposed and agreed to bring Item 9 of the agenda forward to allow	
	HF to leave once she has shared her SEND update.	

9. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Report

HF explained that she has only been in post since September and as an initial body of work, has been working in conjunction with class teachers to review and RAG rate the school's SEND register.

HF then explained that she has also been working her way through existing paperwork to identify where there are any gaps, as well as working on re-introducing Individualised Education Plans (IEP) and set a date to review these next term.

In addition, HF then provided the following overview:

- In terms of priorities relating to the SEND register, she has submitted requests to the Local Authority (LA) for support for some pupils and is trying to reinstate some of the contacts with specialist teachers at the LA.
- Contacted the Speech and Language Therapist and they are currently working with a pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) on a weekly basis, and providing training to this child's Teaching Assistant (TA).
- ➤ Had the opportunity to watch SW lead an annual review, which she found very helpful, as it was very much child led.
- Reviewed the equipment and resources in classrooms to support children with their learning and engagement and purchased new items where necessary.
- Attended Trust and LA networking sessions for SENDCos, as well as training.
- Reinstated weekly TA meetings to include a review of staff Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Also, looked at introducing some Phonics work and worked on the reading provision across the school, with a focus on the lowest 20% in each class and what the school is doing to support them.
- > Reviewed different assessments and the administration that is needed for each type.
- Introduced Lego club to provide extra support for children with additional needs.
- Started the National Professional Qualification for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (NPQSENDCOs), which underpins the more practical work she is undertaking in school.

Governors asked:

Question:

When you took on the role of SENDCo, there was not an existing SEND register is that correct?

Answer:

There was one, but I have created a new, centralised register that is broken down into classes and is RAG rated.

I am also now looking to use Insight as a tool for SEND.

Question:

What is the level of need at Fowlmere? How many EHCPs are in place?

Answer:

There is currently one child in school with an EHCP and I would expect that there will probably be a further 2 over the next year or so.

There are however lots of children on the register whose needs are generally being met in the classroom.

Question:

How does that compare to national average?

Answer

I do not have that information to hand, so I will find out.

Check how the number of EHCPs at Fowlmere compares to national average. ACTION

HF

A governor then queried that the figures were previously higher than that and KR explained that another child also has an EHCP, but they are currently accessing alternative provision.

Question:

Is one of the reasons for the reduction because of the challenge in getting children assessed?

Answer:

The need is very much cohort specific. It is hard to say that the need is declining as children coming into Reception do not get assessed until Year 1.

There is still a high need in school, and I think unfortunately, the provision was not consistent previously.

We do have a significant number of children on the watch list, and this is an area of focus in the school.

Question:

One of the areas of development within the School Development Plan (SDP) for this year is parental engagement. Have there been challenges?

Answer:

Most parents are receptive to having the conversation now that they can see things progressing.

After checking, we have 22 children on the SEND register with 3 pupils in Reception to watch, but I am not sure how that compares to national.

Question:

In terms of teaching staff and supporting them with adaptive teaching processes, how is that being received?

Answer:

Again, I have found everyone receptive and positive. Staff have been keen to make changes and happy with feedback from specialist teachers.

SW agreed with this adding that she does not have any concerns over lack of engagement from staff.

KR then advised that the main area of concern raised by parents is whether newer members of staff know their children well enough to provide the support they need, adding that work is being undertaken to therefore address any gaps.

Question:

Is there any feedback from the specialist teachers and if so, can this be shared with governors as part of our monitoring?

Answer:

We do receive feedback, but I would like to share this with KR first to check if it is possible to share this more widely.

Check with KR if it is possible to share feedback from specialist teachers with the Governing Body. ACTION

HF

Question:

Are you enjoying the NPQ?

Answer:

Yes, very much so.

	As there were no further questions, PB thanked HF for joining the meeting and for providing her SEND update.	
	It was noted that HF left the meeting at 6.50pm.	
	A governor wished to note how impressed they are with the introduction of weekly meetings with TAs and KR agreed, adding that HF had approached her to ask if she could lead on this.	
	Standing Items	
3.	Membership of the Governing Body / Governor Recruitment i. 4 x Co-opted Governor vacancies, 1 x LA Governor vacancy. It was proposed and agreed to discuss governor recruitment under Item 4 Matters Arising.	
4.	Minutes of last meeting and matters arising from the previous meetings Draft standard minutes from the meeting held on 25 th September 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.	

Matters Arising from previous meetings:

Item	Action	Who?	Status		
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.		
10	Share the Trust's monitoring visit template with governors. HW / KR / SW to propose further visits for the Summer term.	SW HW / KR / SW	Action c/f Schedule updated. Action complete.		
11	Link governors to Smartlog once the school joins the Trust.	SW	Action ongoing pending the school joining the Trust.		
9 July 2	2024				
4	Governors to contact local businesses, friends and acquaintances to ask for volunteers to take on the role of governor.	All	Action ongoing.		
9	Share the LA Safeguarding Monitoring report for the September FGB meeting.	SW	Action c/f KR to email Trust for a copy in SW's absence. ACTION KR		
25 th Se	ptember 2024				
6	Share login details for the school website with governors.	KR	n/a		
	Undertake an audit of the school website.	AC	Action c/f		
7	All governors to read the updated KCSiE guidance for September 2024 and confirm they have done so on Governor Hub.	HW	Action complete.		

	Share link on Cyber Security with KR.	LW	Action complete. KR confirmed that all staff have completed this training, with records added to the Single Central Record (SCR).
	Contact the DfE to ascertain what support the school is eligible for given the ongoing delays to the conversion process.	РВ	Action complete.
11	Add Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) to the December FGB meeting agenda.	LW	Action complete.
12	Arrange a SEND visit for Autumn 1.	HW	Action c/f
14	Update the draft monitoring schedule with the above visits and link visits with SDP priorities.	PB	Action complete.
15	Ask SW to provide Prevent training for staff and governors.	KR	Trust does this in January. SW will send online links to governors.
16	Add approval of deferred policies to the December FGB meeting.	LW	Action complete.

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

School Meals Survey

As previously advised, a survey on school meals will be undertaken when a permanent provision is in place.

KR explained however that as of the next day, school meals will be provided by another local school's kitchen, and this will remain in place until the school becomes part of the Trust.

Governor vacancies

HW confirmed that a request for volunteers has been added to Facebook and the Fowlmere Flyer, with some interest shown from a couple of potential applicants.

KR then advised that she has been approached by someone who may be interested in joining the Governing Body, and AC added that she has identified two other potential candidates.

KR then advised that she has also been approached by a volunteer who would like to join the 'Reading Army', adding that their mother would also like to reinstate Forest School

Website audit

KR explained that the school has undertaken an audit of the website, with all statutory documents now uploaded, adding that any items identified as part of the recent LA Safeguarding visit have also either been actioned or in the process of being actioned.

A governor asked how easy it was to update the school website and KR explained that although it is not the most user-friendly website, there is no point in changing it until the school joins the Trust, as they have the same website across all schools.

Another governor asked:

Question:

What is the technical level of ability in school, for instance, would it be possible to include 'latest news' on the website?

Answer:

It is something that we could look at, as the Office Manager is very knowledgeable and resourceful.

It was noted therefore that this governor would contact the Office Manager directly to discuss their ideas on this matter.

Main Discussion Items

5. Safeguarding

The following reports were shared with governors for their review prior to the meeting:

- i. Governor Monitoring Visit Safeguarding 7 November 2024
- ii. LA Safeguarding Note of Visit 12 November 2024
- iii. LA Safeguarding MyConcern Visit 21 November 2024

During the meeting, KR provided the following update:

- Electronic sign in system has been amended to include the correct Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the school.
- 2023 Safeguarding Policy has been removed.
- Boundary Risk Assessment has been written.
- Single Central Record (SCR) has been updated so that all checks on new staff have been undertaken, although a couple of documents are still to be received.
- Letter of assurance from Cam Academy Trust has been received.
- File review has been undertaken and documents archived in secure locations as necessary. Work is ongoing to obtain any documentation that is missing.
- Lanyards are all in place.
- Work ongoing to address any concerns raised as part of the latest Health and Safety audit.
- Damage to the wall has been repaired with a Risk Assessment created before the repair and after.
- Letter of assurance from Kids Club for all staff has been received.
- Updating of DBS checks for volunteers is in progress.

A governor asked:

Question:

Should our HR provider, EPM follow up on staff references?

Answer:

Yes, they should, but they are not very responsive currently.

On behalf of the Governing Body, PB thanked KR for the significant amount of work done in a short amount of time.

A discussion then took place regarding whether the correct process is now in place to ensure that all staff have access to MyConcern to report any Safeguarding concerns, during which KR explained that those staff without a laptop are now able to access a laptop in the library, with the expectation that they will log their own concerns.

KR further explained that some staff are not confident in logging concerns and as such further training will be provided in the Spring term for those who need it.

Governors asked:

Question:

What are the barriers to staff? Is it that some of the concerns are related to welfare rather than Safeguarding?

Answer:

There is an element of that, but we encourage staff to log anything that they would raise if they were talking to a parent.

There is also an element of staff worrying that they may get it wrong, but we have told staff we would rather this is the case than not logging a concern at all.

Previously, lack of access to a laptop has also been a barrier and having one in the library will help with this.

We have also told staff that if an incident takes place in the playground and 3 people witness it, everyone should log the incident.

Question:

Is it in their job description to report and action any Safeguarding concerns?

I will need to double check but staff know that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Question:

Do staff know what to do if they have a concern over a member of staff or yourself and the different processes?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Has MyConcern been updated to provide functionality for staff to positively affirm they have read and understood key documents and policies?

Answer:

Yes.

This week, I have also removed and transferred records for children no longer in school.

I have also booked some training for the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) on the use of MyConcern.

A further discussion then took place regarding the number of visits from the LA in such a short space of time, with governors noting the additional stress this has caused. Governors also noted however that these visits may be in response to a concern raised on the lack of support received from the LA and the Department for Education (DfE) over recent months.

KR explained that one of those visits was to review the Phonics provision in school, expressing concern that as the Phonics Lead was absent that day, it was not a true reflection of the provision.

SW advised however that 100% of children are on track to pass the Phonics screening check this academic year, with KR adding that she has also reviewed those children who did not pass this check the previous year and established reasons why this was the case.

A brief discussion then took place regarding ensuring that consistency is always evident in respect of the quality of education.

6. Head Teacher's Report

A Head Teacher's report was shared with governors for their review prior to the meeting and covered the following areas:

- Executive Summary
- Admissions and Number on Roll
- Attendance
- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Property, Compliance, Finance, and ICT
- Staffing
- Vulnerable Pupils
- Leadership and Governance
- Curriculum Promise
- Progress and Assessment
- Parents / Carers / Community

Governors asked:

Question:

What is the expectation with regards to our Higher-Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) teaching classes when there is no staff absence?

Answer:

Question:

In normal circumstances, they are teaching 2 days in total per week, providing Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) cover including Monday afternoons for me so that I can focus on my Head Teacher role.

Question:

Are they preparing those lessons?

Answer:

Yes. They have advised that they feel more comfortable delivering lessons that they have prepared, but these are discussed with the class teacher. They are following the lesson plan, and most lessons are Music or Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) so are all scheme based.

Question:

Do they have the subject expertise to deliver these lessons to the older age groups?

Answer:

Yes, but there is still some training to be undertaken.

At this point, a governor expressed concern over the amount of time the school's HLTA is teaching, but whilst SW agreed this is not ideal, she explained that the core subjects of English and Maths are being taught by KR in the mornings.

SW further explained that with the current financial situation, there is no other option in order to maintain a balanced budget, with other schools doing the same.

Question:

Are the other teachers qualified to teach the classes they are teaching? Answer:

Yes.

A governor then asked for additional information on the student teacher and KR explained that they are currently on their final block placement and will be increasing their days from 3 to 4 after Christmas.

Governors then asked:

Question:

Who is in class supporting that member of staff?

Answer

The Goldfinches Class teacher and I am their mentor.

Question:

When that member of staff was absent, who was with this teacher then?

Answer:

There was a Teaching Assistant in the class with them, and I was monitoring the provision.

As already advised, ideally, we would want a qualified teacher in class during staff absence, but recruitment is currently challenging.

SW then added that if the expected absence had been for a further week, the school would have recruited a supply teacher.

Question:

How does our HLTA feel about the amount of work they are doing? Are there any concerns with them also being a parent?

Answer:

No. They are very aware of professional boundaries and have always been so.

I am aware they are providing a lot of extra support, but I am hopeful that things will stabilise soon.

Question:

With regards to the Curriculum, are we still buying in our PE provision?

Answer:

Yes. We are using the Get Set for PE scheme which is very good and have also recently changed our Music scheme to Get Set for Music.

Question:

Why is there such a high number of open Safeguarding concerns?

Answer

This is no longer the case, as I have reviewed those allocated to me and closed them where appropriate to do so. I have also asked the other members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to review those concerns allocated to them.

I believe the number has reduced from 28 to 7.

7. Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

KR referred governors to the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) that was shared with them prior to the meeting and explained that although her intention was to produce this document in conjunction with SW, it was written and subsequently reviewed by the School Improvement Partner during their visit.

KR then explained that although she has graded Teaching and Learning as 'good' in Reception, the behaviours for learning in other year groups need addressing and as such, these have been graded as 'requires improvement'.

Governors asked:

Question:

Why have you graded Quality of Education as 'improving'?

Answer:

The advice was to put ourselves slightly below where we want to be and where areas have been graded as 'improving' that is because we are not where I want them to be.

However, by the end of the Spring term, I expect these to be 'good'.

Question:

What are the issues? How is this being manifested?

Answer:

I feel there is a lot of unnecessary chat, and the noise level is above what is acceptable for a classroom. I have also seen some children rocking back on chairs and children congregating in the middle of the classroom to have a chat.

These are all low-level disruptions that have become normalised behaviour, and we need to break that habit and get staff to recognise that this continued, learned behaviour needs to be challenged.

This is our number one priority as it is not what I want for this school and our children, and whilst this is happening, there is a risk that the Quality of Education is dipping, and this is what I want to address and change.

Question:

Is there evidence to support this judgement?

Answer:

The therapeutic approach that the school uses is working well, as there are very few behavioural incidents. Staff in Key Stage One (KS1) are very tight on learning behaviours but this needs to be improved in Key Stage Two (KS2) and we are working on this.

The next step in our therapeutic approach is training on developing a Behaviour Curriculum and understanding emotional literacy

Question:

Is there an element that teaching is not as good as it could be, and children are not being challenged or engaged or is it due to behavioural issues?

Answer:

I think it is about the children not always having the resilience and confidence to try.

Question:

Are there therefore two issues – one group of children who are not resilient and another group where teaching is not challenging enough?

Answer:

There is an element of this, and there are children with additional needs who do not have the resilience to try again.

A governor then mentioned a book that could be beneficial, and KR explained that she is currently looking at ways to build more time for staff to read books to support their Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

A governor then asked:

Question:

Have you surveyed staff as to what CPD they want?

Answer:

We regular discuss this as part of weekly meetings.

8. **Academisation Update**

KR advised that following a delay, the last meeting took place on 25 November, with the DfE now suggesting the school works towards a conversion date of 1 February. KR added that this date was deemed as unacceptable by the Trust and as such, the revised planned conversion date is now 1 January.

KR then advised that a further meeting is scheduled week commencing 9 December, adding that EPM has also been in contact to discuss the transfer of staff contracts, which is a step forward.

Governors noted that the ongoing delays to the process relate to the agreed payment amount between the LA and the Diocese.

Governors also recognised the need to share an update with parents, given the ongoing delays.

It was also noted that PB has written to the Diocese, the LA and the local Member of Parliament expressing the Governing Body's disappointment in these delays, as well as concern over the lack of response from the LA as to how they are going to support the school to meet the revised proposed conversion date.

10. Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2024/2025 and 2023/2024 Impact Analysis It was noted that the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2024/2025 and 2023/2024 Impact Analysis was not shared for this meeting, and will be shared in due course.

11. Inspection Data Summary Report

In addition, it was noted that the latest Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR) was not shared for this meeting and will be shared with governors in due course.

12. Finance Update

Budget review

KR explained that due to ongoing issues with the school's financial reporting system, the School Business Manager had apologised for only just emailing a Budget update earlier that day.

KR then explained that the current predicted carry forward at the end of this financial year is approximately £17k, but a further review of the Budget will be undertaken to see if any additional savings can be achieved.

To receive a summary report from the Pay Committee regarding approval of pay awards.

Due to the nature of the content of the discussion that took place against this matter, it was noted that the rest of this item is covered by a separate Confidential minute.

13. Governor Monitoring and Evaluation

PB referred governors to the updated Governor Monitoring Schedule 2024/2025 that was shared with them prior to the meeting and explained that he has tried to populate the schedule based on the School Development Plan (SDP) priorities.

A discussion then took place with regards to how to ensure monitoring is undertaken given the low number of governors currently, and it was proposed and agreed to introduce weekly, virtual monitoring visits where applicable to do so.

In addition, it was noted that statutory monitoring, such as on Safeguarding will be undertaken on at least a termly basis, with governors also considering Safeguarding as part of every other monitoring visit they undertake.

The following action was therefore agreed:

Update the 2024/2025 governor monitoring schedule to reflect weekly, virtual visits and areas of focus. ACTION

PB

14. Governor Training

It was noted that a discussion on Governor training will be deferred to the next meeting.

15. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

As noted under Item 4 Matters Arising, all staff have completed Cyber Security training in addition to GDPR training.

A governor asked:

Question:

Have there been any breaches or Subject Access Requests?

Answer:

No.

KR then explained that the LA has advised that it will no longer be providing IT support and as such, she has contacted the Trust to ascertain who their provider is.

SW added however that the cost of this service has increased and as such, will need to be reviewed with the School Business Manager.

A brief discussion then took place regarding maintaining the current class structure, with KR advising that last time she checked the portal, there were 19 applications.

16. Policies

The following policies were shared with governors for their review prior to the meeting:

- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Autumn 2024
- Children Missing from Education 2024
- Draft Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions or Medical Needs Policy 2024
- Educational Visits and School Trips Policy 2024
- First Aid Policy Autumn 2024
- Governor Visits Policy 2024
- Low Level Safeguarding Concerns Policy Summer 2024
- Safer Recruitment Policy 2024
- Suspension and Inclusion Policy Autumn 2024

A governor asked:

Question:

Are there any significant changes to these policies or anything you want to highlight?

Answer:

No, they are standard policies.

However, although the Health and Safety Policy was not included on the agenda, it has been updated and is based on the most recent Trust model policy and tailored to the school.

Subject to any further queries raised by governors by 9th December and following some minor amendments and queries that were addressed during the meeting, it was noted that the Governing Body approved the above policies.

Routine Business

17. Any Other Business

It was noted that was no other business added to the agenda.

A governor however asked KR to remain on the call so that they could discuss a matter outside of this forum.

18.	Dates and Times of Future Meetings	
	Meeting dates and times were confirmed as follows:	
	Wednesday 5 February 2025	
	Wednesday 26 March 2025	
	Wednesday 30 April 2025	
	Wednesday 9 July 2025	
	meeting to discuss the progress of Maths in school. Head Teacher to invite the Owls Class teacher / Maths Lead to the next FGB meeting. ACTION	KR
	Close of Meeting There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.45pm.	