

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE FERMAIN
ACADEMY HELD ON 5th JULY 2018 AT 4.10PM**

Governors Present: Stephen Armstrong (SA) Chair
 Nic Brindle (NB) Principal
 Emma Colley (EC)
 Rob Halsall (RH)
 Tim Haselwood (TH)
 Martin Howlett (MH)
 Toby Seth (TSe)

Also in attendance: Claire Leslie Clerk to the Governors
 Lee Cambray (LC) Deputy Headteacher
 Sam Finch (SF) Business Manager

PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

		Actions
1	<p>APOLOGIES & ADDITIONAL AOB ITEMS</p> <p>1.1 Governors noted and accepted the apologies received from Tony Smith (TS.) Governors noted the absence of Jane Dyson (JD).</p> <p>1.2 Part 1 business tabled for consideration at the end of the meeting: Leave of absence policy.</p>	
2	<p>CONFLICT OF INTEREST</p> <p>TH is Business Manager at Tytherington School..</p>	
3	<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>TS joined the meeting at 4.17pm.</p> <p>SF joined the meeting at 4.20pm.</p> <p>The resignation of JD was received. It was noted that SA had accepted this and extended thanks to JD on behalf of the Governors for her contribution to The Fermain Academy (FA).</p> <p>An application has been received from Jo Burrows (JB) to become a</p>	

	<p>Governor. JB has a strong background in mental health and psychotherapy for eating disorders and will bring a wealth of experience to the governing board. Her application was approved subject to the return of a satisfactory DBS check.</p> <p>Appointed for a term of 4 years from the date of receipt of the satisfactory DBS check.</p> <p>Congratulations were extended to TS on his appointment as Headteacher to a school in Yorkshire. It was noted that this may impact his ability to remain on the governing board.</p> <p>It was noted that all governors should be proactive in recruiting new governors, sympathetic to the ethos of FA and the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) and that if possible the diversity of the board should be increased. All applications to become governors should be vetted.</p> <p>Governors wish to co-opt LC to the governing body. It was noted that the Articles of Association limit the number of staff governors to one third of the governing board. It was agreed that the co-option be delayed until at least one further governor is appointed.</p> <p>Q: What important skills of the current governing body need to be boosted?</p> <p>A: The key training needs are in “Leadership and Management” and “Managing Charities”.</p> <p>MH offered to provide some training on Leadership and Management and was thanked for his offer.</p> <p>Action: MH to take steps to offer the training during the academic year 2018/19</p> <p>RH noted that the induction for governors without a background in education is very important. It was agreed that work should be done on a FA induction to run alongside that offered by CEC.</p> <p>Action: RH to meet with NB and LC to agree what might be covered in the FA induction.</p>	<p>MH</p> <p>RH, NB and LC</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>4.1 The part one minutes of the spring term full governing board meeting on 29th March 2018 were agreed as an accurate record, signed by the Chair and retained by FA..</p>	

	<p>4.2 All matters arising are addressed elsewhere.</p>	
5	<p>CHAIR'S ACTION</p> <p>A Strategy Committee has been <u>formed</u> created. The membership is: SA, NB, MH, TS The committee will meet termly.</p> <p>SA reported that he had attended a Department for Education (DfE) conference which had stressed the need for governors to drive the strategy of schools.</p> <p>Following the successful MAT bid, work must commence to write a plan, set up and determine the ethos of the MAT. A Chair for the MAT will be sought and NB will transition from his post as Headteacher of FA to Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the MAT.</p> <p>The creation of the new committee will facilitate strategic decision making. Membership of the committee will grow as plans for the MAT develop; in particular there will be a requirement for a member with finance expertise. It will be important for a representative of this committee to be on the MAT body to make sure that it is held to account. MH will take that role. The possibility of a conflict of interest will be avoided because MH will not Chair the MAT.</p> <p>The AXIS school in Crewe will be opening in 2020. The MAT has to be in place before major capital projects start; the deadline is September 2019. It is possible to have an interim Trust. The committee could fulfil that function if there is an urgent need.</p> <p>Action: The Terms of Reference of the Strategic Committee will be resolved by SA and MH in September and brought to the next Full Governing Board for approval.</p>	SA and MH
6	<p>PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND EPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES</p> <p>6.1 Resources Committee focused on the budget for 2018/19. Some standards and policies were approved by the committee..</p> <p>6.2 Standards Committee noted the outstanding progress made by students. FA has exceeded its targets and was commended on this by Ofsted.</p> <p>FA retained its Centre of Excellence under the Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) framework. Inspectors confirmed that FA was virtually at the standard of flagship school but indicated that this status was not available until a school had held Centre of Excellence for at least 3 years.</p>	

	<p>Ofsted had expressed concern at the number of pupils who have undiagnosed Special Educational Needs (SEN) difficulties. There will be a development point in the Ofsted report for FA to work with parents, students and partner schools to ensure that undiagnosed SEN pupils are diagnosed and supported. The committee discussed how better to engage with the Local Authority (LA) to obtain Educational Psychologist (EP) reports and secure Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) where these are appropriate.</p> <p>It was noted that no EP time is given to FA. Pupil’s “home schools” remain obliged to provide EP assessment. Unfortunately following the placement of pupils at FA home schools are sometimes reluctant to allocate EP resources to placed pupils. FA has a need for designated EP support. This is particularly important because of the vulnerability of many of FA’s pupils.</p> <p>6.3 Reports from governors with special responsibilities.</p> <p>There were none.</p>	
7	<p>FINANCIAL MATTERS</p> <p>7.1 Governors noted that the budget had been scrutinised in detail at the Resources and Audit committee meeting on 20th June 2018. The projected surplus at year end is now £39,000 against an original budgeted surplus of £13,000. Additional pupil income largely accounts for the increase in surplus. The budget for 2018/19 shows a projected surplus of £43,000 based on a conservative estimate of 56 pupils.</p> <p>NB and LC joined the meeting at 4.25pm</p> <p>Q: How is the sum of £6,000 per annum for the rolling programme of ICT replacement and upgrade calculated? A: FA Business Manager and ICT director have looked at FA’s likely ICT needs and estimate this to be a realistic figure.</p> <p>Governors approved the rolling programme for the maintenance and upgrade of ICT facilities.</p> <p>Q: The staff costs amount to 73% of the total income. The general expectation is that around 80% of the budget in a state school should be allocated to staff costs. Does this imply that FA is understaffed? A: No. FA benefits from being a new school with staff not at the top of their grades. The staffing structure is well planned to make appropriate use of learning mentors and teaching assistants and excellent training is provided to staff. Over the next few years as staff move up the salary scales the percentage of budget allocated to staffing costs will increase to around 80%.</p>	

	<p>The budget was approved and thanks were extended to SF for her hard work in preparing it and to TH for his support and oversight.</p> <p>7.2 It was noted that the staffing structure is constantly changing as a result of the increasing pupil numbers. The administrative structure of FA will remain the same. A cleaner is to be appointed to allow the caretaker to concentrate on Health & Safety issues following the recent Health & Safety audit conducted with RH.</p> <p>The staffing structure was approved.</p> <p>7.3 There are no annual contracts to approve.</p> <p>7.4 The clerk left the room from 5.20 to 5.30pm. Governors resolved to continue to buy in clerking services from Cheshire East Council (CEC).</p> <p>SF left the meeting at 5.45pm.</p>	
8	<p>PART ONE HEADTEACHERS REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>8.1 Headteachers report. The Headteacher spoke on the report which had been uploaded to the Governors Virtual Office (GVO) prior to the meeting.</p> <p>FA has been judged outstanding in the recent Ofsted inspection. It was noted that the lead inspector commented that FA “sets the bar for Alternative Provision (AP)”.</p> <p>Staff teams are committed, driven and work very hard. NB is keen that FA should become a teaching school for AP, Pupil Referral Units (PRU) and SEN.</p> <p>It was noted that FA will increase in size to 60 pupils in September 2018.</p> <p>Q: Legal advice is being obtained from Brabners. They are good but very expensive. Is this good value for money? A: Yes, they agreed to price match a cheaper competitor.</p> <p>SA proposed and TSe seconded a motion thanking and congratulating NB and the team at FA in the very successful outcome of the Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>8.2 School Development Plan FA is developing in line with the SDP.</p>	

	<p>Ofsted noted that the reading agenda was “in its infancy”. Since the inspection, progress has been made. Reading periods are now embedded and have been well accepted by pupils. There is a trolley of books and newspapers. The reading programme will develop further. Ofsted inspectors suggested the introduction of pupil book reviews.</p> <p>The SDP for 2018/19 is not yet completed.</p> <p>The SDP will have a focus on careers and will link to the new Gatsby Benchmarks.</p> <p>MH noted that Cheshire East Council (CEC) has invested £2.4 million on improved career provision in schools and that NB needs to sign up to secure access to the new resources.</p> <p>Action: NB to complete and upload plan to the GVO so that it is available for approval by governors at the next Full Governing Board. NB to register to gain access to CEC new career provision.</p> <p>8.3 Attendance</p> <p>NB noted that there are some difficult issues. LC was commended for his hard work trying to engage social care professionals with the issue of school attendance.</p> <p>SA noted that he had observed LC managing a relationship with a parent and had been very impressed.</p> <p>Governors noted that a rise in domestic violence in Macclesfield was having a serious and deleterious effect on a number of young people and on some pupils in the school.</p>	NB
9	<p>CHAIR OF GOVERNOR’S ANNUAL REPORT</p> <p>The Chair’s spoke on the report, received by governors in advance of the meeting.:</p> <p>9.1 Governor training and development</p> <p>SA proposed further discussion on how best to secure this.</p> <p>SA noted three options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Cheshire East Council (CEC) training package. • Use Educare online training. • Use National Governors’ Association (NGA) online training. <p>SA noted that he has not made any use of CEC training over the academic year 2017/18 as it is too difficult for him to access.</p> <p>RH noted that he had attended training provided by CEC and found it useful.</p> <p>It was noted that Educare provide good training modules but that this does not provide the opportunity to meet other governors. It was felt that personal interaction between governors at training sessions can be a</p>	

	<p>valuable experience, particularly for those without an education background.</p> <p>It as agreed that FA will continue to make use of CEC training and that once the governing board is better established governors will look to provide in house training.</p> <p>Action: TSe has a governors' handbook produced in house for The King's School. He will share this</p> <p>TSe left the meeting at 5.36pm</p> <p>9.2 Governors' visits and monitoring</p> <p>It was noted that the planned focus week did not occur because of problems with governors' availability.</p> <p>SA invited discussion on the best way for governors to gain a clear understanding of FA's work. SA questioned whether focus weeks are an important way of securing the oversight and suggested that governors might want to link their visits to specific aspects of FA's Self Evaluation Form (SEF) outcomes and report back to the Full Governing Board (FGB) on their observations.</p> <p>It was agreed that governor oversight should be managed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By two annual focus weeks held in November and at the end of May. <p>Action: The clerk to assist with setting dates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NB will produce a work plan by reference to FA School Development Plan (SDP) and the SEF specifying oversight requirements. Governors will work in pairs to visit FA and review progress thematically. Governor pairs will include one governor with a background in education and one with a business background. • Governor pairs will also link specifically to a named member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). <p>Action: NB to produce work plan mapping oversight needs to the SEF, named SLT members and the SDP and upload to the GVO. Governors to agree pairings and inspection dates.</p>	<p>TSe</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>NB Governors</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)</p> <p>FA outsources its compliance arrangements; there is no designated Data Protection Officer at FA.</p> <p>FA is data compliant. There is an annual audit of practices.</p>	

	<p>The signing in book is being replaced by an electronic process to protect data.</p> <p>It was noted that a named governor needs to take responsibility for data protection. TH was appointed as designated governor.</p>	
11	<p>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER / EXTERNAL ADVISOR / LEADERSHIP PARTNER VISIT</p> <p>Jane Lowe is keen to continue as FA Improvement Partner/ External Advisor (SIP). She is a nationally recognised authority on Alternative Provision (AP) schools. The governors approved and welcomed Jane Lowe's appointment as external advisor.</p>	
12	<p>DIRECTOR'S REPORT</p> <p>The summer term report had been circulated to the Governing Board, Resource and Audit Committee and the Standards Committee in advance of the meeting with no further matters arising.</p>	
13	<p>GOVERNOR MONITORING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>This was discussed as part of the Chair's report.</p>	
14	<p>SCHOOL POLICIES</p> <p>The Leave of Absence policy had been circulated in advance of the meeting:</p> <p>Q: Has this draft policy been based on any pre-existing policy. A: Yes it is in the same form as the Cheshire East Council (CEC) policy.</p> <p>The policy was approved.</p>	
15	<p>PLANNED RESIDENTIAL VISITS</p> <p>EC explained that a booking has been made for students to attend a residential visit to Wincle to a cottage run by a local charity, Back Dane Trust. Students will take part in Peak Pursuits activities including kayaking and canoeing and outdoor climbing and abseiling. Two separate single sex groups will be taken over a 3 day period and each will have one and a half days of activities and one overnight stay.</p>	

	<p>This was approved.</p> <p>Governors noted that the Risk Assessment had been completed and that liability insurance was in place.</p> <p>NB advised governors that he is hoping to organise an overseas trip for the academic year 2019/20.</p>	
15	<p>MEETINGS</p> <p>The calendar of meetings was approved and appears at Appendix 1. All meetings to commence at 5.00pm.</p>	
17	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no further business.</p>	

The meeting ended at 6.08

.....Chair

.....Dated

Appendix 1 below

THE FERMAIN ACADEMY

2018-2019 Governor's Calendar

September 2018						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

October 2018						
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November 2018						
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December 2018						
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30	31					

January 2019						
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27	28	29	30	31		

February 2019						
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March 2019						
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31						

April 2019						
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28	29	30				

May 2019						
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June 2019						
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July 2019						
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August 2019						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Strategy Committee



FGB meeting



Standards Committee



Resources & Audit Committee



Holiday

