

MINUTES OF MEETING

School Edwalton Primary
Meeting title: Special meeting of the governing body of Edwalton Primary School
Date and time: Monday 23, February 2015 at 6.00pm
Location: At the school

Membership
'A' denotes absence

	Mrs S Dawson (chair)
	Mr B Owens (head)
A	Mrs C Fraser
	Mr S Dare
	Mr G Anderson
A	Mrs L O'Raw
	Ms L Shanahan
	Mr J Baddley
	Ms L Paget
	Mrs E Godber
A	Ms J Hodgkinson
	Mrs J Le Mare

In attendance Mr H Jones (minuting secretary)

Action

GB/01/15 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received, and accepted, from Ms Hodgkinson and Mrs Fraser.

GB/02/15 Determination of Confidentiality of Business & Declarations of Interest

The Chair confirmed to the meeting that issues of confidentiality could be discussed but that all were confidential to the meeting. Issues and conflicts of interest were to be declared and a withdrawal made from the meeting at the appropriate time.

GB/03/15 Explanation of the process

- FHT would carry out a thorough but gentle due diligence visit, lasting 2 days.
- an 8 week consultation process involving the whole school community would follow with full support from FHT.
- the 2-way process between the school and FHT ensures clarity throughout.
- one Edwalton representative (probably the Chair of Governors) would become a member of FHT Board of Directors.
- Mr Owens would become a member of FHT Strategic Heads Group.

GB/04/15 Edwalton visit to FHT (19/12/14)

A summary of the Flying High Trust (FHT) meeting with some of the governors had previously been circulated (and were on dropbox) and a full discussion took place concerning the implications and issues resulting from this visit. During the discussions, governors were encouraged to ask questions. Mrs Dawson explained that the FHT accounts have been published on their

website. Reserves are healthy and there are no insolvency issues. The accounts are consolidated across FHT members.

Q. Would any decision made to work with FHT need over 50% or 100% support?

A. Consultation has to take place with the wider school community and a vote does not take place. After full consultation to gather the feelings of the wider school community, the governing body would make a decision in order to safeguard the future of the school.

Q. How many primary schools have become academies?

A. Nationally, there are approximately 70% of primary schools which are not yet academies. Mr Owens commented that the RLA have talked about moving towards a Multi-Academy Trust and that this would have implications for the LA and Rushcliffe schools.

Q. How is FHT organised?

A. FHT is a limited company that is one business with separate working identities (i.e. the schools). The governing body would still function and have the same responsibilities that it currently has, with a representative on the FHT Board of Directors. Governors were referred to the FHT organogram which showed how FHT is structured and how its schools and their governing bodies contribute in a 2-way process.

Q. Who are the 'Members of FHT' (as indicated on the FHT organogram)?

A. Mrs Dawson agreed to find out who the members are.

SD

Q. What would be the role of the headteacher?

A. Exactly the same as it is now and Mr Owens would become a member of FHT Strategic Heads Group.

Q. Would the school's representative on the FHT Board of Directors be the sole means of communication?

A. FHT encourages 2-way clear channels of communication with a lot of input from, and links between, school members. This would probably result in the school having more influence than it currently does with the LA.

Q. How long have FHT been working with schools?

A. Approximately 2 years. FHT wish to keep their primary school ethos but would work with a secondary school if needed. FHT is trying to resist working with 'special measures' schools, although DfE are encouraging them to. FHT aims to work with local hub schools (within a one hour drive) as a further aid to communication. FHT are eventually aiming to work with 20 schools. They currently work with 8.

Q. Will FHT support harmonising the school's policies?

A. Yes.

Q. Are the FHT 'Mocksteads' a bought in service?

A. No, these are part of the FHT service. FHT would provide a full 2-way support package after a 'Mockstead' and stress it is what happens after a 'Mockstead' that is most important.

Q. How would becoming an FHT member effect the school's income (e.g. per pupil, pupil premium)?

A. The income the school receives would not change, but will go to FHT instead of LA. FHT redirects the income to school. The school should benefit from a sharper business practice. FHT would still use some LA services if it gave value for money, e.g. FHT use LA payroll service.

Q. What would happen to monies raised by the school, e.g. PTA, school fund, lettings?

A. These would be considered as 'restricted funds' and ring-fenced for the school, not FHT, to spend.

GB/05/15 Implications for pupils, staff and governors

Teaching staff and pupils wouldn't notice much of a change at all. The school business manager and office staff would see most change using a new business model. FHT would fully support and help the business manager with this change. The main principle of the change would be that under FHT the school would have greater control and influence on decisions made than it currently does. The governing body would still function and have the same responsibilities that it currently has, with a representative on the FHT Board of Directors.

Q. Would FHT be involved in staff recruitment?

A. No, except for a headteacher or if the school requested help.

Q. What is 'pay portability'?

A. 'Pay portability' is when a person takes a step down in their role (e.g. headteacher goes back to being a classroom teacher), but would still receive their original salary. FHT do not have 'pay portability' and this could cause issues with the unions.

GB/06/15 Staff and parent consultation

After the due diligence visit there would be an 8 week consultation period for the wider school community, with full support from FHT, e.g. information packs, Q&A sessions, an open evening for parents. It would be very important that the wider school community, staff and parents, are kept fully informed at all stages of the process.

Q. Have there been any concerns or scepticism from staff?

A. Staff understand they would notice little change, but query any impact on their pay and pensions.

GB/07/15 Headteacher recommendations

Mr Owens stated he supported any decision by the governors to go ahead with the FHT due diligence visit.

Q. If the school were to be a member of FHT who controls admissions?

A. Mrs Dawson agreed to liaise with FHT (Paul Bennet) to clarify the issue of admissions.

SD

GB/08/15 Decision and next steps

Mrs Dawson proposed that Edwalton should move towards becoming a member of FHT. The proposal was seconded by Mr Dare. The proposal was unanimously

approved

by governors.

Next steps

- FHT will be asked to carry out their 2 day gentle due diligence visit.

- There will be an 8 week consultation period for the wider school community, with full support from FHT, e.g. information packs, Q&A sessions, an open evening for parents.
- staff consultation is of prime importance and governors will keep staff fully updated.

Govs

Q. What is the anticipated timescale to become a member of FHT?

A. The school would need to apply to DfE by March 2015 to start as a FHT school in September 2015. The process takes approximately 4 months.

Mr Owens agreed to take the governor's decision, and explain the process, to staff at the next briefing meeting.

BO

GB/09/15

AOB

There were no AOB items.

The meeting closed at 7:55pm.

Signed(chair) Date

HJ/SA