

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body of Sutton-on-the-Forest CE VC Primary School on Wednesday 3 October 2018 at 6.00 pm

Present: Prof H Hall (Chair), Mr C Henderson, Mrs A Williams, Mrs J Fineran
Mrs H Pye (Headteacher), Mrs D Craig, Mrs H Morris, Mrs V Gale

In attendance: Mrs A Instone, Clerk

Those present were welcomed to the meeting.

The Chair read out the three core functions of a Governing Body, as follows:

- a) ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- b) holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- c) overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

and it was agreed that they would be included, in future, on the top of each agenda.

Minute no

Gov 1 Prayer

The meeting opened with the School Prayer.

**Gov 2 Apologies for absence, consents and declarations of interest
Welcome to new Staff and Foundation Governors, Mrs J Fineran and
Mrs D Craig**

There were no apologies for absence. Apologies for lateness had been received from Mrs Gale.

The Headteacher declared that her Brother-in-law had designed the school prospectus. There were no other declarations of interest. Register of Interest forms were distributed for completion in accordance with the annual requirement so to do.

Mrs Fineran was welcomed to her first meeting of the Governing Body and Mrs Craig was welcomed back as a Foundation Governor; they were thanked for their willingness to commit time and energy to the Governing Body.

Those present were reminded of the need to maintain confidentiality at all times.

Mrs Morris joined the meeting at 6.04 pm.

Attention was drawn to the Register of Gifts and Hospitality and all members of the Governing Body were requested to complete the form as appropriate.

Gov 3 Approve minutes for signature of the meeting dated 10 July 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2018 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

Gov 4 Matters arising from the minutes and from the Action Plan

Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Action Plan

Item 2 – no further progress had been made and it was agreed to remove the item

Item 3 – it was suggested that each meeting be held in a different classroom and that the relevant teacher be requested to give a brief presentation at the commencement of the meeting. The Headteacher suggested drawing up a timetable for the year

Mrs Gale joined the meeting at 6.05 pm.

Item 4 – Mrs Morris undertook to follow up the matter.

Gov 5 Chair's opening remarks

The Chair again welcomed those present to the meeting and went on to state that:

- a) he was pleased to have been elected as Chair
- b) he felt that it was a good time to take up the role as it coincided with a new Headteacher, a new School Improvement Adviser, a successful OFSTED visit and a positive Governor Health Check on the effectiveness of the Governing Body
- c) he wished to ensure that members of the Governing Body provided effective strategic leadership for the school, carried out their statutory duties, engaged in best practice, built on the solid foundations from the most recent OFSTED Inspection and helped to make the school an exceptional place to learn
- d) there was a considerable amount of work ahead and he listed some of the tasks
- e) procedures needed to be improved and best practice followed

- f) he had reviewed the list of statutory policies and drawn up a spreadsheet which indicated the responsible person(s) and review dates
- g) the Marketing Committee had established a sub-group with the intention of populating the website with updated information within the next year
- h) consideration needed to be given to the Governing Body vacancies, to the Committee structure, to Link Governors and to Governor training
- i) the workload needed to be shared amongst members of the Governing Body
- j) since taking up the role as Chair, he had answered the fire alarms, sent out a welcome letter to parents, posted a letter written by the former Chair to the Chair of Governors at Crayke CE Primary School and agreed to meet weekly with the Headteacher and report back to the Governing Body
- k) in the latter meetings, they had discussed the School Development Plan and appropriate data reporting systems, identified strategies to manage the volume of her teaching and the roles she was carrying out, been given a suggestion for a mentor to support her. The Headteacher had recently met with the Chair, Vice Chair and the School Improvement Adviser to undertake the Headteacher's annual appraisal meeting
- l) in order to enhance communications, he would be submitting brief reports for the school Newsletter
- m) he had attended training courses in Headteacher Appraisal and Managing Complaints.

Gov 6 Order of business

The order of business was agreed as presented.

Gov 7 Review of Committees:

- a) structure and memberships

The Chair referred to the existing structure of two Committees, Resources and Standards and Improvement, and sought the views of those present with regard to continuing with the same structure or moving to a system whereby the whole Governing Body dealt with finance and school improvement as part of its general meetings which would mean increasing the number of meetings to

once per month throughout the academic year. He outlined the benefits of so doing. The costs of using the Local Authority Clerking Service were raised and the Clerk was requested to withdraw at 6.30 pm whilst a discussion took place. She re-joined the meeting at 6.35 pm.

It was agreed to move to a 'no-Committee' structure, on a trial basis for one year, and to schedule in an additional meeting each term with a focus on the priorities of the school and to request the services of a trained Clerk. The Chair and Headteacher undertook to discuss potential dates for the additional meetings.

It was further agreed that membership of the Pupil Discipline, Staff Dismissal, Staff Dismissal Appeals and Complaints Committees would continue to be drawn from the membership of the whole Governing Body with different representatives on the two staffing Committees.

- b) appointment of Clerks to Committees

This item was no longer relevant

- c) Terms of Reference

This item was no longer relevant.

Gov 8 Review of Governor Links and Named Governors, including SCR and Training Governors

Some discussion took place with regard to the Link and Named Governor roles and a number of options were considered. The following were agreed:

Induction	-	Chair
Health and Safety	-	Mr Redfearn, subject to his agreement
Safeguarding/SEND/SCR	-	Mrs Morris and Mrs Craig
Data (SDP Priority)	-	Mr Henderson
Teaching and Learning (SDP Priority)	-	Mrs Gale
Leadership	-	Chair
Governor training	-	Mrs Williams
Finance, including pupil premium and sports funding	-	Mr Henderson and Mrs Fineran.

The Headteacher outlined the advantages of linking members of the Governing Body to different elements of the School Development Plan.

Gov 9 Governing Body Health Check

Attention was drawn to the Health Check Report, in particular to the items which had been marked in red ink, and it was agreed that:

- a) the Chair would issue a biographical pro forma to those present for completion and return, together with an updated photograph where desired
- b) Mrs Williams would organise the framing and display of Governor photographs
- c) once approved, minutes from meetings of the Governing Body would be uploaded onto the school website and replaced on a rolling programme of three.

Reference was made to the recommendations at the end of the Health Check Report in terms of training and concern was expressed with regard to the cost of the training sessions. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that, as part of her role as the Training Governor, Mrs Williams would maintain a file of all documentation from Governor training sessions and signpost those present to any new entries into the file as there was insufficient time within meetings of the Governing Body to cascade any information received. Mrs Craig indicated that she would be attending some SIAMS training.

It was noted that, in general, the recommended procedures contained within the Health Check were being followed.

Gov 10 Governing Body membership

Consideration was given to the three Co-opted Governor vacancies which existed on the Governing Body. Mrs Williams stated that she had approached a local resident and the Chair undertook to follow up the matter with him. Other possibilities were discussed.

It was agreed that the Chair would submit an article to the Parish Magazine and would also contact other schools, outside of the Easingwold cluster, to enquire whether or not they had any staff who would be willing to become Governors.

Gov 11 Review of Standing Orders and Code of Conduct

The Standing Orders and Code of Conduct were approved, subject to personalisation for the school by the Chair.

Gov 12 Virtual voting

The Clerk explained the concept and, following brief consideration of the matter, it was agreed not to adopt virtual voting.

Gov 13 Approval of policies:

a) Pay

It was noted that the Policy was the most recent template provided by North Yorkshire County Council and included the current salary structure.

Under the heading 'Scope of the Policy' on page 4, **the Chair questioned** whether or not the Policy should be reviewed by a sub-group or by the full Governing Body. It was agreed that the Policy review implementation would be by the full Governing Body.

The Chair asked the Headteacher whether the whole school staffing structure could be attached to the school's Pay Policy. The Headteacher confirmed that one had been published and that it would be possible to do so.

There were no further questions and the Policy was approved

b) Child Protection

The Policy was approved.

With regard to the Early Years' guidance, **the Chair questioned** whether or not it was necessary to formulate a policy and it was suggested, and agreed, that Mrs Fineran would seek clarification the following day when she was attending an Early Years' training course

c) Appraisal

The Appraisal Policy was approved without comment

d) Complaints

The Complaints Policy was approved without comment.

It was agreed that the Health and Safety Policy would be added to the agenda for consideration at the next meeting.

Gov 14 Role of SENDCo

It was noted that the Headteacher was currently undertaking the role of SENDCo with support from two of the Teaching Assistants.

Discussion followed and it was reported that:

- a) the Headteacher had discussed the matter with the School Improvement Adviser
- b) employing a member of staff from another school to undertake the role of SENDCo might be a possibility
- c) the Headteacher intended to raise the issue at the next meeting of the cluster Headteachers
- d) the percentage of pupils with special needs was high for such a small school.

Mrs Williams suggested that a costing to employ a qualified SENDCo for one day per week be drawn up and the Headteacher undertook to follow up the matter, although she did point out that she would prefer the role to be carried out in-house and added that it would provide a leadership development opportunity for the staff should any of them be in a position to commit the time in order to gain the qualification.

Gov 15 Governor monitoring

Mrs Morris stated that she would be attending a Governor monitoring course.

The Headteacher drew attention to the Governor Monitoring timetable which had been distributed with the agenda and ideas for monitoring visits were invited. It was suggested that those members of the Governing Body with responsibilities should arrange to visit the school each half term. In order to ensure a spread of visits, it was agreed that all dates would be submitted to Mrs Williams. The Headteacher suggested that Spring 1 would be an appropriate time for Mr Henderson to carry out a data monitoring visit. Mrs Gale volunteered to undertake a learning walk. The Headteacher suggested that Mrs Williams could visit the school to discuss cpd with the staff.

Gov 16 Governor training

This matter had already been dealt with during discussions throughout the meeting.

Gov 17 Headteacher's Report, including School Improvement Plan, SEF, pupil premium update and SEND/safeguarding/child protection and health and safety

Questions on the Headteacher's Report were invited.

She highlighted the following matters:

- a) staffing was more stable

- b) three pupils from one family had left the school in the second week of term and a further pupil would potentially leave after Christmas due to the family's relocation
- c) £1,000 had been budgeted for cpd and efforts were being made to link with other schools in order to address training needs
- d) the roofing works had been completed
- e) there would be an in-year surplus
- f) the possibility of enhancing the playground, using sports funding, was being investigated
- g) a positive health and safety meeting had been held earlier in the day
- h) the SEF had been written and distributed
- i) the fourth priority on the School Development Plan required completion
- j) a SIAMS Inspection, in which members of the Governing Body would be involved, was anticipated.

Mrs Williams expressed concern with regard to the long list of responsibilities being undertaken by the Headteacher and she responded that the list would be reviewed after Christmas.

The Chair challenged the Headteacher in connection with the costs of some of the external contracts and asked where it might be possible to reduce them. The Headteacher undertook to raise the matter with the Bursar. The issue of the effectiveness and high cost of the storage heaters was raised and the Headteacher volunteered to explore other options with the aim of reducing expenditure.

The Chair questioned whether or not it would be possible for a supply teacher to be employed, via the sports funding, in order to support the pupils at cluster sports events and the Headteacher undertook to ascertain the position with the Bursar.

Mr Henderson drew attention to an incident which had arisen in the past whereby the contact details for all pupils participating in school trips were not accurate. The Headteacher confirmed that they were up-to-date.

Mrs Morris volunteered to assist the Headteacher with the Toddler Morning and Mrs Craig undertook to attend the Open Day on 13 October 2018.

The Headteacher stated that she had approached Hambleton District Council in respect of a school sign and had been informed that planning permission would be required at a cost of £130. She added that the Parish Council had also been contacted and that an abrupt response had been received. Mrs Williams informed that a member of the Parish Council was willing to raise the issue, on behalf of the school, at the next meeting but required more information. It was agreed that Mrs Williams and the School Administrator would liaise over the details needed.

It was noted that the Remembrance Service, which would take place in school, would need to be advertised.

Mrs Morris questioned when the impact of the work 'at greater depth' would be evident and the Headteacher stated that she anticipated that next year's results would show a marked improvement with regard to progress in that area. She added that pupil progress tracking meetings were being held on a half termly basis and volunteered to give a presentation on tracking at the next meeting.

Gov 18 Correspondence

The Chair stated that a letter had been sent to the Chair of Governors at Crayke CE Primary School and he read out a response from the Chair of Governors there which had been forwarded to him from Mrs Windsor.

There was no other correspondence.

Gov 19 Any other business previously notified to the Clerk

The Headteacher announced that it was proposed to open a pre-school provision on site with effect from September 2019. She explained that, via Treetops, wraparound care would be offered using the outdoor classroom, although it had been suggested that funding could be sourced in order to provide a purpose built structure. It was acknowledged that there was an existing pre-school provision in the village which may be affected by the proposal.

The views of those present were invited. Mrs Gale drew attention to the potential health and safety issues. Support for the proposal was given and the Headteacher was requested to explore the possibility further with a view to drawing up a detailed business plan.

Gov 20 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 14 November 2018 at 6.00 pm. Mrs Craig gave her apologies in advance for that meeting.

The Chair ended by asking those present to consider what impact the discussions had had on learning outcomes for pupils and the meeting closed at 8.25 pm.