

SUTTON ON THE FOREST CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
FOCUS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
HELD ON THURSDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2019 at 6.00 pm

Small school, big heart, aiming higher together

Our vision is to “value everyone” to enable them to develop curiosity, ignite a love of learning, discover talents and reach their full potential in a caring and secure environment.

*This vision is rooted in our Christian values of **respect, compassion, friendship and perseverance** that are at the heart of our school.*

1 Peter 3.8: ‘...be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.’
Proverbs 22:6: ‘Start children off in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.’

Core Functions of a Governing Body:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

PRESENT: Prof H Hall (Chair), Mrs H Pye (Headteacher), Mrs D Craig, Mrs J Fineran, Mrs V Gale, Mrs H Morris, Mr G Redfern

IN ATTENDANCE: Christine Knights (Clerk)

Minute No.

Gov 1 Prayer

The meeting opened with the School Prayer.

**Gov 2 Apologies for absence, consents and declarations of interest.
Reminders regarding confidentiality, gifts and hospitality.**

Apologies for absence, with consent, had been received from Mrs A. Williams and Mr C. Henderson.

A declaration of interest was made by Mrs Pye whose brother-in-law was quoting a price for the new school sign. Mrs Pye had also given notice of two items of any other business: a SENCO update and Rolls Royce funding.

Gov 3 Approve minutes for signature of the meeting dated 23rd January 2019.

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2019 were agreed and signed as a correct record. The signed copy was passed to the Headteacher to be filed in school.

Gov 4 Matters arising from the minutes and Action Plan dated 23.1.19.

Minutes

Page 2 – Mr Redfern and Mr Day inspected the school premises and Richard Day now has a list of issues to be addressed. The School Office Manager (LB) will update the list as required.

Page 9 – Sports Funding could be used to repair the school's outside surface.

Action Plan

Item 1 – no update available

Item 2 – to be actioned by LB in future

Item 3 – Governor monitoring visits on February agenda

Item 4 – data summary on February agenda

Item 5 – report on monitoring training course not yet circulated by Mrs Morris

Item 6 – on next Business mtg agenda

Item 7 – on February agenda

Item 8 – Mr Redfern and the Headteacher have discussed the Lock Down policy. There are still some issues to be resolved. Headteacher will discuss with other Cluster heads.

Item 9 – completed

Item 10 – on February agenda

Item 11 – School SEF and SIAMS SEF circulated

Item 12 – School SEF on February agenda

Item 13 – completed

Item 14 – completed

Item 15 – completed

Item 16 – ongoing, costing being sought

Item 17 – Sept 2019 meeting agenda

Item 18 – LB has contacted grounds maintenance contractor to end current contract and confirm no further payments will be made. No reply as yet. The Chair will take up further correspondence if necessary. Another contractor who will be able to provide the services at a lower cost has been identified. Checks on relevant certificates in progress.

Item 19 – completed

Item 20 – A maintenance monitoring plan has not yet been written, however all the issues have been logged with Mr Day and LB will add to this list as required. Headteacher to ask LB to keep Mr Redfern informed of progress..

Item 21 – clarified that the school has £11k devolved capital budget available which can be carried over to the next financial year.

Item 22 – completed

Item 23 – completed

- Item 24 – Headteacher to discuss Sports Premium with cluster Heads
- Item 25 – Mr Redfern is taking this forward with an electrician after half-term break. He will discuss the details of door lighting requirements with the Headteacher ahead of meeting the electrician.
- Item 26 – on February agenda
- Item 27 – September agenda
- Item 28 – on February agenda
- Item 29 – Chair to send comments on Whistleblowing policy to Head.
- Item 30 – Lockdown policy still to be finalised. Add to March agenda
- Item 31 – on February agenda

Gov 5 Chair's opening remarks

The Chair stated that:

- a) all Governors should sign up to receive the Safeguarding updates via the link included in the email from the Headteacher
- b) he would like to thank Mr Redfern for organising the recent Maintenance Day, and both governors and parents for helping out on the day. The next Maintenance Day is 23rd March. Mr Redfern agreed to write an item for the school newsletter the week before, to raise awareness and encourage more involvement.
- c) he recently met Mrs Comfort who is interested in joining the Governing Body. Mrs Comfort will send in a biography and Governors will be able to consider her appointment at a future meeting.
- d) he would like to thank all Governors who attended the recent Parents' Evening.
- e) SFVS has now been drafted by the Headteacher and Chair, and will be circulated to Governors for discussion at the next meeting
- f) LB is progressing actions on the School Sign
- g) the Headteacher has submitted an expression of interest to apply for funding for the School's Condition Capital Programme. £3k is available for cooking and growing projects. Larger amounts of funding (£5 k) are available for larger capital projects and this could be an option for funding the courtyard ideas. Applications deadline is 4th March.
- h) he and the Headteacher had met with the School Improvement Adviser, Mrs Hayes, on 21st Feb. Progress against the SDP was reviewed and followed by a learning walk around the three classes. Mrs Hayes expressed her view that the School was making good progress against the SDP. Mrs Hayes also agreed with the priorities for next steps.

Gov 6 Headteacher updates

It was agreed that updates would be covered in agenda items 8 and 9.

Gov 7 Order of business

The order of business was agreed as presented.

Gov 8 Follow up from SIAMS visit

a) Celia Wilson, Diocese of York School Development Adviser, joined the Headteacher and the RE Link Governor Mrs Craig, for a review of Collective Worship and a book scrutiny. Mrs Wilson was impressed by what she saw, and indicated that the school was a solid “good” in terms of the upcoming SIAMS inspection. The children were found to understand the school’s values.

b) Some possible next steps were identified: additions to the SIAMS SEF; additional information for the website; Mrs Craig to visit on a monthly basis; improving the classroom reflection areas.

Mrs Wilson highlighted the importance of articulating what is planned, as well as what is already in place.

c) Mr Sewell from QChurch will be working with the children to make a YouTube video on the theme of forgiveness. All the children will be involved and the video will be included on the school’s website.

Gov 9 Headteacher’s report including:

a) Data review and evaluation of progress against SDP

b) School SEF

The Headteacher invited questions on the data review and the school SEF.

a) Unauthorised absences. A Governor asked how unauthorised absences are managed. The Headteacher explained that a very firm letter is automatically sent to parents. This makes it clear to parents that no unauthorised absences are allowed. The Headteacher discusses the matter with parents to explain the situation more fully. Currently, the school’s level of unauthorised absence is at about national average level.

b) Attendance. The Headteacher also explained that attendance is at about national average level. A letter has recently been sent to parents explaining the importance of attendance and punctuality.

c) Staff list. Governors discussed the importance of keeping parents informed of any staff changes well in advance. A new member of staff, Mrs Alexander, would be starting after the half-term break. One correction to the list was noted.

The Headteacher reported that the School Adviser was impressed by how well arrangements in Class One are working. The Headteacher also commented that the children benefit from having committed part-time teachers in smooth running job-sharing arrangements, such as are currently in place at the school. The effectiveness of the TA in Class 2 was also commented on by the Headteacher.

d) Writing. The Chair asked for more information on writing attainment as an area for development across the entire school. The Headteacher reported that the School Improvement Adviser recommended the “Power of Reading” scheme which is being used to great effect by a school in Skipton. It involves a very clear process which can be delivered across the whole school. The connection between writing and reading is important. There are very able children in Sutton School and the children enjoy reading. The attainment in writing should therefore be higher. Mrs Hayes will deliver training to help the staff encourage pupils to start looking at how to improve their writing from a very early age. Mrs Hayes also recommended that the school should reconsider relocating the school’s library to the school’s main building to improve access to books.

e) Maths. The Headteacher reported that the White Rose scheme is starting to bring positive results.

f) Years 2 and 3. In general, the Headteacher is keen to ensure that the Year 2 children have the opportunity to catch up on their learning this year, after a couple of challenging years. These children have been making huge strides this year, particularly since Christmas, and showing maturing Behaviour for Learning.

The Headteacher reported that the data for children in Year 3 will change quickly, reflecting the big jump between Infants and Juniors. Not all children in the year group are reaching ARE, however the Headteacher emphasised that each child’s individual situation and potential is understood by the staff and appropriate targets are set. The children with SEN are progressing well in meeting their own targets.

g) Premises. Mr Redfern requested information from LB on the status of work on the school premises. The Headteacher agreed to pass this request on to LB.

h) CPD. The Chair asked how staff feel about the CPD that has been provided so far. The Headteacher and the Staff Governor both confirmed that staff are pleased with CPD and that it has had an impact on the staff and the pupils. There has been a considerable amount of input and now staff need time to digest the learning. The Chair asked if there would be a similar level of CPD next year. The Headteacher confirmed that the intensity of CPD would be similar, with different emphasis as defined by the teachers’ needs. The Headteacher reported that OFSTED are moving away from focusing to such an extent on data, and looking at whether a school’s curriculum is “broad and balanced”. Sutton School already has a broad and balanced curriculum. Next

year, CPD will be aiming to support the school's already broad curriculum. The Chairman commented on the importance of integrating Maths and English learning into other subject areas.

Gov 10 Discussion of school vision

a) The Chair introduced the discussion and invited Governors to contribute their ideas on a vision for the school in 3-5 years' time.

b) The Headteacher outlined key elements for consideration in the discussion:

- everyone feels valued
- there is a love of learning
- sufficient levels of support in the classroom
- a sustainable school (no budget deficit)
- a full school (95 children)
- a caring school
- a school that provides very good support for children with special needs
- an inclusive school
- all pupils achieving their progress measures
- a school that prepares children well for secondary school in terms of their mental health and wellbeing

c) The Chair asked Governors to consider their views on:

- the importance of maximising use of the facilities and premises
- an aspiration that all pupils should reach at least ARE, with 25%-30% at deeper learning
- what would be needed for the school to be "outstanding"

d) Governors added further elements:

- making the most of the play area on the field for TreeTops
- eco-friendly school where children absorb an understanding of the importance of looking after the environment
- children leaving the school as confident and well-rounded individuals (having had opportunities to develop in sport, art, music, IT)
- children learning how to be outward-looking and active citizens

e) The Chair invited Governors to consider what actions need to be taken in order to realise the vision. So far, marketing has involved talking to pre-schools in the area, articles in newspapers, an upgraded website, twitter feed. The impact of this on pupil numbers should begin to be noticeable.

f) Other ways of increasing school numbers were discussed eg nursery provision, greater visibility on Google Search, yellow hashings on the road to draw attention to the school (49% of children currently are from outside Sutton).

g) The Chair and Headteacher will put together a document on the basis of this discussion. This can then be used to develop the school vision further.

Gov 11 Governor visit schedule

a) Mrs Morris had produced a list of key actions. She would send this to the Headteacher, who would then produce a timetable for Governor visits.

b) The Headteacher commented that representatives from the School Council, and the Subject Leaders need to present to the Governing Body.

c) The Chair emphasised the usefulness of the learning walk forms used during the visit with the School Improvement Adviser.

Gov 12 Feedback from Governor visits

Feedback from the RE Governor visit is reported in agenda item 8.

Gov 13 Feedback from Governor training

Mr Redfern and Mrs Fineran attended NYCC training for new Governors at Alne Primary School on Monday 28th January. Both found the training useful. There was a strong emphasis on ensuring Governors had received key documents. Governors were encouraged to follow-up the training with a considerable amount of recommended reading.

Gov 14 Expiry of Foundation Governor term

Mrs Morris expressed her willingness to continue her role as a Foundation Governor. She could not, however, continue as Vice Chair due to the fact that she is working more than 100 hours in an academic setting.

Gov 15 Policies for approval:

a) Child Protection

The Policy was approved without comment

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b) SEN Policy

The Policy was approved, subject to correction of a typo on page 1.

c) Lock down

This policy is still being developed.

d) Single equalities policy

This policy is still being developed.

Gov 16 Correspondence

There had been no correspondence.

Gov 17 Any Other Business previously notified to the Clerk

SENCO update

The Headteacher outlined two possible approaches to taking SENCO forward in the school. Although the Headteacher is currently fulfilling this role, time constraints mean that an alternative long-term solution must be identified.

a) Mrs Pye has been in discussion with colleagues in other settings to look at options of sharing a SENCO. For an initial meeting the cost would be £350 to assess need and then subsequent charges to be defined subject to requirements identified in this consultation.

b) School to train a member of its own staff (teacher not TA) to take on the SENCO role, at a cost of £2k over a period of up to 3 years (training can extend over a 3 year period maximum). The school SENCO could cover the role while training, including attendance at the SENCO Action Group meetings.

This issue will be discussed at the next FGB with a Finance focus.

Rolls Royce funding

a) At a recent training course, Mrs Fineran had submitted a STEM Action Plan in the first round of competition. Her Action Plan had been selected to go through to round two, and an award of £1000 would be made to the school by Rolls Royce if an entry into the second round is submitted.

b) The staff have been working on developing ideas to build up STEM learning in the school for round two of the competition. The submission deadline is 22nd March. The project team can include up to five people, with Mrs Fineran as the project leader. An external person can also be included. Mrs Fineran is currently exploring contacts to identify a sustainability expert to join the team. If the team is invited to go through to the final round of the competition, the school is awarded £5k, contingent upon taking up the opportunity to enter the final round, with a prize for the overall winning school of £10k.

The Governors joined the Chair in offering their congratulations to Mrs Fineran. This is an exciting opportunity for the school.

School electrics update

Mr Redfern provided a brief update on progress with work on the school's electrics:

a) NYCC had quoted £9,500 to fully fix the problems identified, however the project would have to go into NYCC's list of "planned works" and it could be years before this work came to the top of the list of priorities at county level.

b) Mr Redfern has therefore made an appointment with an alternative contractor to get a quote for the work. The contractor will also look at the outside lighting. The contractor would have to provide evidence of all the required certification.

The Chair thanked Mr Redfern for all his work on this.

Gov 18 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Wednesday 20th March 6.00 pm.

Those present were thanked for their attendance and the meeting closed at 8:30 pm.