

SUTTON ON THE FOREST CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL
APPROVED MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON WEDNESDAY APRIL 14th 2021 at 7.00 pm via Zoom
GENERAL MEETING

(re-scheduled from March 24th 2021)

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 V Gale, Mrs T Comfort, Mr M Graham

IN ATTENDANCE: Christine Knights (Clerk)

Minute No. _____

Gov 1 Prayer

Gov 2 Apologies for absence, consents and declarations of interest.

Reminders regarding confidentiality, gifts and hospitality. Notification of AOB.

Apologies for absence were accepted from Dr Forsey and Mrs Fineran. There were no declarations of gifts or hospitality.

The Chair reminded Governors of the need to respect confidentiality.
 There had been no notification of AOB.

This meeting had been deferred from March 24th 2021 due to internet access problems in the village.

Gov 3 Approve minutes for signature of the meeting dated February 10th 2021
 Governors approved the minutes of the meeting held on February 10th 2021.

The minutes would be signed electronically by the Chair and filed in school.

Gov 4 Matters arising from minutes and action plan dated February 10th 2021

The Chair noted that Actions 1-15 had been reviewed in the January FGB and that there were no further updates to report other than those below and included in the agenda.

Item 2 – all Governors were reminded to send a brief biography to Mrs Berthinussen for the school website.

Item 3 – it was agreed that the timing of an OFSTED focus special FGB would be considered in September 2021. The Headteacher noted that she would be attending OFSTED training this half-term.

Item 16 – the Pupil Premium and Sport Premium updates would be uploaded on the new website still currently under development.

Item 17 – Headteacher had contacted FOSS re Annual Report to Governors. Clerk to add to May agenda.

Items 18 and 19 – see below for discussion on meeting with Mr Redfern and Mr Graham re classroom space.

Item 20 – the Accessibility Plan is complete. Clerk to add to FGB agenda for Governor approval.

Item 21 – the contractors will be returning again to patch up the leak.

Item 22 – the MASS scheme had been re-joined for this year. The Headteacher confirmed that there was no need to give notice of intention to leave the scheme next year at this point. The scheme was undergoing fundamental changes under new leadership.

The Chair questioned whether this was in response to the levels of dissatisfaction with the scheme. The Headteacher noted that schools needed a modernised service which reflected current requirements. The new service would be based on a “pay-as-you-go” style approach and was a response to schools leaving the scheme on the grounds of poor value for money.

Gov 5 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair informed Governors that Mrs Bird had taken the decision not to return after her maternity leave and, with great regret, her resignation had been accepted. The Chair wanted to place on record the great service Mrs Bird has given to the school and that she would be hugely missed. Governors joined the Chair in thanking Mrs Bird.

Gov 6 Headteacher news update

See report agenda item Gov 8.

Gov 7 Order of business

Governors agreed the order of business.

Gov 8 Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher had circulated her report in advance of the original March meeting date. She drew Governors' attention to the items below.

a) Pupil numbers/attendance

The Headteacher noted that there were 90 pupils currently on roll, and that the expectation was that this would continue in 2021-22, with 15 or 16 new starters expected in September (final numbers due Friday 16th April).

There had been no exclusions.

Attendance was very good, at 98%.

The Headteacher provided details of the return to school on March 8th in her report, including the focus on three themed weeks before Easter and then a re-establishment of the usual school routine after the Easter holidays.

The school was operating as two bubbles, however the children were all now allowed to play together outside at playtime given the low level of risk of virus transmission outside and the extensive outdoor space available (including the field). A risk assessment for this approach has been completed.

Governors were content that life was returning more to normal in school and had no questions.

b) Staffing

The Headteacher confirmed that Mr Dodd left the school at Easter. Class 4 was now being covered by Miss Baldwin and it was noted that her impact to date had been positive. Mrs Carter and Mrs Bethan Alexander were both now back in school. The Headteacher reported that it would be a great help to have the three student teachers in school in the summer term. As reported by the Chair, Mrs Bird would not be returning to school after her maternity leave and the Headteacher reiterated that she would be greatly missed. Overall the Headteacher reported to Governors that the school's staffing was strong.

A Governor questioned whether the students would be carrying out COVID tests. The Headteacher confirmed that the students had already started the regular lateral flow tests and would continue in line with the school staff's general approach of two tests a week.

c) Monitoring

The Headteacher stated that she had updated the monitoring programme and had included two dates for Governor monitoring of Maths and English. The Headteacher would circulate the monitoring programme and invited Governors to contact her if they were available to come in to school for the

Maths and English learning walks. The Headteacher confirmed that it was now possible for Governors to come into school.

d) Staff CPD

The Headteacher noted that there had been few opportunities for professional development however the report included a brief update.

e) Premises

The Headteacher updated Governors on the outside quad area which had been completed in the Easter holidays as planned. The work had been carried out by Jonny Comito after gathering of three quotes. The Headteacher expressed her thanks to everyone involved for the love and care put into the new area.

The Headteacher noted the Fire Safety Inspection which had been carried out. There had been no issues raised.

The Headteacher had met the Premises Governors Mr Graham and Mr Redfern on Zoom to discuss options for increasing indoor classroom space. It was agreed that relocating the staff room would not be an option, and that the most practical solution would be to remove the cupboard area in the front classroom, returning this to the space available for use as part of this classroom. The Headteacher stated that this room would be used for Yr 3/4 in 2021-22, and would therefore be for 23 children.

See also agenda item Gov 4 Item 22 re overhaul of the MASS scheme (Maintenance and Servicing Scheme)

f) Attainment and Progress Data

The Headteacher noted that the report included teacher assessments.

g) Finance

The Headteacher noted the expectation of a surplus budget.

The Chair questioned whether a September 2021 intake of 15/16 would mean that there would be no class with more than 30 children in the following year. The Headteacher confirmed this. She added that the intake in 2022/23 was also expected to be strong.

h) Safeguarding

Governors confirmed approval of the Safeguarding report. The Chair had sought approval via email on 25th March following rescheduling of the Governing Body meeting due to internet access problems. The report had been submitted to NYCC to meet the 31st March deadline.

The Headteacher noted that there were no current Safeguarding concerns.

i) Wellbeing

The Headteacher stated that the Wellbeing lead, Mrs Carter had been training children who had volunteered to be wellbeing champions (there had been 30

volunteers). She was also putting together an information board for staff. The Headteacher noted that Mrs Carter was doing a great job.

The Chair questioned whether there were any general wellbeing issues for the children. The Headteacher described some settling issues while the children who had been in school throughout lockdown got used to the rest of the children coming back but this was short-lived. She commented that all the children were very tired, and that this continued to be the case after the Easter break, perhaps because of the different routines over recent months. The children seemed generally happy to be back and being in a routine was suiting them, although the Reception children seemed similar in many ways now to when they had arrived at school in September. The re-introduction of homework had been announced.

The Headteacher noted that after-school clubs and lunch-time clubs were restarting including for cricket, hockey, rounders and football. The work on the summer production would begin with auditions next week, and would involve the whole school. There had been an Easter service with Tony from YoYo and plans were in place for the local vicar to visit the school again in the Summer term.

j) School report and parents' evenings

The Headteacher reported that the School Improvement Advisor would be meeting with her to consider the School Development Plan (SDP) and also to review the impact of lockdown.

The Headteacher would be suggesting holding an additional parents' evening this term, and providing a short written update, instead of the usual style end of year report to parents. She explained that a discussion would be much more useful and appropriate given the different impacts of lockdown on children. The Headteacher asked Governors with children in the school to comment.

Mr Graham and Professor Hall discussed the impact on their children's learning. Both expressed the view that an additional parents' evening with a short update report would be far more useful than the usual end of year report.

The Headteacher noted that assessments would be carried out in the next couple of weeks.

A Governor questioned whether there would be sessions to fill any gaps. The Headteacher confirmed that a plan for extra sessions tailored to meet needs was being developed, and that it would be very helpful to have the student teachers involved in providing the extra input for the children.

k) School and community links

The Headteacher informed Governors that the Yr 5/6 children were enjoying their work on the Young Leaders Awards. Their community project would involve looking at the lack of traffic calming measures in the village. The

Headteacher and Governors agreed that the children's findings should be sent to the Parish Council.

The Chair updated Governors on his discussions with a parent following a recent near-miss traffic incident outside the school. The parent was also raising her concerns with the Parish Council and North Yorkshire Highways. She would be continuing to keep in touch with the Chair on this matter.

The Chair and Governors noted their disappointment with the poor response to date from the Parish Council with respect to measures to improve the safety of children and families outside the school.

The Chair stated that he would write again to the Parish Council suggesting zigzag markings outside the school with a small sign. The original proposal sent to the Parish Council for yellow lines had been turned down and a neighbour had objected to proposals for a large sign. Governors agreed with the Chair's approach.

Governors had no further points to raise on the Headteacher's report.

The Headteacher emphasised how incredibly well the staff had kept the school going and continued to educate the children throughout both lockdowns.

The Chair added that he had been impressed by the staff's enthusiasm and motivation, and expressed his appreciation for everything the team had done. The Governors joined the Chair in thanking the staff enormously for their efforts and commitment.

Gov 9 SFVS

The Headteacher confirmed that she had amended the SFVS as indicated by the Chair, and submitted the SFVS.

Gov 10 Mass scheme update

See agenda Gov 4 Item 22.

Gov 11 2020-21 Budget update and 2021-22 Start Budget

The Headteacher noted the strong 2020-21 Budget position. The latest updates had been circulated to Governors, and all information was available on the Google Drive. There were no questions.

It was agreed that the Headteacher would request a further iteration of the 2021-22 Start Budget reflecting the need to focus on stability for the staff and the children. This scenario would include classroom time for the Headteacher. The Headteacher would circulate this scenario as soon as possible to allow Governors to raise questions ahead of the May meeting if necessary. The Start Budget would need to be approved by Governors before 20th May and would be included on the agenda for the FGB scheduled for May 19th.

A Governor questioned the configuration for classes to be used in this scenario. The Headteacher explained that it would be based on four classes: Reception; Yr 1/2; Yr 3/4 and Yr 5/6.

Gov 12 Leadership development

The Headteacher provided an update on options for leadership development, not only for individual CPD but also in order to ensure leadership continuity should she be unavailable, for example for training or as a result of illness.

The Headteacher noted that Mrs Ovenden was currently taking a course for middle leaders, and that Mrs Fineran was reaching the final stages of the SENCO course.

Governors agreed that such training was important and that further ideas to allow teachers to develop and demonstrate leadership skills should be offered. The school's budget and size meant that there was no scope for introducing a deputy headteacher post.

The Chair of Governors suggested project leadership would be a useful way forward, both for the individual members of staff to develop and demonstrate leadership skills, but also for the school. It was agreed that the Headteacher would devise a series of project ideas which could be considered for a programme of ongoing project development. The Chair proposed a project to make a case for developing the school's offer for 3 year-old and 4 year-old children, to include both the political and business case.

A Governor questioned whether teachers could be asked to take on more responsibility if there wasn't the option of also offering financial reward. The Headteacher stated that TLRs (Teaching and Learning Responsibility Payments) could be allocated for a project with a finite timescale.

The Headteacher noted that the current SDP included development of subject leaders. She undertook to include project leadership development in the SDP in September 2021.

Gov 13 Governor training

The Chair reported that Dr Forsey had signed up for NYCC's new governor training "Introduction to Governance" (19th May Part 1 and 23rd June Part 2).

Gov 14 Governor monitoring

Update on agenda item Gov 8c.

Gov 15 Policies for approval: Single Equality Policy

Governors approved the policy.

Gov 16 Correspondence

The Chair noted the correspondence on the traffic incident discussed in agenda item 8k.

There had been no other correspondence.

Gov 17 Other Business

Mrs Gale questioned whether there had been any news following the Stillington Primary School consultation. There was no known further information on this.

Gov 17 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 19th May 2021 7pm via Zoom

The meeting closed at 8:35pm.

Signed:

Date: