

**SUTTON ON THE FOREST CHURCH OF ENGLAND**  
**VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**APPROVED MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY**  
**RESOURCES**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2021 at 7:00 pm (via Zoom)**

*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 T Comfort, Mrs D Craig, Mrs J Fineran, Dr K Forsey, Mr G Redfern

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Christine Knights (Clerk), Mrs S. Redfern (Bursar)

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 from Mr M Graham were accepted.  
There were no declarations of gifts or hospitality.  
The Chair reminded Governors of the need to respect confidentiality.

**Gov 9 Budget update**

Governors agreed that the Budget update should be taken at the beginning of the meeting. It was noted that the Bursar, Mrs Sue Redfern, was not related to the Governor Mr Guy Redfern. The Headteacher introduced and welcomed Mrs Redfern to her first meeting with the Governing Body.

**Revenue budget.**

a) The Bursar highlighted key elements of the budget in the September summary. She noted the £30,203 balance brought forward from the previous

year and the current in year position of -£1493, with an expected carry forward at this point of £28,710. In the Start Budget the expected in year position £3946 and the expected carry forward was £34,148.

b) The Bursar noted variances; an additional £4035 secured through Pupil Premium (3 more children than expected with Pupil Premium); £2403 received from insurance to offset supply costs; additional supply costs for which a claim on insurance was going through; more HLTA and MSA hours; Robinwood deposit; and small variance in supplies and services. The Headteacher noted that she would be discussing HLTA and MSA hours in her staffing report.

c) The Bursar noted the positive news that the next year's budget would be based on recent census figures of 93 children. This year's Start Budget was based on 86 children. This means that there will be an extra £28k in the budget for the next financial year.

The Bursar and Headteacher would work on a revised budget after the half-term break, taking into consideration income, expenditure and staffing changes since March 2021.

### **Capital budget**

d) The Bursar stated that £4878 had been received from County and noted the two capital projects in school for which this funding had been allocated: classroom upgrade and hall lights. The classroom upgrade had cost £3654 leaving £1225 for the hall lights. The Bursar confirmed that the capital budget had now all been spent.

**Mr Redfern questioned** whether next year's capital budget allocation could be spent this year. The Bursar stated that this would not be possible.

**The Chair questioned** whether there had been any discussions at County about energy costs. The Bursar stated that County had procured energy for this financial year (up to May) and were currently negotiating 2022-23. There would be substantial increases for 2022-23 and more information was expected from County after the half-term break. The Chair noted that in view of current increases, there could be an increase in the region of £2.5k for the school.

Governors welcomed the healthy position of the school's finances. There were no further questions or comments on the budget.

### **Gov 3 Approve minutes for signature**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021, were approved subject to one amendment, would be signed electronically by the Chair and filed in school.

### **Gov 4 Matters arising from the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 minutes and from the Action Plan**

Mrs Comfort confirmed her willingness to take on the Governor training specialism. The Chair explained that this would involve coordination of

Governor training, including for example advising Governors on County recommendations for Governor training, ensuring records of Governor training in school are up to date and that training is linked with the School Development Plan (SDP). It was noted that all Governor link roles needed to be linked with the School Development Plan.

Mrs Comfort would discuss this further with the Headteacher.

There were no further matters arising not covered in the agenda.

### **Action Plan 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 update**

**1 and 2.** The Headteacher would make access to NYCC website available for the Chair.

**3.** Mrs Comfort confirmed her willingness to undertake Safer Recruitment training, or repeat it if necessary. The Headteacher would send her the link.

**5.** The Headteacher confirmed that the new website was now live, although some further work was still needed. The issue of adding audio text would be raised with the website developer by the Headteacher/Mrs Fineran.

**6.** Review of caretaker options deferred. Currently full absence cover being provided.

**7.** FOSS had responded to Chair the next day, therefore this action had not been necessary.

**9.** HT had contacted the Diocese regarding the Foundation Governor vacancy and the Diocese were now publicising this.

**10.** Pupil Premium report 2020-21 on agenda.

**11/12.** Governor monitoring to be included on December FGB agenda.

**13.** The latest risk assessment had been circulated. The Headteacher noted that this would soon be superseded.

**14.** HT had discussed energy costs with the Bursar. See Budget Update below (Item Gov 9)

**15.** Clerk had updated and recirculated Governor specialisms, link roles and Committees.

**16.** The Chair proposed that in the light of the latest Government update on COVID, all Governing Body meetings should continue to be conducted remotely. Governors agreed.

**17.** The Headteacher confirmed that the Sports Premium report 20/21 was on the website.

**19.** The Headteacher noted that the School Development Plan included development of pupils' self-motivation and also parental involvement in supporting children eg with homework. The aim had been to have a meeting with parents in school however the Headteacher expressed concern that this would now possibly need to take place remotely. Dr Forsey welcomed this initiative and commented that an online meeting could be easier for some parents.

All other actions are pending or included on the agenda for this meeting.

#### **Gov 5 Chair's opening remarks**

##### **a) Disclosure Declarations. Register of Business Interests.**

The Chair reminded Governors to sign and return these documents either to school or via email to the Clerk.

##### **b) New website.**

The Chair encouraged Governors to look at the school's new website. The Headteacher noted that there were still "tweaks" to be completed, including uploading recent video clips and Governor biographies (which had been sent to Mrs Berthinussen). (It was also noted that the Governor information on the school noticeboard needed to be updated.)

##### **c) FOSS update.**

The Chair informed Governors that FoSS had responded to his letter and sent an Annual Statement of Accounts. However FoSS had not provided any information on the stolen money in this response. The Chair reported that FoSS had sent a letter to parents but this letter had not included information on how the stolen money would be recovered. The Headteacher confirmed to Governors that the necessary documentation had now been sent by FoSS to the Small Claims Court. The Headteacher also noted that a meeting of FoSS was planned for Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October (see Item Gov 11)

**A Governor questioned** how FoSS would prevent money from being stolen in the future. The Headteacher stated that the following measures had been implemented: FoSS now had two signatories on the account; the bank card was kept in school; and there were always two people counting any money collected/received.

##### **d) Policies.**

The Chair noted that it had not been possible to keep up with a policy renewal schedule during the pandemic crisis. He had therefore undertaken a review of the status of the approximately 30 statutory policies and 45 other policies. See Item Gov 16.

**e)** The Chair recorded his thanks and appreciation on behalf of the Governors to Mrs Berthinussen for the fantastic job she had done for the school and gratitude that she would be continuing in new ways as part of the school family.

**Gov 6 Headteacher's opening remarks**

See Item Gov 8. It was noted that the Headteacher had circulated the School Development Plan (SDP) and School Evaluation Framework (SEF) and these would be discussed in the December FGB.

**Gov 7 Order of business**

Governors had agreed that:

- the Budget update (Item Gov 9) would be taken at the beginning of the meeting
- the update on FoSS (Item Gov 11) would be taken at the end of the meeting.

**Gov 8 Headteacher's update**

**a) School numbers.** The Headteacher reported that there had been 93 children on roll at census day, and that there had been a good uptake of school dinners.

**b) Staffing.**

**School administrator.** Mrs Berthinussen would be handing over to two new members of staff who would be job sharing the school administrator role: Miss Hannah Woodcock and Mrs Sophie Ancell. After the half-term break Mrs Berthinussen would be working as a midday supervisor on Monday and Tuesday lunchtimes and volunteering in the classroom on Monday and Tuesday afternoons. The Headteacher noted how grateful and pleased everyone was that Mrs Berthinussen would be continuing to be in school, and how excellently she had fulfilled the role of school administrator.

**HLTA.** The Headteacher outlined the need for additional support for SEND children for half a day a week. Governors agreed.

**Governors questioned** whether COVID catch-up funding could be used to finance additional help for SEND children and whether this was already available for the school in the current budget figures. The Headteacher confirmed that this could be used, and was being made available in instalments. This term £2866 had been received. The Headteacher also noted that "recovery money", based on Pupil Premium numbers, was available to schools.

**Staff absence/supply.** The Headteacher noted the pressures on supply cover given levels of sickness absence in schools. It had not been possible to arrange supply cover for recent staff absence, therefore in-house staff had been covering. The Headteacher would continue to try to arrange supply.

**c) Activities in school.** The Headteacher informed Governors that the usual Christmas activities were being planned this year, and the hope was very much that these would be possible. The Headteacher also described circus skills activities which had been extremely successful and would continue after the half-term break, funded through the Sports Funding. These activities had included not only practising the skills themselves, but also examining the science behind the skills.

**A Governor questioned** when the Young Leaders Award was offered to the children. The Headteacher explained that this award was usually offered every couple of years, allowing children to complete it in either Yr 2 or Yr 5/6.

**d) Open afternoon.** The Headteacher noted that there had been a good level of interest in the school on visits that afternoon. There were already 10 children signed up to join the school in 2022.

**Gov 9 Budget update**

*See beginning of meeting.*

**Gov 10 Pupil Premium Report 2020-21**

The Headteacher explained that most of this funding had been used for additional TA support in the classroom. She highlighted also that the funding had been additionally used for wellbeing courses and, in some small amounts, to support educational visits for some children. The Headteacher emphasised that this funding was intended generally to benefit all the children in the school rather than individual children and noted that this had recently been discussed in response to a parent query.

The report would be made available on the school website.

**Gov 11 FoSS update**

*See end of meeting.*

**Gov 12 Premises update**

**a) Maintenance and Servicing Scheme (MASS) NYCC.** The Headteacher reported that there would be a meeting in school to discuss the new NYCC MASS and how it compared with the current scheme. Mr Redfern noted his concern about the prices currently, and the need for clarification on this going forward. Mr Redfern suggested investigating the current scheme run by the Diocese of York. The Headteacher agreed to do this.

**b) Electrics.**

**Mr Redfern questioned** whether the electrical inspection certificate had now been issued for the whole school given that the testing was carried out a few weeks ago. It had not. He noted also that no certificate had been issued for the main board or for the Yr5/6 classroom, despite this testing also having been carried out during the summer. The Headteacher had chased these, and would continue to do so.

**A Governor questioned** whether the school would be issued a refund given that an element of the job was incomplete ie the certificates had not been issued. Mr Redfern stated that there would be no refund under the MASS contract. He described the example of the ongoing unsuccessful attempts to tackle the repeated leaks in the main corridor.

**c) Survey.** The Headteacher stated that the condition survey would take place on 4<sup>th</sup> November at 12:30. She would submit Mr Redfern's report. Mr

Redfern agreed to attend the meeting, if possible, or follow-up with a telephone call. The Headteacher reported that the doors had still not been completed.

### **Gov 13 Health and Safety update**

The Headteacher reported that the Health and Safety advisor had not identified any issues in her recent visit. The Headteacher noted however that the legionella report still needed to be completed.

### **Gov 14 Safeguarding update**

The Headteacher stated that there was nothing to report with respect to safeguarding.

The Headteacher noted that the online safeguarding tool CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System) was a very useful tool and was being used by herself, Mrs Fineran and Mrs Carter. CPOMS records could be forwarded to the next school when children move.

### **Gov 15 Supporting mental health and wellbeing**

The Chair and Governors noted the ongoing challenges. The Headteacher expressed concern that activities planned for Christmas might need to be cancelled due to increasing numbers of COVID cases.

**A Governor questioned** whether the Headteacher was finding the additional time outside the classroom this term helpful. The Headteacher stated that in fact recently she had been providing cover for staff absence, and noted that she enjoyed working with the children.

Overall the Headteacher emphasised that the staff were fine and looking forward to the half-term break. She explained that staff very much supported each other.

### **Gov 16 Approval of policies**

The Chair had conducted a review of the current status of the school's policies, including both statutory requirements and recommendations, and had prepared a policy renewal schedule. The Chair had brought all the information together on a spreadsheet which included the renewal dates and the locations of all the policies. The Chair advised that all statutory policies should be made available on the school's website. The Chair had forwarded new statutory policies and templates to the Headteacher to facilitate the updating process going forward.

The Chair noted that in practical terms it would not be possible to update all the policies due for approval in November 2021 and he would schedule these throughout the FGB calendar

There were no policies presented in this meeting, due to time constraints, however there would be a significant number for Governors' approval at the next Governing body meeting in December.

**Gov 17 Governor vacancies**

No additional updates.

**Gov 18 Governor monitoring**

The Chair emphasised the importance of Governor monitoring and the need to build this into the Governors' activities on a regular basis. Dr Forsey noted that she would be going to the pumpkin picking visit as a parent volunteer.

Governors agreed to discuss Governor monitoring at the December meeting when the focus would be on School Improvement.

**Gov 19 Governor training: Basic Safeguarding Awareness and Prevent**

Governors were reminded to complete the online Basic Safeguarding Awareness training (annually) and Prevent (tri-annually) and send their certificate to school administrator.

**Gov 20 Correspondence**

The Chair had received no correspondence.

**Gov 21 Any Other Business previously notified to the Clerk**

None

**Gov 11 FoSS update**

a) The Headteacher and Dr Forsey provided an update on FoSS. The FoSS AGM was scheduled to take place on 21<sup>st</sup> October but there was concern regarding whether it would be possible for FoSS to continue in its present form because only two people had so far volunteered for committee positions. The Headteacher would try to explore how other models operate.

b) Dr Forsey noted that FoSS had submitted its annual return to the Charities Commission on 18<sup>th</sup> October for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.

c) The Chair noted that the Charities Commission required a report on the objectives of the charity for the year and what had been done. The Chair emphasised that the school should identify its priorities and FoSS should then work with the school to support these priorities. The Headteacher expressed her hopes for a fresh beginning with FoSS and practical ideas for organising future events with a simple and inclusive approach in the school newsletter and/or by email. The Headteacher emphasised the extent of parental support for the school.

**Gov 22 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021**



**Focus on School Improvement**

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 8:40 pm.

Signed:  
Chair of Governors

Date: