

SUTTON ON THE FOREST CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL
APPROVED MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
FOCUS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23rd MARCH 2022 at 6:00 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 D Craig, Mrs T Comfort, Mrs J Fineran, Dr K Forsey, Mr M Graham, Ms J Porter

IN ATTENDANCE: Christine Knights (Clerk)

Minute No. _____

Gov 1 Prayer and Welcome

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 had been received from Mr Redfern. The apologies were accepted.

There were no declarations of gifts or hospitality.
The Chair reminded Governors of the need to respect confidentiality.

Gov 3 Approve minutes for signature

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2022 were approved, would be signed electronically by the Chair and filed in school. An unsigned version would be made available on the school website.

Gov 4 Matters arising from the 9th February 2022 minutes and Action Plan

1 and 2. Contracts. The Headteacher would ask the school administrator to send the NYCC website contracts link to the Chair for review.

3. Safer Recruitment Training. Mrs Comfort confirmed that she had completed this training.

4. Invitation to potential new Governors. A new Governor, Ms Porter, joined the Governing Body in January.

5. Audio text. The Headteacher noted that this could involve some cost and she/Mrs Fineran would investigate. Mrs Fineran explained that this was not a requirement but was regarded as good practice.

6. Review Caretaker options. The Headteacher had investigated caretaker costs and informed Governors of the situation by email following the February Governing Body meeting. The Headteacher confirmed that the school currently paid £3k a year for two and half hours' caretaking a week, covering for example fire alarm checks, legionella testing, refilling paper towel dispensers and emptying playground bins but not tasks such as gritting, sweeping leaves or basic repairs. If the latter were to be covered, a local handyman would need to be found. The Headteacher commented that the costs would be too high currently.

7 and 21. Governor Monitoring. The Chair emphasised the importance of ensuring monitoring by Governors was in place. The Headteacher agreed and would formulate a monitoring schedule specifically for Governors. She had already circulated to Governors the schedule for school monitoring with staff subject leads. It was agreed that the finalised schedule for Governor monitoring and the Governor subject leads would be confirmed in the May meeting. Mrs Comfort stated that she was in a position to carry out monitoring already and would contact the Headteacher to arrange a monitoring visit. Dr Forsey volunteered to lead on Science.

8 and 9. KCSIE, Register of Business Interests, Disclosure Declaration. Governors agreed that this should now be removed from the Action List as documents were on the school Google Drive.

10. Governor biographies on school website. Mrs Comfort noted that not all Governor biographies were on the website. She confirmed having provided her biography. The Headteacher would ask the school administrator to follow this up.

11. Governor biographies on school noticeboard. The Chair confirmed that this was now up to date.

12. Strategic plans. The Chair stated gathering examples of schools' strategic plans was in progress and could be removed from the Action List.

13. Review staff insurance. The Headteacher stated that staff insurance cover would remain as is for the next financial year.

14. Buying in Business Manager services. The Headteacher noted that a discussion with the Bursar was needed on this.

15. Governor training on tracking data. The Headteacher would re-send the email for access to Insight and this would be included on the May agenda.

16/17. Research evidence supporting rollout of air purification by Manchester City Council. Discuss. Mr Graham had circulated this to all Governors. In the meantime the school had been allocated three air purification units. These were currently not in use because windows could be opened when CO2 monitors readings go above 1500 level, as specified in the guidance.

Dr Forsey questioned the CO2 levels in school and noted that a level below 1000 was recommended for learning. The Headteacher informed Governors that usually in school monitor readings would not be above 800. She emphasised the importance of reducing electricity use when possible given the costs involved. Mrs Fineran confirmed that opening windows was effective and referred to the evidence circulated by Mr Graham. The Headteacher also commented that in the winter the air purification units could be useful and by opening windows rather than using the units now, the expense of replacing the filters would not be incurred.

18. SEN Information report and SEN policy. The Headteacher had advised deferring this agenda item until May. Mrs Fineran confirmed that although almost final, there was work still to do. The Headteacher emphasised that the priority in school currently was on preparing the Yr 6 children for SATS.

19. Parent election. There had been no response to an invitation to stand for election sent out to parents. Professor Howard Hall was therefore elected unopposed.

20. Finalise SFVS. This was on the meeting agenda.

21. See 7 above.

Items 22, 23 and 24 relating to budget, pupil numbers and recruitment were deferred to May. The Headteacher had not been able to discuss these issues with the Bursar due to technical problems with the Bursar's laptop and time constraints. See also agenda item Gov 9 below.

Gov 5 Chair's opening remarks

a) Governor training. The Chair drew Governors' attention to the training log now on the school Google drive and requested that Governors logged their training. He informed Governors that he had booked to attend the NYCC webinar on Ofsted for Governors and recommended that Governors check the NYCC update and book any training they would find useful.

b) NYCC meeting. The Chair attended a meeting with Michele Hattersley from NYCC with the Headteacher.

Gov 6 Governor election

As reported at the last meeting, Professor Hall's term of office as Parent Governor ended on 6th March. An invitation for nominations for the role of Parent Governor was circulated to parents on 14th February 2022, however no nominations were received. Professor Hall had expressed a willingness to serve a further term as Parent Governor and would therefore continue in his current role and as Chair of the Governing Body.

Gov 7 Order of business

The Headteacher stated that agenda item Gov 9 would need to be deferred to May. She had not received the latest budget information from the Bursar in time to circulate it to Governors or to discuss it with the Bursar herself. The Headteacher would send Budget documents to Governors as soon as possible so that questions and comment could begin by email, in advance of the discussions and final approval of the Start Budget in the May meeting. The Headteacher would confirm with the Bursar that the current scheduled Governing Body meeting on May 18th would allow the deadline for Start Budget approval to be met. Governors agreed to this proposed way forward.

Gov 8 Headteacher's report

The Headteacher's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Governors were invited to raise any questions or comments.

The Headteacher highlighted the following.

a) Early Reading Focus. The Headteacher updated Governors on the Early Reading focus in w/c 21st March. The subject lead Miss Pugh and Mrs Comito had reviewed Early Reading provision in school and also visited Hubby School to discuss the new phonics scheme introduced there. Their conclusion and recommendation was that this scheme would be valuable for Sutton on the Forest. The total cost will be £4k, feasible thanks to support from FoSS.

b) Maths. The Headteacher and subject lead Mrs Fineran reported on NYCC SIA visit focused on Maths. See below agenda item Gov 14.

c) Safeguarding. The Headteacher had nothing to report in terms of Safeguarding concerns.

She noted that staff had been advised not to record other children's names when making a report about a child on CPOMS. If others need to be named, a separate linked report must be made.

The Headteacher also informed Governors that improved Safeguarding information posters had been produced. The new poster for children would include photos of the staff to speak to as well as their names.

The Chair questioned how the Yr 5 visit to Robinwood Outdoor Education Centre had gone. The Headteacher reported that it had gone very well.

A Governor questioned whether the Headteacher felt any further Safeguarding training was currently needed. The Governor described recent training on grooming she had attended and recommended the trainer to the Headteacher. The Governor would send the contact details to the Headteacher.

The Chair questioned whether Safeguarding was a regular item on the staff meeting agenda. The Headteacher stated that CPOMS is discussed in staff meetings. She noted that it would be useful to include Safeguarding as an agenda item for staff meetings and minute discussion.

d) Deep dive reviews. The Headteacher noted that all subject leaders were aiming to have done a deep dive in their subject by July. Miss Pugh was making progress in developing a template for Geography and PE, and resources for Arts were being collated. Dr Forsey commented that a Science document and template already existed, and she would send this to the Headteacher.

e) Wellbeing. See Item 13b.

There were no further comments or questions on the Headteacher's report.

Gov 9 Budget a) update b) Start budget
Deferred to May. See agenda item Gov 7.

Gov 10 SFVS (School financial value standard)

The SFVS had been circulated to Governors with the meeting papers.

The Chair noted that the related party transaction form needed to be added to SFVS as highlighted in NYCC Governor newsletter, even though if it would be a nil return.

The Chair also pointed out an edit needed in 25.

The Governors had no further questions/comments and agreed that, subject to this amendment and addition of the form noted above, the Headteacher should submit the SFVS.

Gov 11 Pupil premium update

The Headteacher noted that there were no new pupils eligible for pupil premium. There was nothing further to report.

Gov 12 Sport premium update

The Headteacher reported that the Sport Premium 2021-22 had all been spent.

The Headteacher had allocated the funding for 2022-23 to swimming, First Aid (which had been completed this term) and Sports Wellbeing led by Ross Divorty.

A Governor questioned whether this sports wellbeing leader was already doing sessions locally in various villages. The Headteacher confirmed this. The Governor was already aware of this person and how well received his sessions were locally. She noted that many parents would find it useful to have additional activities for children in the summer and proposed the idea of an additional holiday club being led by him.

Gov 13 School Development Plan

The latest update of the School Development Plan had been circulated to Governors. The Headteacher noted that COVID had delayed several elements of the plan but that now things seemed to be settling down. She highlighted that much of the work on the SDP is ongoing.

a) Governor Monitoring. The Chair commented that the SDP showed the “red” items were related to Governor activities. He noted the importance of Governor monitoring and it was agreed that the Link Governor roles would be reviewed in the May FGB.

b) Yr 6 Focus and wellbeing. The Headteacher emphasised the current focus on Yr 6 SATS and expressed the importance of continuing the work on preparing the children for secondary school, filling in gaps in learning.

The Chair questioned whether any children were becoming anxious about SATS. He emphasised the importance of the message to children and parents that these tests were about assessing the school. The Headteacher confirmed that this was being done.

Mrs Fineran described the approach to preparing the children in Yr 6 for SATS, which included booster sessions with the Headteacher in the afternoons. Mrs Fineran described the children’s growing confidence.

A Governor questioned whether there was anything further that parents could be doing to support their children. He noted the very useful parent meeting led by the Chair but expressed disappointment at the numbers of parents attending. The Governor asked whether perhaps a leaflet with the key points could be circulated.

A Governor questioned whether the Yr 5 children were being affected by the preparations for Yr 6. Mrs Fineran explained that when the Yr 5 and Yr6 children were together there was no change from the usual approach in the classroom.

Mrs Fineran and the Headteacher expressed some frustration that the preparation for these tests was taking time that could have been used to fill gaps in learning caused by the pandemic. However, the Deputy Chair

commented on the positive confidence boosting approach being taught in school. The Chair emphasised the importance of the strategies and life skills being developed through the preparation for SATS, including the positive impact on the children's resilience which they would take forward through into secondary school. Mrs Fineran and the Chair had previously discussed self-regulated learning and the Chair noted that he would send materials to Mrs Fineran.

The Chair questioned whether the other children taking SATS this year were showing any signs of an impact on their wellbeing. The Headteacher emphasised that the younger children were not aware that they were being assessed.

There were no further questions or comments on the SDP.

Gov 14 External evaluation

The Headteacher and Mrs Fineran reported on a recent NYCC School Improvement Advisor (SIA) visit which had focused on Maths.

a) The SIA had invited the Headteacher to propose the subject focus for the visit. The Headteacher had highlighted Maths, as a strong subject in school, and put forward an agenda for the visit, which was agreed by the SIA. The Maths Subject Leader, Mrs Fineran, had a meeting with the SIA early in the day in which she described the structure of the curriculum, how the plan for teaching the subject was developed, and the pupil voice involved. Mrs Fineran also talked the SIA through the action plan and how it related to the development plan. Mrs Fineran highlighted the next steps and the priorities for improvement. The SIA also spent time in the classroom as an observer.

b) The SIA feedback reflected the priorities identified by Mrs Fineran. There were no questions or challenges raised by the SIA.

c) Governors discussed the role of the SIA and an expectation that the SIA would be a conduit for good practice.

A Governor questioned whether the SIA was a Maths specialist. The Headteacher confirmed that this was the case, and noted that the SIA worked across the curriculum and with all the schools in the cluster. The Governor, a Science specialist, expressed concern that a non-specialist would be working with the school across all curriculum subjects.

The Chair questioned why the SIA had allowed the school to select the subject for the visit. The Chair stated that he would have expected the SIA to offer challenge and advice in areas where the school was less strong, which could have been identified by the SIA from the SDP.

A Governor questioned whether the school could buy-in school improvement specialists from elsewhere, particularly in order to have specialist advice in the areas of English, Science and Maths from individuals

who could offer advice, input and encouragement to support school improvement. The Headteacher agreed that this was possible. The cluster schools would be working together to feedback to NYCC on the approach to school improvement.

d) The Headteacher described the feedback from the staff and the impact of the SIA visit.

A Governor questioned whether a visit from member(s) of the Governing Body would be useful. She offered her time and willingness to come into school to offer positive feedback and support. The Headteacher welcomed this and it was agreed that Governors would contact the Headteacher to come to school before Easter if possible.

Gov 15 Governor monitoring feedback

It was agreed that this would be discussed in full at the May FGB meeting, including a review of the Link Governor roles and confirmation of a schedule of school visits by the Link Governors (with dates/times always arranged with the Headteacher in advance).

Gov 16 Governor training

a) Mrs Craig reported that she had attended the NYCC Governor School Improvement Network meeting on January 24th. She would also be attending a Diocesan schools meeting for Governors in the near future, and would report back any key points.

b) The Chair reported that he had signed up to attend the NYCC Ofsted for Governors training in May.

c) Ms Porter reported that she had signed up for the Introduction to Governance, parts 1 and 2, to be delivered online. Governors commented that they had found this useful training.

The Chair encouraged Governors to consider the list of training available in the NYCC Spring Governor newsletter and contact school to book courses.

Gov 17 Accessibility Plan

Mrs Fineran had circulated the Accessibility Plan to Governors and invited questions/comments. She introduced the plan by explaining that it was a legal requirement to have an Accessibility Plan and to include it on the school's website. The plan presented the actions and timescales, and was based on the Accessibility Audit.

The Chair questioned who had carried out the Accessibility Audit and how. Mrs Fineran explained that she had completed the Accessibility Audit which had involved a detailed process covering all areas of the building, including

school signage, and the website. The audit document used by Mrs Fineran was good practice adopted from another school.

The Chair questioned whether all the issues identified in the audit needed to be included in the plan. Mrs Fineran had investigated this and confirmed that not every issue identified in the audit needed to be included. Mrs Fineran explained that she had reviewed the Accessibility Plans published by other schools to confirm that the Sutton on the Forest School plan reflected practise adopted elsewhere. The plan prioritised actions which would achieve the biggest impact in the short term and were affordable. Mrs Fineran noted that the biggest immediate need was to address Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH). Mrs Fineran highlighted aspects of the medium and longer term plan, and noted that impact and costs/affordability had been taken into consideration in developing the timescales.

The Chair questioned how the review process needed to be taken forward. Mrs Fineran stated that there would need to be an annual review of the Accessibility Plan by Governors, and that it needed to be updated at least every three years.

The Chair questioned how the plan would be communicated to the staff. Mrs Fineran explained that once the plan was agreed by Governors, she would be talking about it with the staff, including the aim of interweaving it with the curriculum and the School Development Plan. This would allow the staff to have ownership of the plan.

Governors had no further questions or comments. The plan was approved and would be reviewed annually, by Governors, in the March meeting.

Mrs Porter apologised but had to leave the meeting at 7:30.

Gov 18 Policies

There were no policies for approval.

Gov 19 Correspondence

The Chair had received no correspondence.

Gov 20 Any Other Business previously notified to the Clerk

There was no other business.

Gov 21 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 18th May 2022

Focus: RESOURCES via Zoom 6pm

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance.
The meeting closed at 7:35 pm

Signed:
Chair of Governors

Date: