

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 WEDNESDAY 18th MAY 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, Ms J Porter

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

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 and Mr Graham.
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 23rd March 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 23rd March 2022 minutes and Action Plan

1 and 2. Contracts. The Headteacher had signed the Chair up to the NYCC system. He should receive a login via email.

3. Governor learning walks. Mrs Comfort and Mrs Craig had completed learning walks (see agenda item Gov 21 below). Further visits by Governors to be arranged for Summer Term. The Headteacher would prepare a new monitoring schedule for the Autumn Term.

4. Governor biographies on school website. The Headteacher would ask the school administrator to follow this up.

5. Buying in Business Manager services. The Headteacher had been investigating options and had arranged a meeting in a local school for the school administrators to discuss how an increased finance element, including budget monitoring, is carried out within the school administrator function, to establish whether this could be implemented in Sutton on the Forest Primary School and, if so, to identify any training needs. The Headteacher noted that Mrs Redfern had resigned and therefore it would be a good time to change how the different aspects of financial administration, monitoring, management and budget development would be carried out. There would be a new NYCC Bursar in the Autumn term. The Headteacher noted that one of the school administrators already had some financial experience.

6. Governor training on tracking data. The Headteacher would try again to re-send the email for access to Insight as Governors had not received it. It was agreed that this would be the focus of the June FGB and that the meeting would be held in school to facilitate and enhance the training.

7. SEND Information report and SEND policy (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). On this agenda.

Items 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 relating to budget, pupil numbers and recruitment on this agenda.

Item 13. Safeguarding trainer contact details sent by Ms Porter to Headteacher.

Item 14. Safeguarding had been including as agenda item in staff meetings.

Item 15. Science Plan Resources and STEM activities sent to HT by Dr Forsey.

Item 16. HT submitted SFVS with related party transaction form.

Item 17. HT had produced a leaflet on supporting children taking SATS.

Item 18. Chair confirmed the documents on self-regulated learning and would take them to school.

Item 19. Governor link roles. On agenda.

Item 20. Confirm Governor monitoring schedule. See update on Item 3 above.

Item 21. Booking of Governor training. Governors had reviewed available training. See update on workshop attended by Chair below.

Item 22. Annual review of Accessibility Plan by Govs. Clerk would bring this to agenda in March 2023.

There were no further matters arising from the minutes or action plan.

Gov 5 Chair's opening remarks

The Chair had no opening remarks.

Gov 7 Order of business

It was agreed that agenda items Gov 6 and Gov 12 would be taken together.

It was agreed that agenda items Gov 8-11 would be taken first and combined under agenda item Gov 9 to allow efficient use of the Bursar's time.

Gov 9 Approval of 2022-2025 Start Budget

a) The Bursar introduced the three year Start Budget explaining that the income and expenditure had been based on admission of 17 children in September 2022 and 15 in each of the two following years.

b) Staffing. The Bursar emphasised that she and the Headteacher had spent a lot of time looking at the detail of staffing. She drew Governors' attention to the fact that for 22/23 the in year position would be £3.9k even though the school had received a sparsity funding allocation. The increase in staffing costs had been due to rises in National Insurance and in teachers' pay, and also the NQT salary level had been raised, which had had a knock on effect on teachers' salaries.

c) 2021-2022 Outturn. The Bursar noted the balance brought forward figure of £22.1k.

d) The Bursar noted the balance carried forward from 2022-2023 would be £26k if there were no changes.

e) The second year in the Start Budget looks less good with the in year position showing -£34.7 because sparsity funding had not been included. The Headteacher explained that she preferred not to include sparsity funding for years 2 and 3 until it had been confirmed. She emphasised that this was a personal preference and that Governors needed to discuss the approach they would find most useful. The NYCC advice was to be cautious if the school had been allocated sparsity funding according to the sliding scale.

The Chair questioned why caution was required when the information was already available on how the funding was allocated and whether the children on roll would be within 1.9 miles of the next nearest school. The Headteacher explained that she had adopted a cautious approach because she had

previously not received funding that had been expected. Dr Forsey noted that this being the first year the new funding formula had been applied, it could be more likely that the approach to the sliding scale particularly might change.

Dr Forsey questioned whether the sparsity funding could be shown separately on the budget to increase clarity however the Bursar explained the technical reasons that this was not possible.

The Bursar explained that if the school were to go into deficit, NYCC would ask for a recovery plan. Governors would then at that point explain that the sparsity funding had not been included if this approach were to be adopted.

The Chair questioned whether the school would be asked to prepare a recovery plan. The Bursar stated that the school would not be asked to do this and explained that NYCC initially looked at whether staffing costs were above 75-80% of a school's budget and only then asked for a recovery plan.

The Chair questioned whether caution was needed because although the school was on the sliding scale for sparsity funding allocation, 85% had been received ie £39,939. The Bursar and Headteacher stated that NYCC figures had shown the school allocation to be £29,926, approximately 75%. The Chair had sourced his information from the Government issued spreadsheet for all schools. The Chair and Governors expressed serious concern about this £10k difference in the amounts. The Bursar would investigate and feedback to Governors.

Mrs Fineran questioned what would be the impact of including/not including the sparsity funding in the budget for years 2 and 3. She noted that it could be that not including this funding could help keep Governors focused on the budget limitations. The Chair stated that the sparsity funding should be included because this would make it clear that Governors had discussed it. The Bursar commented that if Governors were confident about the numbers of children on roll who were within the school's catchment area, it made some sense to include the sparsity funding. The Bursar stated that the school's budget mostly went on staffing costs and so the approach would need to ensure that no staff were recruited if the salary depended on funding which would not necessarily continue. She noted that the school did keep a tight eye on costs in its budget management.

The Chair expressed concern about the rising energy costs. He noted that including the sparsity funding in the budget would provide the Governors with some comfort in this respect. Dr Forsey commented that all schools in North Yorkshire shared this problem and that North Yorkshire needed to consider what they would be doing about it.

Dr Forsey questioned whether 2 of the 17 children included were currently formally on the waiting list. The Headteacher confirmed this and noted that NYCC were currently going through the processes necessary to allow these 2 children to join the school. The Headteacher emphasised that pupils do leave for various reasons and therefore taking 2 children above PAN was not expected to be a problem.

Governors agreed the Start Budget should be based on 17 in 2022-23.
Governors agreed that sparsity funding should be included for years 2 and 3.
Governors approved the Start Budget on the basis of the changes discussed being made.

The revised Start Budget would be sent to the Headteacher and circulated.

Gov 12 Headteacher update. Report.

The Headteacher had circulated her report. She highlighted the following:

a) Pupil numbers. The Headteacher emphasised that it was very much hoped that all 17 children would join the school. She noted that the Year 1 and 2 class which Governors had discussed previously would now have 30 children and was therefore not an issue of concern. There were 90 children on roll, and it was expected that there would be 95 on the next census.

b) Attendance. The Headteacher stated that from September 2021 to now overall attendance had been 93.73%. COVID in school before and after Christmas had had an impact on attendance, and there had been more term-time holiday requests than was usual (none had been authorised). The Headteacher hoped that unauthorised absence would drop as people moved on from the feeling of “not having had chance to have a holiday” due to the pandemic. The Headteacher noted that individual attendance for children was generally at around 96%-97%.

c) Performance management. The Headteacher noted that all staff mid-term Performance Appraisals had been completed in April 2022.

d) NYCC school educational advisor (SEA) visit. This visit had focused on ‘How effectively does assessment affect outcomes for all children?’ The Headteacher and Mrs Fineran expressed concerns with regard to the usefulness of the visit, including the short notice of an additional focus on children with SEND. The advisor had produced a report was a summary of what the Headteacher and Mrs Fineran had told her. The advisor emphasised the importance of embedding quality first teaching, which was already in progress. Mrs Fineran noted that there had been no probing questions from the SEA. The Headteacher stated that 2 further SEA visits would take place under the existing NYCC Service Level Agreement: a Safeguarding visit in June, and then a fourth visit to be confirmed, both with different advisors.

Dr Forsey questioned whether the aim of these visits was to prepare the school for OFSTED inspection. The Headteacher explained that it had been agreed that the SEA input would be tailored to the School Development Plan, but that visits to all schools locally seemed to be following the same schedule.

The Chair and Governors questioned the value for money of these visits, at £300 per visit. The Headteacher stated that at the end of the year she would be compiling all the SEA reports and sending them with feedback to NYCC. The Headteacher and Governors agreed it would be appropriate to investigate other opportunities for expert input focussed on the school’s priorities.

e) FOSS donation.

The Headteacher expressed thanks to FoSS (Friends of Sutton School) for the £4k donation which had allowed the school to purchase the entire Little Wandle reading scheme and would also allow other news books to be bought.

f) Maths.

Mrs Fineran outlined key highlights of changes made to the new White Rose Maths scheme: a section on common misconceptions and what to do about them; suggested STEM sentences to develop reasoning and vocabulary; updated KS1 approaches to learning; greater alignment of topics to support teaching of different year groups together; recap woven through everything; steps broken down more. These resources would be ready for September and more would be added throughout the year. Mrs Fineran noted that all the changes were positive.

g) CPD

The Headteacher noted staff training in her report. If possible, Dr Forsey would join the staff meeting on the STEM Outdoor Learning course. Dr Forsey stated that she also had written Maths outdoor learning resources which had not been published and could therefore be shared with school.

h) Premises

The Headteacher would be paying a local joiner/handyman at a daily rate to do various small jobs as this was a more economical option than NYCC. She also stated that the main hall would be decorated during the school holidays.

i) Curriculum

The Headteacher had circulated the Science curriculum and the whole school curriculum plan to Governors. The Headteacher noted that she intended to make a child-friendly format available on the website.

Dr Forsey commented positively on the Science curriculum, noting that it included what had been covered on the Outdoor Learning (STEM) course. The Headteacher thanked Dr Forsey for providing the Science plan. Dr Forsey explained that it was freely available for all schools but it did not seem to be widely known about in North Yorkshire.

j) Attainment and progress

The Headteacher updated Governors on Year 6 and Year 2 SATS. Phonics Year 1 screening and Multiplication tables check would take place after half-term. The Headteacher would look at data with Governors in the Insight training in June's FGB.

k) Safeguarding

The Headteacher's report included the update that the Single Central Record was up to date and that all staff were using CPOMs effectively. It was agreed that Mrs Craig (Safeguarding Governor) would join the Safeguarding visit meeting with the SEA on 19th June.

l) Health and wellbeing

The Headteacher highlighted that school were applying for the DfE Wellbeing Charter. She also noted that following on from the wellbeing section in the newsletter, Mrs Carter had been contacted by a wellbeing worker from a York school and Mrs Carter would be meeting her to share good practice. Governors commented that Mrs Carter was providing excellent support to the children and families.

m) Extra curricular activities

The Headteacher had listed the available activities in her report. She emphasised that further options were being explored and that appropriate space being available after school was an important consideration.

The Chair questioned whether the school would be involved in the Sutton Show. The Headteacher confirmed that the school would be involved, on the theme of “giving”, and that all the equipment /materials had been provided.

The Headteacher noted that there would be a Jubilee lunch for the children and special activities for them in the afternoon.

The Headteacher highlighted that the school would be celebrating its 150th anniversary this year and that it was hoped that an event involving the community would be possible in September/October.

Ms Porter questioned whether this could be an opportunity for fundraising for the school. This was discussed further in agenda item Gov 19.

The Chair questioned whether there was a report on the Reading deep dive. The Headteacher would circulate the report to Governors. It was noted that this would be helpful for Governors generally but also if Governors needed to meet OFSTED inspectors. Governors discussed the success of the “bedtime boxes” and “raffle tickets” (linked to the children’s reading records) in encouraging children to read independently and building their enthusiasm for reading. The idea of a reading café with parents was also being explored.

Mrs Comfort described links between Easingwold Library and local schools. She noted that Easingwold Library had so many good quality books that there was not enough shelf space for them all and so ways of making these available to children through schools had been and were being explored. Recent initiatives through which library books were brought to local schools were not currently being extended due to problems with NYCC. Mrs Comfort described past experiences and benefits of visits to the Library when funding for transport was provided. Mrs Comfort emphasised the importance of improving access to the Library and that it was free for children to both take out and order books.

The Chair questioned how many of Sutton on the Forest children had visited Easingwold Library and suggested having library ambassadors who could enthuse others to visit Easingwold Library and, as suggested by other Governors, other local libraries.

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

Gov 13 Pupil premium update

Nothing to report.

Gov 14 Sports premium update

The Headteacher updated Governors on positive feedback and children's enjoyment around the Sports and Wellbeing activities being led by Ross Divorty. Governors also reported positive feedback.

The Headteacher would be identifying further ideas which could be financed through the Sports premium during the year.

Gov 15 Staff and pupil health and wellbeing

See Headteacher's Report agenda item Gov 12 l.

Gov 16 Safeguarding

See Headteacher's Report agenda item Gov 12 d and agenda item Gov 4. Governors would be provided with full feedback on the Safeguarding visit from SEA scheduled for June at the following Governing Body meeting.

Gov 17 Health and Safety

The Headteacher reported that all staff had completed First Aid Training.

Gov 18 Premises

See Headteacher's Report agenda item Gov 12 h. The Headteacher added that she would be contacting the electrician to discuss what the absolute necessity for emergency lighting was.

The Headteacher noted that work experience opportunities would be provided to two Year 11 students and would involve some outdoor painting. The Headteacher informed Governors that the students would include her son. The students would also help in the School the Sports Day.

Gov 19 Governor training feedback and update

NYCC Ofsted for Governors training. The Chair updated Governors on the training, including in particular the importance of Governors developing a strategy for the future of the school. This linked back to the issue of fundraising raised in agenda item Gov 12m and to previous discussions on maintenance and the school premises, such as ideas for an additional classroom and the school hall, and the possibility of exploring other ideas such as installing solar panels.

Governors shared various fundraising ideas. It was agreed that Governors would discuss how they see the school developing and how this could be resourced in a future meeting (end Summer/Autumn term). The Chair noted that it would be useful to have input from someone with expertise in fundraising. Ms Porter would explore this with her contacts.

The Chair would write a note of the Ofsted for Governors training and make this available to the Governing Body. He confirmed that he had uploaded the training certificate on the Google Drive.

At this point, Ms Porter had to leave the meeting (7:30pm).

There was no further feedback on training.

Gov 20 Governor link roles review

a) Link roles were identified for Dr Forsey (Science, Outdoor Learning) and Ms Porter (Humanities: Geography).

b) The Link roles for Teaching and Learning and Curriculum would be covered by the Chair until a new governor could be recruited. The role of Link Governor for Art would be taken by Mrs Craig. There remained a gap for a Link Governor for music, which Governors hoped Mr Graham would consider.

Gov 21 Governor monitoring feedback and schedule

Mrs Comfort and Mrs Craig provided extremely positive feedback on their learning walk visit around school before Easter, highlighting: the warmth of their welcome in school, the calm atmosphere, the beautiful displays, the high quality work being produced by the children. Mrs Comfort commented on the sophisticated quality of the writing by the children in the Year 3 and 4 classroom, and also the high level of difficulty in Maths being approached with strong perseverance by the children in the Year 5 and 6 classroom. Mrs Comfort noted the usefulness of the wellbeing information in the library, with the concrete suggestions and ideas of how to make people feel more at ease. Both Governors agreed that the children were confident in talking about what they were doing, for example their “busy books,” which was particularly impressive given that there had been so few visitors able to come into school in the last two years due to the pandemic restrictions. Overall the Governors had found the visit provided grounds for reassurance that high standards were being set and met in the school, in a lovely warm environment. See also agenda item Gov 4.

Gov 22 Governor appointments /vacancies

The Chair noted that there were currently two vacancies on the Governing Body. It was agreed that in addition to the areas identified in agenda item Gov 20, a new governor with expertise in fundraising was needed. The Chair would produce a note for Governor recruitment.

Gov 23 SEND Information Report (deferred from March) SEND Whole School Provision Map

a) Mrs Fineran noted that the SEND Information Report, the Whole School Provision map, SEND policy and SEND Accessibility Plan (approved in March 2022 FGB) would be on the school website.

b) Mrs Fineran explained that the SEND Information Report was essentially an information leaflet for parents and prospective parents aiming to demonstrate that the school is accessible and to encourage parents to come

and discuss accessibility. The updates were primarily on terminology. More recent photos had also been included. Mrs Comfort welcomed the clarity of the report, noting that it was jargon free.

c) Mrs Fineran explained that the Whole School Provision map reflected how the school supported the current cohort, and that if the needs of the cohort changed, the provision would change. The emphasis on quality first teaching being available to all children meant that fewer children would need anything additional. The document described the four areas of need matching the SEND Code of Practice and identified the kinds of the support the school could make available.

d) The Chair noted and thanked Mrs Fineran for the huge amount of work invested in producing these documents.

Governors approved the SEND Information Report and the SEND Whole School Provision Map.

Gov 24 Policies: SEND policy

Mrs Fineran noted that the policy had mainly been amended to update terminology and contact details. She highlighted that the identification of SEND now reflected that this was based on something additional or different being needed to support learning.

Governors approved the SEND policy.

Gov 25 Correspondence

The Chair had received no correspondence.

Gov 26 Any Other Business previously notified to the Clerk

There was no other business.

Gov 27 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 15th June at 6.00 pm to be held in school

General meeting. Focus on tracking data and curriculum.

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 7:55 pm

Signed:
Chair of Governors

Date: