

**SUTTON ON THE FOREST CHURCH OF ENGLAND**  
**VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY**  
**GENERAL BUSINESS AND STRATEGY**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 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), Mr M Graham, Mr G Redfern, Dr K Forsey, Ms J Porter

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Christine Knights (Clerk), Mrs J Fineran, Mrs D Craig

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. Notification of AOB.**

Apologies for absence from Mrs T Comfort were accepted. It was noted that Mr Graham would be delayed by approximately 30 minutes.

There were no declarations of gifts or hospitality.

The Headteacher noted that her sister-in-law would be delivering Talk for Writing training to staff and informed Governors of the discounted cost of the training.

The Chair reminded Governors of the need to respect confidentiality.

Items of AOB added as agenda items 27-30 were noted.

The Headteacher informed Governors that Mrs Craig would be re-locating from North Yorkshire and would not therefore be renewing her term of office as Foundation Governor. Mrs Craig would be available to join the Governing Body meeting in October, which Governors welcomed.

**Gov 3 Approve minutes for signature**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022, were approved subject to one typo amendment and a point of clarification with respect to recording Governors' discussions and concern about pupil non-attendance.

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

**Gov 4 Matters arising from the July 13<sup>th</sup> 2022 minutes and from the Action Plan**

**Action Plan update**

**1 and 2.** The Chair now had the links to the contracts on NYCC website to allow him to review/update contracts.

**3. Governor biographies.** More Governor biographies had been received in school and these were now on the school website. Governors commented that these biographies had been circulated to them and to some parents. The Headteacher would check whether these had been circulated to all parents.

**4,5,6,7.** In progress.

**8. Strategy.** The Chair confirmed that Governors would be working to develop a strategy for the school during academic year 22-23.

**9. Explore contacts for fundraising expertise.** The Chair noted the importance of identifying a contact with fundraising expertise to join the Governing Body and asked all Governors to consider this. Governors noted that FoSS had written to parents explaining that, due to the current economic climate, their fundraising would be reduced this year. Governors discussed how to approach fundraising for the school in this context.

Governors discussed the event to mark the school's 150-year anniversary. The Chair noted that the opportunity to archive photographs and registers would be interesting for a History student and he would follow up on this with local contacts. Mrs Fineran would explore ideas with the local history societies. Mrs Fineran outlined the work she had been doing with the children on the history of the school.

**10. Newsletter article on Governor vacancies.** Dr Forsey would share this article on Facebook. The Chair would explore ideas for publicising vacancies outside the village. The Headteacher would add information about the vacancies to coverage of the 150-year anniversary celebrations in the Easingwold Advertiser.

**11.** The Headteacher noted that the Governance section of the School Development Plan needed to include providing Governors with information to support discussions with external advisors.

**12. Insight login for Chair.** HT to continue to pursue.

**13. Academisation.** Andrew Smith would be speaking to all Cluster Headteachers about Church schools and academisation on 5<sup>th</sup> October.

**14. Insulation.** HT gathering quotes for insulation of Yr3/4 classroom. Mr Redfern outlined information on energy efficiency grants/loans, none of which had been found suitable for the school. He explained that a project coordinated at NYCC or Academy level would be needed. The Chair noted that energy efficiency would need to be highlighted in the Governing Body's strategy discussions.

**16.** Nothing to add to previous ideas for including children anonymously on photos. Complete.

**22. Anonymised staff survey.** This referred to the need for Governors to gather information in addition to the reports and updates provided by the Headteacher. This action will be clarified as "Parent Voice" and "Student Voice" in the action list.

**23. Chair and Vice Chair 360 degree appraisal.** The Chair noted that this would have been provided under the NYCC Governance Support SLA (see agenda item 30). Mrs Fineran would explore opportunities for Board governance reviews pro-bono through corporate responsibility initiatives. Mr Graham would set up a meeting to identify the key priorities of the Governing Body and how to achieve maximum impact. The importance of the Governing Body Self-Evaluation carried out in the July FGB was noted in terms of ensuring ongoing review of governance.

All other actions had been included on the agenda or were in progress and would be followed up in the next meeting.

**Gov 5 Chair's opening remarks**

The Chair highlighted Governor recruitment, the online meeting with Andrew Smith and the query regarding Governor biographies discussed under Gov 4.

**Gov 6 Order of business**

Agreed

**Gov 7 Annual register of business and personal interests (to be signed)**

It was agreed that Governors would sign this at the October meeting in school.

**Gov 8 Register of Gifts and Hospitality (to be signed)**

Headteacher to file a "nil return" on behalf of Governors. All Governors confirmed they had not received gifts or hospitality in their role as Governors.

**Gov 9 Disclosure declaration (to be signed)**

It was agreed that Governors would sign this at the October meeting in school.

**Gov 10 To adopt the terms of reference, instrument of government**

The Chair stated that the terms of reference (TORs) had been based on those of the Governing Body's previous committees when Governors had resolved to conduct all its business as a full Governing Body. The TORs had been re-adopted annually unchanged.

All Governors agreed to adopt the TORs.

All Governors agreed to adopt the Instrument of Government.

**Gov 11 Review of Standing Orders and Code of Conduct, Delegation Planner and Scheme of Delegation for Headteacher (to be signed)**

All unchanged and approved by Governors. The Chair would send the Standing Orders with the school information included to the school office.

Headteacher confirmed that she would sign and file the Delegation Planner which includes the Scheme of Delegation for Headteacher.

**Gov 12 Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**

All Governors had been provided with the link to KCSIE statutory guidance for schools 2022. All Governors confirmed that they would read the KCSIE guidance and sign on the Google Drive to record that they had done so. The Headteacher would circulate the CASPAR briefing on key updates to the statutory guidance 2022 to support Governors' understanding of the latest version of KCSIE.

**A Governor questioned** whether all staff had read the latest version of KCSIE. The Headteacher confirmed that all staff had read the document and that she had included a training session on safeguarding in the staff training day at the beginning of term.

**A Governor questioned** whether the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy had been updated in line with the 2022 guidance. The Headteacher stated that NYCC had not yet circulated their model policy and therefore the school policy had not yet been updated. She confirmed that this would be done as soon as school received the NYCC policy document.

**Gov 13 To elect Committees: Complaints Committee, Pay Panel, Pupil Discipline Committee and Staff Appeals Committee, HT Performance Management**

a) The Chair highlighted the roles currently filled by Mrs Craig and asked Governors to consider whether they could volunteer for any of these positions. The Clerk would recirculate the updated document.

b) Governors otherwise agreed to continue as in 21/22 pending further discussion in October.

The Chair thanked Governors and noted that the above committees only met if required.

#### **Gov 14 Review of Governor Links and Named Governors, including Single Central Record and Training Governors**

a) Ms Porter agreed to take on Governor specialisms of Safeguarding, including the Single Central Register (SCR), and SEND. She would also lead on mental health/wellbeing which linked closely with these specialisms. The Headteacher would meet Ms Porter once a term to discuss Safeguarding and review the SCR. The Headteacher noted that Ms Porter could be needed to discuss Safeguarding with Ofsted during an inspection. Mrs Fineran, as SENCo, would meet Ms Porter termly in her capacity as SEND Governor.

b) Governors otherwise agreed to continue as in 20/21 in their specialisms.

The Chair thanked Ms Porter. Governors would discuss the vacancies for link roles in October.

#### **Gov 15 Virtual attendance and voting**

Governors approved virtual attendance at Governing Body meetings following the current agreed procedure (*NB should a vote be required, there would be a show of hands*).

#### **Gov 16 Headteacher's Report**

The Headteacher's Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Headteacher apologised for the late circulation.

The Headteacher highlighted the following key points in the report.

##### **a) Pupil numbers, attendance, exclusions**

The Headteacher noted that class structure remained the same. There were 11 pupils in Yr 5, including 4 boys. The report detailed the staffing for each class. Four children left the school in the summer to attend other schools, which was one more than expected.

**A Governor questioned** whether the Headteacher met parents and discussed reasons for moving the children. The Headteacher confirmed that she had been in close contact with parents and outlined the reasons parents had given. The Headteacher emphasised that the staff had worked hard to support the children during their time at the school and that it had been disappointing to see the children leave. The Headteacher emphasised that she and staff had worked closely with parents.

There had been no exclusions.

##### **b) Safeguarding**

The Headteacher reported that there had been no safeguarding issues. The Headteacher's report detailed that there were no children subject to a Child Protection Order. The report also highlighted that a Single Central Record check would be undertaken by the Headteacher and Office Manager in

October 2022. A Safeguarding Health Check was conducted by NYCC Christine Johnston in the Summer Term.

### **c) Staffing and CPD**

The Headteacher noted that there had been no changes in staffing. The report listed staff CPD (continuous professional development). The Headteacher would begin the National Professional Qualification for Headship in October 2022. She had deferred the course due to the workload involved in leading the school through the COVID pandemic. Jodie Pugh would be embarking on the National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership. All staff would be completing the Talk 4 Writing training to raise standards across the school. The Headteacher noted that, as had been discussed previously with Governors, assessment results in writing had not been as strong as had been hoped due to the disruption caused by the COVID pandemic.

### **d) Premises**

The following had been completed during the summer: school hall floor stripped and resealed/varnished; the roof had been repaired (there had been two holes) and gutters cleared; the local handyman had completed various maintenance jobs around school. Quotes were currently being sought for: fob entry to all doors; insulation of Year 3 /4 classroom; and for fencing at the back of the school. The Headteacher noted her gratitude for the £50k gift from the Diocese, some of which had been used for this work. The Headteacher would keep Governors updated on quotes.

**Mr Redfern questioned** whether the emergency lighting was being addressed. The Headteacher would ask the local electrician for quotes.

**Mr Redfern questioned** whether it would be worth investigating the installation of storage heaters for the Year 3 /4 classroom. Governors discussed the practicalities of this and it was agreed that the Headteacher would look into this with the local electrician.

**Mr Redfern questioned** whether the thermostats on the existing storage heaters had been checked. The Headteacher confirmed this had been done.

**Mr Redfern questioned** whether the timers on the storage heaters had been checked and emphasised that the timers were not controlled by NYCC. The Headteacher would ask the local electrician to address this.

### **e) Attainment and Progress**

The Headteacher noted that the children in Reception had completed their statutory baseline assessments. Year 6 children had already completed the 2019 SATs test to give a baseline and identify areas for individual focus. The Headteacher outlined the way that a new online scheme called SATs Companions (£350) would support the Year 6 children initially and then later in the academic year the children in Year 5. She reminded Governors that children in Years 1 through to 6 were now using Spelling Shed and Maths Shed, including for homework.

### **f) Finance. Staff pay negotiations.**

The Headteacher had reported that the August budget monitoring showed an in-year deficit of £13,051, mainly due to increased costs for pay. The report detailed the implications of pay consultations.

***The Chair questioned*** whether the teaching unions had yet agreed pay rises. Mrs Fineran stated that the latest position was that unions were looking towards a ballot. The Chair noted that the school's budget included provision for 3% increase in pay but that negotiations were already looking at 5%. The Chair stated that he would not support cutting staff in order to fund pay increases or energy costs and that in his view the Government should fund schools appropriately, including to cover these costs.

#### **g) Extracurricular activities**

The Headteacher highlighted Rock and Pops and a choir club. Sport options for extracurricular clubs were limited due to the hall being unavailable, but ideas were being explored for other clubs eg crafts, science, that could be held in classrooms. The Headteacher was working with the Cluster Heads to develop sports activities at the Galtres Centre in Easingwold. Currently plans were going ahead for KS1 fun run and KS2 cross country. Netball and football were also being investigated. Duncan Burgess, North Yorkshire School Games lead for Hambleton based at Thirsk School, had confirmed that children could go through to the local finals even though the events would not be held at a school.

***A Governor questioned*** whether Outwood Easingwold was in fact obliged to host the sports events. The Headteacher explained that it had been difficult to arrange the events at Outwood Easingwold for several reasons, including the timing with buses arriving there at 2:30pm.

#### **h) Community links**

The school would be hosting a Macmillan Coffee Morning to fundraise and give parents an opportunity to come into school. An afternoon tea would be arranged for the community and former Headteachers, to take place in late November to celebrate the school's 150 year anniversary.

#### **i) Energy prices**

***A Governor questioned*** whether the help now being offered by Government (cap on energy costs for schools) would mean that the school would be able to keep the children warm. The Headteacher noted that the cap would be in place until March and that it would help. The Headteacher mentioned also the £50k gift from the Diocese and how lucky the school were to have this.

Governors thanked the Headteacher for her report and had no further questions.

### **Gov 17 Introduction of new curriculum**

The Headteacher reported that the new curriculum had been introduced and was available on the school website. Governors welcomed the curriculum and noted the amount of work involved in developing it. Mrs Craig offered a huge congratulations to the staff, which was supported by all Governors. Governors

noted how the curriculum allowed parents to see ways of supporting the children's work at home.

**A Governor questioned** how the impact of the curriculum would be reviewed. The Headteacher noted that this needed to be included in the School Development Plan (SDP). The Headteacher explained that it was important to ensure tracking across all the curriculum, not just the SATs subjects. She described the display boards in school which would be used to allow the children to show their work and their progress in the different subjects. The Headteacher added that ways for the children to record their work with photos, eg Tapestry and SeeSaw, were being explored. A Governor commented that as Governors it was important to know what the intention behind the curriculum was, how it was being implemented and what the children have learnt (impact).

**A Governor questioned** whether there was any guidance to help parents understand the curriculum and its value, and how to support the children's work at home. Mrs Fineran explained that the parents' meetings provided an overview of the topics and the timing, and that she had prepared an information pack particularly for the parents who had not been able to attend the meeting. Miss Baldwin had also provided a very succinct explanation of the curriculum for Year 5/6 children at their parents meeting.

**A Governor questioned** whether Miss Baldwin's presentation and also the video on Phonics shared by Miss Pugh for example could be made available, through Google Classroom. Governors agreed that short video explainers would be a quick and effective way to help parents understand the curriculum and how to support their children as they work through it.

Governors noted the importance of ensuring parents were not overloaded with communications via different channels. It was agreed that a termly update was useful, as was the school newsletter. Mrs Fineran commented that parents had been asked in the parent meetings about how much information they would like to receive and how. Dr Forsey advised reviewing the several different information channels and considering which would be most effective and succinct. The Headteacher suggested links to the different materials could be included in the weekly newsletter. It was agreed that a single source of information with links would be useful.

## **Gov 18 School Development Plan (SDP)**

a) The Headteacher outlined progress on development of the SDP. She would be incorporating key elements of this meeting's discussions within the SDP and consulting with staff in the Monday staff meeting. The Headteacher would then circulate the SDP to Governors. Further discussion of the SDP would be included in the October FGB agenda.

b) Ofsted. The Headteacher explained that Ofsted would now be carrying out either "graded" or "ungraded" inspections. As a school graded "good" in its latest inspection, Sutton would have an "ungraded" inspection. An ungraded inspection differs from a graded inspection, because it does not result in individual graded judgements; instead, it focuses on determining whether the school remains the same. A "graded" inspection would be carried out for schools where the expectation is for a change in the inspection outcome.



### **Gov 19 School PAN and update on pupil numbers**

a) The Headteacher confirmed that the PAN would remain at 15 for 2022-23. Dr Forsey noted that Government could change the size of KS1 classes to 32 rather than 30 which could have implications for the PAN. For current pupil numbers see agenda item Gov 16a. The Headteacher would seek to continue with a single year group Reception. It was agreed that this was a positive commitment for parents.

b) Nursery. The Headteacher proposed exploring opening a nursery. Circumstances had changed, particularly the country's economic situation, since the last discussion with NYCC which took place before the COVID pandemic.

### **Gov 20 Approval of policies:**

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy  
Health and Safety Policy  
Relationship and Sex Education

These policies would be brought to the October Full Governing Body meeting. The Headteacher explained that she was waiting for NYCC to circulate the model policies to schools.

### **Gov 21 Safeguarding update from Headteacher**

There were no safeguarding issues to report. See 16b.

### **Gov 22 Governor safeguarding training**

a) The Headteacher highlighted that any new Governors must have good safeguarding training, not only the Basic Safeguarding Awareness and Prevent training. Ms Porter noted that she had completed the NSPCC courses.

b) The Chair asked Governors to inform Mrs Comfort of all training completed so that she could retain an overview and log training on the Google Drive.

c) The Clerk would circulate the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership newsletter to ensure all Governors stay fully informed on Safeguarding.

d) All Governors committed to read Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022 and sign on the Google Drive to confirm having done so (agenda item Gov 12).

### **Gov 23 Governor monitoring schedule**

The Headteacher had prepared a monitoring schedule and would circulate this to Governors. She noted that monitoring would be included in the SDP.

#### **Gov 24 Governor vacancies and renewals of terms of office update**

a) The Chair updated Governors on the 4 current Governing Body vacancies (2 Foundation, 1 LA and 1 staff). He had drafted a piece for the Parish and Church newsletters and asked Governors to circulate this to potential interested parties, including outside the village. Dr Forsey would contact former colleagues. Mr Redfern mentioned a parent who had previously expressed an interest in joining the Governing Body.

b) A member of staff had expressed an interest in the Staff Governor role. If it would be helpful, Ms Porter noted a willingness to take up the LA Governor position.

#### **Gov 25 Correspondence**

The Chair had received no correspondence.

#### **Gov 26 Any Other Business previously notified to the Clerk**

AOB raised in advance of the meeting had been added to the agenda in items Gov 27 to Gov 30.

#### **Gov 27 Sports Premium Annual Report 2021-22**

HT to circulate. Governors would discuss any questions/comments in the October Full Governing Body meeting.

#### **Gov 28 Pupil Premium Annual Report 2021-22**

HT to circulate. Governors would discuss any questions/comments in the October Full Governing Body meeting.

#### **Gov 29 FoSS Annual Report 2021-22**

The Chair thanked FoSS for the Treasurer's report. Governors had no questions and commented that FoSS finances were looking healthy. Governors noted that FoSS had organised a number of successful events. The Headteacher stated that a further update would be provided after the FoSS AGM.

#### **Gov 30 NYCC Governance Service Level Agreement (SLA)**

a) The Chair informed Governors that the NYCC Governance SLA would cost £680. It included a digital toolkit and some training sessions. He noted that most training would still have to be paid for and that NYCC training was of a variable standard. The Chair stated that this SLA therefore did not represent good value for money.

**A Governor questioned** how the Governing Body would source what it needed if it did not take up this SLA.

The Chair informed Governors that the existing membership of the National Governance Association provided extensive online governor training and advisory documentation at a cost of £132 per year. The Chair stated that he would circulate the NGA link and gather Governors' opinion to decide on the way forward.

**Gov 31 Date of next meeting: Wednesday October 19th 2022 6pm in school**

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 8:10 pm.

Signed:  
Chair of Governors

Date: