**SUTTON ON THE FOREST CHURCH OF ENGLAND**

**VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY**

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18th JANUARY 2023 at 6:00 pm (via TEAMS)**

# *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.’*

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| **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 (Deputy Chair), Dr K Forsey, Mrs J Fineran (Staff Governor),**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Christine Knights (Clerk)**

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**Minute No.**

**Gov 1 Prayer**

The Headteacher opened the meeting with the new school prayer which had been written by one of the pupils.

**Gov 2 Apologies for absence, consents and declarations of interest. Reminders regarding confidentiality, gifts and hospitality. Notification of AOB.**

Apologies for absence from Ms Porter were accepted.

There were no declarations of interests, or of gifts or hospitality.

The Chair reminded Governors of the need to respect confidentiality.

There were no items for AOB.

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 30th November 2022 were approved.

The final version of the minutes would be signed by the Chair, filed in school and put on the school website.

**Gov 4 Matters arising from the 30th November 2022 minutes and from the Action Plan**

**Action Plan update**

**1 -4.** Ongoing

**5.** **Discussion of questions Governors might be asked during visits by external advisors and OFSTED.** To be included on February agenda.

**6. HT to invite Andrew Smith to talk to Governors re academies.**

The Headteacher reported that there had been discussion at the most recent Headteacher cluster briefing indicating that the Government White Paper requiring all school to academise might be withdrawn. Governors now therefore need to discuss whether academisation is something to take forward. See action list update point 18.

**7. Parent Voice. Student Voice. Staff survey.** The Headteacher reported that the subject leaders were currently carrying out Pupil Voice. The Headteacher noted that a parent questionnaire should be sent out in the next couple of weeks. Dr Forsey had forwarded an article to the Chair which included useful parent survey questions. The Chair would circulate the article to Governors and the Headteacher for consideration. The Headteacher noted that OFSTED have a standard questionnaire which is used in their inspections, however it was agreed that it would be worth considering combining the OFSTED questionnaire and some of the questions highlighted in the article.

**8. 360 degree appraisal of Chair and Vice Chair.** The Chair stated that this was last carried out in 2019, noted that little had changed since then and therefore questioned the value of repeating this exercise at this point given there are currently so few Governors. Dr Forsey highlighted that there were no concerns currently and all Governors agreed with her. The Chair highlighted the importance of Governor recruitment. It was agreed to defer these appraisals until more Governors had joined.

**9. Annual Governance Statement 21-22.** Still to be done.

**10. Read KCSIE and Caspar briefing. Sign confirmation on Google Drive.** Headteacher to update Google Drive.

**11. Headteacher to put subject leaders in contact with Governors to organise learning walks and monitoring meetings.** The Headteacher noted that more Governors were needed for this. Ms Porter had arranged to carry out a Safeguarding monitoring visit. The Headteacher invited Dr Forsey to meet her and Mrs Comito would be in contact with Mrs Comfort to arrange a visit. See also agenda item Gov 18.

The Chair updated Governors on potential new Governors. He would continue to encourage the people who have expressed an interest.

Governors discussed different ways of publicising the vacancies eg adverts in Easingwold library, Galtres gym. The Headteacher would post the vacancies on the school Facebook page and Dr Forsey would share this on the Easingwold Facebook page. Mrs Comfort and the Chair would explore options with the library and the Galtres gym respectively. Rev Steve had explained to the Headteacher that he could not take on a Governor role as he worked with more than one school.

**12. Circulate NYCC advisor report on Reading.** The Headteacher would circulate this document immediately.

**13. Annual register of business interests and personal interests. Disclosure declaration.** Clerk to remind Governors individually.

**14. Comparison of 22/23 Revised Forecast with 22/23 Start Budget.** This had been circulated.

**15. Governing body to respond to NYCC survey on impact of financial pressures on school’s budget.** The Headteacher noted that the Bursar Sian Carling had responded to this in December.The Chair noted that he had not been able to find this survey on the link sent by the Bursar.

**16. Bursar to provide detail of the LA income in the Benchmarking to explain the large differences.** Information had been provided by the Bursar, however the Chair pointed out that the school income was still £70k below the best possible scenario identified by the Bursar and the reason was not clear.

**17. Ms Porter (as Safeguarding Governor) to meet LA advisor during Safeguarding visit.** The LA advisor did not wish to speak to the Safeguarding Governor as part of this visit.

**18. Governors to meet to discuss academisation.** This will take place outside the Governing Body meeting schedule.

**19. HT to bring spending needs as defined with staff back to FGB meeting.** It had been agreed that a strategic spending update would be a standing item on Governing Body meeting agendas. The Headteacher stated that she was keeping a spreadsheet of all spending. The Chair advised writing up a summary of how the money had been spent and the impact for the children. This could then be sent to the Diocese along with the spreadsheet. Dr Forsey suggested adding photos and quotes from the children. The most recent spend had been on the outdoor area for the Reception children and new books on the Stone Age. The work on new fencing for the Yr1 / 2 outdoor area would be carried out in the February half-term break. Resources would also be purchased for the Reception outdoor area.

**20. Challenges faced by children to be included in the Pupil Premium Strategy document.** The Headteacher confirmed her understanding of this and noted that it would be included.

**21. Sign up for NGA learning link.** The Headteacher would confirm this and circulate the link and password.

**22/23. Check Single Central Record. Ms Porter to visit HT and Mrs Fineran re Safeguarding.** Meeting arranged.

**24. Consider question on wellbeing and mental health for staff survey.** Dr Forsey highlighted the challenging time for teachers and the high national feeling with respect to pay and strike action. Dr Forsey expressed support and concern and asked how the staff were. Mrs Fineran responded that she had found the last few days particularly difficult while deciding what to do in terms of the ballot on strike action. She emphasised that although she was speaking for herself, she also believed others were feeling the same. The Headteacher explained that Headteachers were being given guidance to remain open even if the normal curriculum could not be covered. The Chair highlighted the impact on the economy which was the focus of Government concerns when /if schools closed. Mrs Fineran noted that teachers were aware that striking would make life harder for colleagues. The Chair highlighted the strength of feeling which would be evident in the strikes on 1st February.

The Headteacher also drew Governors’ attention to the stresses of the financial situation for the school. The school had received 10 applications for Reception, and it was a low birth rate year.

***A Governor questioned*** whether the school had a waiting list. The school had a waiting list but could not accommodate the children in the appropriate year groups currently.

**25 and 26. Read KCSIE and Caspar briefing and sign confirmation on the school’s Google Drive.** The Headteacher would ensure the Google Drive sign-up sheet for staff and Governors was available. All Governors to complete this action as soon as possible.

All other actions had been completed or were in progress and would be kept on the action list for follow up in the next meeting.

**Gov 5 Annual register of business and personal interests (to be signed)**

**Disclosure declaration (to be signed)**

The Clerk would remind Governors who had not yet signed these documents.

**Gov 6 Chair’s opening remarks**

No further opening remarks.

**Gov 7 Consider nomination for appointment as LA Governor: Jess Porter**

**Governors**

Governors confirmed the appointment of Jess Porter as LA Governor.

Ms Porter was already well known to Governors as she had been on the Governing Body as a valued Co-opted Governor since January 2022.

**Gov 8 Order of business**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**Gov 9 Headteacher: School Development Plan (SDP) and Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) . Progress data review.**

The SDP and SEF had been circulated to all Governors ahead of the November Governing Body meeting. The Headteacher talked through the SDP and provided an update on progress.

**School Development Plan review**

**a) Curriculum**.

The curriculum has been developed in line with the national curriculum. Subject leaders were now looking at schemes of work using a number of bought in schemes as a starting point: Language Angels, Sing Up Music and (on a free trial basis) Kapow for Art and DT, I-Learn for computing and PE planning. Curriculum displays were now put up in the corridor and then put into a scrap book as a record of the children’s work. Work is in progress to make sure the outdoors environment is being used to enhance the children’s learning. The Marking Policy is embedded. The Headteacher noted that there would still be more progress with respect to KS1 provision.

**b) Development of cultural capital**

The Headteacher added further details to the main areas of activity described in the SDP, particularly for music. The school had been in touch with NYCC to explore the opportunities provided through their peripatetic music teachers with ideas for piano lessons and recorder lessons in school being considered in addition to the Rock and Pop and choir already in place. The dance workshop in December was a great success. The West End in Schools would be bringing a performance of “Where the Wild Things Are “ in March.

***Dr Forsey questioned*** how the school had evaluated and chosen the schemes of work from the many available. Dr Forsey noted that this would be a question OFSTED could raise. The Headteacher emphasised the importance of all the schemes including a good progression of skills eg the PE scheme. Mrs Fineran described how she had evaluated several language learning schemes and had chosen Language Angels in particular because it included phonics and was recommended by national leaders for languages.

**c) Behaviour and attitude**

The Headteacher stated that she was working with her mentor on the NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headship) to develop a behaviour policy. Dr Forsey commented that the documents circulated for this meeting were good and welcomed the integration with mental health. The Chair asked the Headteacher to circulate documents on the role of governors in developing behaviour principles and what governors should expect to see. The Headteacher mentioned the concept of “praise in public, reprimand in private” which was of interest. Dr Forsey welcomed this being explored although she noted potential drawbacks. The behaviour principles would be discussed in detail in the February Governing Body meeting.

The Headteacher noted the ongoing wellbeing initiatives. The Headteacher highlighted that the NYCC advisor had appreciated the work being done on wellbeing and had highlighted it as a further layer of safeguarding.

**d) Personal development**

The Headteacher described the various extracurricular activities. She noted that subject leaders were starting now to think further about enrichment days. The efforts to involve parents in the Science Day had proved successful.

***The Chair questioned*** how many parents would be involved. The Headteacher said that eight parents had committed to come in to speak to the children.

The school clubs were running well and there would be new clubs added in the Summer Term.

The Headteacher outlined the challenges of keeping Easingwold schools cluster sports going given the costs of coaches.

***Governors questioned*** whether parents could be involved in transporting children and mentioned various ideas for sports outside of the cluster sports which could benefit the children. The Headteacher noted the problems of insurance if parents are involved in transporting children, and stressed the importance of the cluster events because these are during school time and also can lead to the opportunity to participate in the schools’ area finals. The Headteacher quoted the example of the cost of coach transport: £1k to transport children for 6 swimming lessons. The Sports Premium was being used for transport to PE lessons and activities.

Next steps would be to develop opportunities for spiritual development further.

**e) Leadership and Management**

The Headteacher noted that the actions to develop leadership and management were work in progress. The Governors and subject leader links would be discussed in the February Full Governing Body meeting. The Headteacher reported that the Subject Leaders had written their action plans and were now looking at progression from Early Years to Yr 1. Mrs Fineran reported that SEND progression throughout the school had been looked at.

***A Governor questioned*** how the Headteacher ensured that subject leaders had time for their work in this role. The Headteacher explained that she herself provided classroom cover. She was currently also considering setting the Easter training day aside as a subject leader day, which would allow the teaching assistants also to link up.

The Headteacher noted that there would be a deep dive on Art in the next week which would give Fiona Alexander useful experience of speaking to an external person about her subject. Ellie Baldwin would have experience of a deep dive in computing later in the term. All the teachers would then have had experience of speaking about their subject with an external visitor. It was noted that Governors could help build on this experience through their monitoring visits.

***The Chair questioned*** whether it would be possible for the Governors to see the action plans. This would allow them to develop a series of questions ahead of the monitoring visits. Mrs Fineran emphasised how useful it would be for Governors to come to talk to teachers about their subjects. The Chair offered to come in to school to discuss a range of subjects.

***A Governor questioned*** whether it would be possible to include further evidence of implementation in the SDP. The Headteacher agreed to add this and noted that the “3 i-s” had been included in all the action plans and are shown on the school website for each of the subjects.

**Progress data review**

f) The Headteacher had a report with further information for Governors which she would circulate after the meeting. The analysis of Pupil progress for children in Year 1 and Year 3 was still to be completed for this half-term.

g) Mrs Fineran discussed recent consideration of Maths assessment. The NFCR test had previously been used for the summative assessments but these did not always reflect the work that had been done that term and so were not very helpful. This year therefore the White Rose termly summative assessments were being used. These included work from the term, and also the previous term, and therefore provided evidence of what the children had retained. Mrs Fineran also described Flashback 4 provided by White Rose which included assessment of work done the day before, the previous week, the previous term and the previous year. Mrs Fineran would be recommending incorporating this into all teaching. Flashback 4 was already being used in Year 4 and Year 6.

***The Chair questioned*** what was highlighted by Flashback 4. Mrs Fineran explained that this increased the children’s confidence and enhanced their learning by using different vocabulary such as “find the difference” or “minus” in the case of learning subtraction and addition. Governors agreed this scheme sounded positive and Dr Forsey pointed out that it followed the education principles of ensuring recall through repetition.

***The Chair questioned*** how the Timetable Rockstars event had gone. The Headteacher and Mrs Fineran emphasised how successful it had been, and parents shared their families’ experiences and fun with this. It was agreed that this had raised the profile of Maths in a really different way.

**Gov 10 Strategic spending**

This item was covered under the Action Plan update point 19.

**Gov 11 Premises update**

The Headteacher reported that the school had received an additional £11k capital funding from NYCC, to be used to improve the school’s energy efficiency.

***The Chair questioned*** whether this funding could be allocated retrospectively to finance the work on the Yr 3 / 4 classroom. The Headteacher agreed and would be talking to the Bursar about this.

The Headteacher reported that the school’s front doors needed to be replaced and a quote was being sought for metal doors from local contactors (NYCC had not been able to help). Dr Forsey pointed out that new doors would reduce drafts and therefore should also be considered as improving energy efficiency.

**Gov 12 Health and Safety update**

The H&S advisor visit had been postponed due to ill health.

**Gov 13 Safeguarding update**

a)The Headteacher had completed the Safeguarding Audit. This would be included on the agenda for approval in the February Governing Body meeting.

b) The Headteacher noted that she had no Safeguarding concerns currently.

c) The Safeguarding Governor, Ms Porter, would be visiting the school before half term.

**Gov 14 Supporting mental health and wellbeing**

This item had been covered in agenda item Gov 4 point 24.

**Gov 15 Policy approval: Leave policy**

The Headteacher outlined the importance of the policy.

***A Governor questioned*** whether paid leave would be agreed for a member of staff with a child who is ill. The Headteacher explained that this is not paid according to this policy. If paid, this was at the Headteacher’s discretion.

Governors approved the policy.

**Gov 16 Annual Governance Statement 2021-22**

The Chair stated that this had not been written.

**Gov 17 Governor vacancies**

The Chair had written a letter to invite parents to express an interest in joining the Governing Body and had spoken to a couple of parents about the vacancies. The Chair had also written a letter for the Parish newsletter to be published in March. See also agenda item Gov 4 point 11.

**Gov 18 Governor monitoring – HT monitoring schedule, learning walks**

Governors to be linked up with subject leaders and visits arranged. This will be discussed further in the February Governing Body meeting.

**Gov 19 Governor training**

The Chair highlighted the large number of learning units available online with the NGA, and emphasised in particular the usefulness for new Governors.

**Gov 20 Correspondence**

None

**Gov 21 AOB**

None

**Gov 22 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 8th February 6pm in school**

General meeting.

Governors agreed that all meetings would take place in school. The Headteacher asked whether the start time could be earlier, however this was not possible for all Governors.

The meeting closed at 7:30 pm.

Signed: Date:

Chair of Governors