

SUTTON ON THE FOREST CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
WEDNESDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 6.00 pm in school

GENERAL BUSINESS AND STRATEGY

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: Mrs H Pye (Headteacher), Prof H Hall (Chair), Mrs J Fineran (staff governor), Mrs T Comfort (Deputy Chair), Mrs C Allan, Dr K Forsey, Mrs S Hodgkinson, Ms J Porter

IN ATTENDANCE: Christine Knights (Clerk)

Minute No. _____

Gov 1 Prayer

The Headteacher opened the meeting with the school prayer.

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

There were no declarations of interests, gifts or hospitality. There were no items for AOB.

There were no apologies for absence. Mrs Comfort had given apologies for an unavoidable late arrival (*arrived 7:15pm*) as had Dr Forsey (*arrived 6:30pm*).

The Chair reminded Governors of the need to respect confidentiality.

Gov 3 Approve minutes for signature

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2023 were approved, signed by the Chair to be filed in school. The approved minutes would be put on the school website.

Gov 4 Matters arising from 12th July 2023 minutes and Action Plan update

1. Governor biographies to be added to the website. Biogs and photos of Mrs Fineran and Mrs Hodgkinson to be uploaded by new administrator.

2. Staff survey. The Headteacher was considering the most useful approach for this.

3/21. Annual Governance statements 21-22 and 22-23 completed in a single document using NGA (National Governance Association) template. To be uploaded on website by new administrator. Governor attendance data will be uploaded onto the website in a separate document.

4. Yellow lines. The Chair had emailed NYC to request a meeting to discuss yellow lines and signage. Headteacher noted that staff parking outside school grounds would be useful in the winter months to increase the area available for outdoor play.

5. Chair to meet new Governors for induction. Date to be set.

6. New Governors to book NYC induction. NYC had set a date for the next online training.

7. Solar lighting for path. Mrs Hodgkinson would bring lights in to school. Mrs Allan's husband would put them up on the fence. Mrs Hodgkinson had spoken to one of the school's next door neighbours about the solar lighting.

8. Draft strategy for school. The Chair had written up the strategy based on the Governors' discussion and included it in the Annual Governance statement.

9. Exit interviews for staff. The Headteacher and Governors discussed whether exit interviews would be useful in a small school. It was agreed that an exit interview with a Governor would be offered.

10. Foundation Governor application. Mrs Reynolds would complete the Foundation Governor application (transferring from her current Co-opted Governor role). It was suggested that the Headteacher could include mention of the Governor vacancies in a parent newsletter.

11. Monitoring Schedule. The Headteacher will complete this as soon as possible.

12. FoSS annual report to Govs. The Headteacher had been informed that FoSS had £5.5k in surplus.

The Chair questioned whether FoSS had discussed the Headteacher's priorities for spending and advised that this should take place as soon as possible to avoid surplus being held in accordance with Charity Commission advice. The Headteacher reported discussions about bringing FoSS under the umbrella of the school as it is difficult to recruit members.

A Governor questioned whether this would have implications for the charitable status of FoSS. The Headteacher would ask the Bursar about this.

13. Review of Governing Body self-evaluation. On agenda.

14. Review and organise Governor area of Google Drive. Done.

15. Upload subject action plans. This action was for 2022-23.

Actions 16-20 are on this agenda.

Gov 5 Chair's opening remarks

a) Ofsted. The Chair congratulated the Headteacher, staff, children and all involved for a successful Ofsted inspection.

b) School administrator. The Chair reported that he and the Headteacher had interviewed for a new school administrator and that the successful candidate would join the school in October.

c) Governor recruitment. The Chair had produced a poster to publicise the Foundation Governor role and this would be displayed in the Church.

Gov 6 Order of business

Agreed.

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

All Governors present signed. Documents to be held in the Governor file.

Gov 8 Register of Gifts and Hospitality

No Governors had been in receipt of Gifts or Hospitality. The Chair therefore signed a nil return to be retained in the Governor file.

Gov 9 Disclosure declaration

All Governors present signed. Documents to be held in the Governor file.

Gov 10 To adopt the terms of reference and instrument of government

a) The Chair stated that the terms of reference (TORs) had been based on those of the Governing Body's previous committees. The TORs had been re-adopted annually unchanged. The Chair noted that an update of the Premises section would be useful to consider in the future.

All Governors agreed to adopt the TORs.

b) 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

All unchanged and approved by Governors. Documents signed by Chair and Headteacher.

Gov12 Keeping Children Safe in Education

a) All Governors had been provided with the link to KCSIE statutory guidance for schools 2023. All Governors confirmed that they would read the KCSIE guidance and sign confirmation in the October meeting.

b) The Headteacher noted that there had been very few changes in KCSIE from last year, and highlighted the focus on monitoring safer internet usage. **The Chair questioned** whether Veritau still work with the school on compliance. The Headteacher confirmed this. The Headteacher also stated school needed a Governor with lead responsibility for monitoring the school website. Discussion of the school website and monitoring of compliance would be included on the October meeting agenda.

c) The Headteacher drew Governors attention to other new areas of focus in KCSIE including: children missing from education/ absent (a link governor is needed); pre-recruitment checks to include looking at candidates' social media; how to respond to allegations involving organisation using school premises.

d) The Headteacher and Mrs Fineran would be attending the Safeguarding Networking Conference and would report back to Governors.

e) The Headteacher recommended the NSPCC updates and stated that she would circulate this. Dr Forsey recommended the safeguarding quizzes as an important and useful way for Governors to keep up to date.

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

Governors confirmed the Committee memberships and approach as last updated on 23/3/23 and circulated for this meeting.

The Headteacher stated that the external advisor for the HT Performance Management Committee had been allocated from NYC and had not previously been involved with the school.

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

Governors confirmed the Governor Links and Named Governors as last updated on 23/3/23 and circulated for this meeting.

Gov 15 Virtual attendance and voting

Governors approved virtual attendance at Governing Body meetings following the current agreed procedure and including voting.

Gov 16 Headteacher's update

a) Ofsted. The Headteacher highlighted how pleased she is with the Ofsted report and the scope this now gives the team for moving forward. The Chair and Governors congratulated the Headteacher and staff on the successful Ofsted inspection. The final report had been published on the Ofsted website.

b) Pupil numbers and staffing update. The Headteacher reported that there are 9 children in Reception and they have come together well as a group. The Headteacher explained the approach for staffing in Reception. The Headteacher provided an update on TA support across the school. The Headteacher noted that the current levels of staffing, TA support and volunteering input are meeting needs. She will keep this under review.

c) Budget. The Headteacher reported that the school income had increased in September as compared with the forecast. The budget would also be affected by an anticipated rise in the October census figure, from 88 to 90. The budget would be reviewed in detail in the next Finance focus Governing Body meeting.

d) Curriculum. Mrs Fineran updated Governors on the school's involvement in the Maths Hub, a nationwide initiative funded by the DfE (Department for Education). This is a two-year programme of specialist Maths input including lesson observation, action plan development and information on resources. **A Governor questioned** whether this included outdoor learning. Mrs Fineran confirmed that the programme was extensive and she felt sure this would be included.

A Governor questioned whether programmes of this kind existed for other subjects. The Headteacher confirmed that other subject hubs existed. The Headteacher emphasised involvement in the hub involved enormous commitment for a school. Dr Forsey commented on the usefulness of the STEM Learning Centres.

A Governor questioned whether involvement in the Maths Hub would lead to a need for supply teachers. The Headteacher emphasised that her aim would be to provide any necessary teaching cover herself.

Gov 17 SEND report and progress data

a) Overview. Mrs Fineran provided Governors with information on the SEND cohort in terms of percentages of pupils in school and the comparison with North Yorkshire schools and nationally. The total SEND percentage of the school's cohort by level of need is broadly in line with the national and North Yorkshire percentages. Mrs Fineran explained the detail of the statistics by level of need and by type of primary need. Mrs Fineran noted the small number of children reflected in the percentages.

A Governor questioned who decides whether a child is to be included on the SEN register. Mrs Fineran explained that this decision is taken by the school.

A Governor questioned the percentage of the school cohort with MLD (moderate learning difficulties) which appeared to be higher than the North Yorkshire and national percentages. Mrs Fineran explained that MLD involves moderate difficulties across a range of categories rather than one primary area. She highlighted the percentage of children with SEMH (social, emotional and mental health difficulties) in school is much lower than the North Yorkshire or national picture. Mrs Fineran also noted the impact of the COVID pandemic on SLCN (speech, language and communication needs) and highlighted that this area of need is increasing.

b) Progress. Mrs Fineran reported that the Year 6 children with SEND who left the school in summer had all shown good progress, especially in Maths. The children in KS1 (Key Stage One) had all passed Phonics. In EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) 50% of the children with SEND had reached ARE (age related expectations) in Maths and Reading.

c) Staff training. The Locality Board focus this year is on autism. Mrs Fineran reported that school had funding for a member of staff to be trained on the "social story" approach to embedding skills. Mrs Fineran was also currently researching an intervention tool available free for one year to support speech and language.

d) SEND Information Report. This had been reviewed by the Governing Body in the summer term and had been uploaded onto the school website.

Gov 18 School Development Plan (SDP) and Self Evaluation Framework (SEF)

The Headteacher stated that the SDP would be updated this year to include the key points from the Ofsted inspection. Governors agreed that the SDP overall was sound. It was agreed that the SDP would be discussed in detail at the October Governing Body meeting.

Gov 19 School PAN and update on pupil numbers

The Headteacher confirmed that the school PAN (pupil admissions number) is 15 and would need to remain at this level.

Gov 20 Sports Premium Annual Report 22-23 and action plan for 23-24

Deferred to October Governing Body meeting

Gov 21 Pupil Premium Annual Report 22-23 and action plan for 23-24

Deferred to October Governing Body meeting.

Gov 22 Approval of policies:

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy – deferred to October
Health and Safety Policy – deferred to October
Relationship and Sex Education – not due until Jan 2024

Gov 23 Safeguarding update from Headteacher

The Headteacher informed Governors about a safeguarding incident during the summer holidays. The Headteacher provided the details and confirmed that relevant bodies had been involved. No further action had been required.

There were no other safeguarding issues or concerns.

Gov 24 Governor safeguarding training

All Governors confirmed that they had completed safeguarding training.

Gov 25 Governor monitoring schedule

The Headteacher would link the monitoring schedule to the SDP.

Gov 26 Governor training feedback and forthcoming dates

a) NGA training. The Chair recommended that Governors develop a training programme for themselves and make use of the opportunity provided by having taken out the subscription to the National Governance Association resources.

b) NYC training. The Clerk had circulated details of NYC training in the autumn term.

Gov 27 Review of Governing Body self-evaluation

Governors reviewed the self-evaluation which had been undertaken in July 2022. The updates have been noted separately.

Gov 28 Correspondence

None

Gov 29 Any Other Business previously notified to the Clerk

None notified in advance.

Dr Forsey suggested considering development of an Amazon “wish list” for donations to the school.

Gov 30 Date of next meeting: Wed 18th October 6pm in school

The meeting closed at 8:40pm.

Signed:
Chair of Governors

Date:

List of papers circulated for this meeting:

1. Draft agenda
2. Sutton on the Forest 12th July 2023 draft Governing Body meeting minutes
3. Action plan Sutton on the Forest FGB 12th July 2023
4. Staff Subject leaders for governor links
5. Governing Body Terms of Reference
6. Standing Orders
7. Delegation Planner
8. Instrument of Government
9. Code of Conduct
10. Sutton on the Forest Committee members and link governors
11. Register of Business Interests
12. Self declaration
13. Register of Gifts and Hospitality
14. 2022 Governing Body SEF (self-evaluation) and NGA rag (National Governance Association red amber green guidance)
15. Primary SEND cohorts (school, North Yorkshire and national) (distributed in the meeting)