

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

**APPROVED MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY**  
**WEDNESDAY 29<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 5:45pm TEAMS**

**GENERAL/FINANCE FOCUS**

***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 T Comfort (Deputy Chair), Mrs C Allan, Mrs J Fineran, Dr K Forsey, Mrs S Hodgkinson, Ms J Porter

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Christine Knights (Clerk), Sian Carling (Bursar)

**Minute No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gov 1 Prayer**

The Headteacher opened the meeting with the school prayer.

**Gov 6 Order of business**

It was agreed that agenda item Gov 8 would be taken at the beginning of the meeting. The Bursar had given prior notice that she would need to be available for another meeting at 6:30pm. Governors agreed.

**Gov 8 Budget : approval of Revised Budget**

**a) Start Budget versus Revised Budget forecast**

The Bursar highlighted the differences between the Start Budget and the Revised Budget. The carry forward position was now up from £52,400 to £79,200. The Revised Budget reflected the changes to staffing in the Autumn term. Teachers' pay had been increased by 6.5% rather than the 4% included in the Start Budget, covered in part by a Government grant based on pupil numbers and deprivation factors, a decision made at Government level not in local areas. The Pupil Premium was now £1,500 higher than budgeted. Also, there had been additional donations, catch-up premium and NVQ income. The assumption around catering had changed and this Budget included lunch costs increases. The provision for teaching staff in the Revised Budget reflected the fact that a teacher would be leaving at the end of the Autumn term and additional supply provision would be needed until recruitment is completed, currently planned to be at February half-term. There had been some savings from other support staff and administration staff changes in the Autumn term.

### **b) Three-year Budget forecast**

*Dr Forsey arrived at 5:55pm.*

The end of year carry forward 23-24 forecast was now £79,200, for 24-25 £51,900 and for 25-26 £14,900. The Bursar explained that the three-year Budget was based on an assumption of 0.5% minimum funding guarantee with every school receiving any additional amount above this in full. The Bursar noted the assumption of slight increases in funding associated with deprivation factors and sparsity funding, both of which are received by the school. The 2023 October census of 90 children on roll would be the position for the 24-25 Budget. For staffing, the current level of support staff had been retained going forward and a 6% pay increase in 24-25 and 3% in 25-26 had been included. For teachers, an increase of 3.5% had been included for 24-25 and 3% for 25-26. The Bursar noted that a teachers' pension review is currently ongoing and there could be an increase in April 2024. She stated that on the previous occasion, the Government had provided extra funding for a teachers' pension increase. The Bursar drew Governors' attention to the in-year deficits in 24-25 and 25-26 which could currently be covered by the surplus but highlighted the need for Governors to be mindful of this.

***A Governor questioned how increases in staff salaries and possible increases in pensions had been shown in the Budget.*** The Bursar explained that no as yet undecided changes to pensions had been reflected in this Budget forecast. The actual increases in staff salaries and the Government funding for this had been included.

***A Governor questioned whether the recent announcement of additional Government funding would keep the Budget in balance.*** The Bursar stated that there was no information about this funding yet and that if information is available in February, it would be included in the Start Budget for 24-25.

The Bursar noted that the Budget was based on there being no teaching commitment for the Headteacher which is very positive for the leadership of the school but might need to be reviewed going forward. The Headteacher

emphasised that she provides cover to allow the teachers to carry out their subject leadership roles and to allow Mrs Carter to have two hours a week in her wellbeing lead role. If she had a timetabled teaching commitment, supply teachers would need to be used.

***A Governor questioned whether this meant that it had been possible to reduce the Budget allocation for supply staff.*** The Bursar explained that the Budget was already low and that £2000 of the total £3000 included is to cover supply provision for the days before the insurance cover begins.

Pupil numbers. The Headteacher noted that 15 children were expected to join Reception in September 2024. There had already been 9 applications received, and a further 6 were expected to come in from children with siblings in the school. Enquiries had also been made by other families.

Treetops. The Bursar noted that wrap-around provision could be an income generator for schools. The Headteacher commented that a lot of work was going on behind the scenes in this context. This Budget had not included Treetops.

### **c) Benchmarking**

The Chair commented that school was generally in line with the comparator schools. He noted that if the school did struggle financially it would therefore not be alone, others would be struggling too.

The Chair commented that this looked to be a very positive Budget and Governors agreed.

The Chair highlighted that the Budget included the extra costs going forward but not any potential income from the Government. The Bursar recommended a mindful approach to the Budget position and reminded Governors that the position rarely stays the same going forward. The Headteacher noted the growing pupil numbers and that two in-year pupils joined the school this week.

There were no further comments or questions and the Bursar left the meeting.

### **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.

The Chair reminded Governors of the need to respect confidentiality.

Mrs Reynolds had sent apologies for absence. Dr Forsey, Ms Porter and Mrs Hodgkinson had given notification that they would not be able to arrive for the 5:45pm start. Apologies accepted.

The Headteacher requested an item on a trim trail to be included on the January agenda.

**Gov 3 Approve minutes for signature**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were approved, pending one amendment on page 5 and would be signed by the Chair to be filed in school. The approved minutes would be put on the school website.

**Gov 4 Matters arising from 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 minutes and Action Plan**

1 – 3. ongoing

**4. All Gobs to read KCSIE and Clerk to bring sign-up sheet to meetings.**

Mrs Comfort confirmed that she had read KCSIE. The Clerk would record this.

**5. Report back on SG conference.** On this agenda.

**6. Relationships and sex education policy.** On January agenda.

**7. Chair to write short paragraph for school newsletter re Governor vacancies.** The Chair would emphasise that ideally this vacancy would be for someone who does not have a child in the school in order to ensure a balance of different perspectives on the Governing Body. The Headteacher reported that Jodie Pugh would be joining as the Staff Governor in January.

**8. Staff training and online safety provision update from Vital.** The Headteacher confirmed that Vital was fulfilling this role. She had no further details at this point. A report from Vital would be provided in a future meeting, January if possible.

9 -12. Deferred.

**13. Pupil premium 23-24 action plan.** On this agenda.

14-16 Deferred.

**17. Frequency of SG training.** It was agreed that Governors would sign up for Basic Safeguarding Awareness training and Prevent training every two years.

**18. HT to circulate information on Diocese Governor training.** It was noted that Mrs Reynolds was working through the SIAMS training modules.

**Gov 5 Chair's opening remarks**

a) The Chair, Vice Chair and North Yorkshire Council (NYC) advisor had met with the Headteacher to conduct the annual Performance Management appraisal review. The Chair reported that the review process had been thorough and fair, and had been concluded to everyone's satisfaction.

b) The Chair thanked Mrs Helen Morris for her service to the school. He noted that Mrs Morris had expressed an interest in rejoining the Governing Body and that her application would be welcomed.

c) The Chair thanked Mrs Jo Fineran for her service to the school. He noted that she would be a fantastic asset to her next school, just as she had been during her time at Sutton on the Forest.

*Mrs Hodgkinson and Ms Porter arrived at 6:20pm.*

## **Gov 7 Headteacher's update**

### **Treetops**

a) The Headteacher thanked Mrs Morris for all she had done at Treetops and congratulated her on her new appointment.

b) The Headteacher explained to Governors the huge amount of her time, attention and care had been and continued to be involved in ensuring that Treetops would continue and could be transferred to the school. She informed Governors on future staffing arrangements in Treetops, and the continuity being provided by existing staff. The Headteacher updated Governors on the recruitment of a Play Leader which she was hoping would be confirmed in early December. Also she was pleased to note that a member of staff who already worked at the school would now be joining Treetops. The Headteacher highlighted the extensive implications in terms of HR including contracts and TUPE arrangements, and insurance. A new booking system had also been required. The Headteacher emphasised that her priority throughout had been to ensure uninterrupted high quality care for the children. The Headteacher noted that there had been a number of emails from parents about the importance of a hot meal for the children at Treetops. The Headteacher emphasised that the transition to school was not in any way connected with any changes to catering arrangements that might need to be introduced. The Headteacher assured Governors that there would still be food provided for the children at Treetops.

The Headteacher emphasised the importance of Governors' support and in particular by providing reassurance for any parents who have concerns.

Governors noted the exceptional level of care provided by Treetops and how much this means to parents. The Chair asked whether there were any specific ways in which Governors could help and support the Headteacher. Mrs Allan volunteered to review any insurance and contract issues. The Headteacher confirmed that insurance would be under RPA.

### ***The Chair questioned whether the TUPE process had gone smoothly.***

The Headteacher confirmed that it had and that the staff would be employed by NYC. Arrangements for the hourly paid students from University of York were being put in place.

***A Governor questioned whether a Business Manager could be employed by the school.*** It was noted that school had decided not to continue with the NYC contract for Business Services. The Headteacher praised the input by the School Administrator since she joined the school.

**c) Pupil numbers**

See agenda item Gov 8b.

**d) Recruitment**

The Headteacher reported on the recruitment process for a Year3/4 teacher.

**e) SEND**

Mrs Fineran and the Headteacher had been having meetings with parents and preparing the paperwork for several children.

**f) Christmas festivities**

The Headteacher noted the activities coming up before the end of term: the nativity play, the Christmas tree selection and decoration, songs and music on the last day of term.

The Vice Chair told Governors about her lovely experiences listening to readers in the Reception class.

**Gov 9 Strategic spending update**

a) The Headteacher reported on a donation from the estate of a local resident and how this would be used this year. She was hoping to be able to bring outside involvement in school assemblies.

b) The Headteacher noted that she was hoping to introduce a trim trail funded from the school's Capital Budget and FoSS contributions.

c) The Chair reminded Governors that the £50k donation from the Diocese was supporting the school's Budget as had been seen throughout the Budget discussions.

**Gov 10 Asset management plan**

a) The NYC annual schedule /plan of Governing Board business had included completion of an asset management plan. The Chair had researched this via the National Governance Association (NGA) website. He stated that the asset management plan forms part of estates management and estates strategy which for Sutton on the Forest Primary School are both included in the School Development Plan (SDP) under capital expenditure.

b) In terms of the role of the Governing Body in estates management, the Chair noted that Mrs Allan, as Premises Link Governor, reviewed the school premises and any updating or maintenance identified as required by NYC. It was the role of NYC to identify, prioritise and implement work.

c) The following next steps were agreed. Mrs Allan would visit the school this term to review the premises and consider the County Surveyor's latest report. The Headteacher would ask Veritau about an asset management plan.

**Gov 11 FoSS Annual Report 22-23 update on surplus**

The Headteacher would contact FoSS after Christmas and report back to the Governing Body on the funds raised.

**Gov12 Approval of policies:**

**Charging and Remissions Policy**

a) Governors agreed to continue with the approach of not charging Brownies for the use of the school hall.

b) The Headteacher noted that Treetops had been renting the school hall but this would no longer be the arrangement as Treetops would be transferring across to the school. The Headteacher stated that options for increasing summer provision by Treetops and possibly also other clubs could be considered at some point in the future but emphasised that at least two weeks holiday club would continue to be provided.

***A Governor questioned how many children were needed for Treetops to be viable in the summer.*** The Headteacher emphasised that Treetops would continue to be provided in the summer and that any new plans for additional clubs or Treetops weeks would not be considered at this point.

c) The Headteacher would proceed on the basis of this discussion to complete the draft Charging and Remissions Policy.

**Gov 13 Safer internet**

See agenda item Gov 4.8

**Gov 14 Performance management: Headteacher and staff**

a) Headteacher Performance Management see agenda item Gov 5a.

b) Teaching staff performance management. The Headteacher reported that each member of the teaching staff had two targets, one focused on assessment and the other linked to CPD (continuous professional development).

c) Mrs Comito would be carrying out the TA staff performance management.

**Gov 15 Premises update**

The Headteacher reported that the planned work had been carried out during the half-term break ie Yr3/4 classroom had been painted inside and out, and carpets had been fitted in the Yr1/2 classroom. New carpets would be fitted in the Yr3/4 classroom during the February half-term break.

#### **Gov 16 Health and Safety update**

The Headteacher had uploaded the Fire Risk Assessment visit report on the Google Drive in the November Governing Body meeting folder. Governors had no questions or comments.

#### **Gov 17 Sports Premium Action Plan for 23-24**

This was deferred to January due to the Headteacher's time pressures.

#### **Gov 18 Pupil Premium Action Plan for 23-24**

The Headteacher had uploaded the Pupil Premium Strategy including activity for academic year 23-24 on the Google Drive in the November Governing Body meeting folder. There were no questions or comments from the Governors.

#### **Gov 19 Safeguarding update from Headteacher**

##### **a) SG Conference feedback**

The Headteacher informed Governors that Jodie Pugh would be the Safeguarding Lead from January 24, taking over from Mrs Fineran. She was therefore enrolling on all current courses to ensure that she is appropriately trained and had attended the recent Safeguarding Conference. The Headteacher reported that the conference had been disappointing this year.

##### **b) Update on any SG incidents or concerns.**

The Headteacher stated that there had been no SG incidents or concerns.

#### **Gov 20 Any incidents of bullying or racist incidents**

The Headteacher stated that there had been no bullying or racist incidents.

#### **Gov 21 Governor monitoring schedule and visit planning**

This was deferred to January due to pressures on the Headteacher's time.

#### **Gov 22 Governor training feedback and forthcoming dates**

Mrs Allan had attended the NYC Governor School Improvement meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> October and reported that it had been useful. The following items were discussed: music; resilience and emergency planning; delivering better value in the SEND programme; what Governors need to know about safeguarding and technology. Mrs Allan (in her role as music link governor) would discuss the music update with Jodie Pugh (music lead). Mrs Allan noted that the presentations by the technical staff at the meeting reflected the issues that the Headteacher had been discussing with Governors. The Headteacher confirmed that Smoothwall digital monitoring ensures that the school is compliant.

#### **Gov 23 Governor vacancies**

See agenda item Gov 4.7. There were currently two Governor vacancies.



**Gov 24 Correspondence**

None

**Gov 25 Any Other Business previously notified to the Clerk**

None

**Gov 26 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024 Resources**

The meeting closed at 7:05pm.

Signed:  
Chair of Governors

Date:

**List of papers circulated for this meeting:**

1. Draft agenda
2. Sutton on the Forest October 2023 draft Governing Body meeting minutes
3. Action plan Sutton on the Forest FGB October
4. Start Budget vs Revised Forecast 23-24
5. Revised forecast 3 year summary draft
6. Revised forecast 3 year detailed draft
7. Benchmarking report Autumn 23
8. Pupil Premium Statement 2023-2024 (including activity plan for 23-24)
9. Sutton on the Forest Fire Risk Assessment visit 2023
10. Charging and Remissions Policy September 2023