

SUTTON ON THE FOREST CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL

MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

held on Wednesday 07th May 2025 AT 18:00

at the school

Finance/Resources

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:

- that the vision, ethos, and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined
- that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school
- the sound, proper and effective use of the school’s financial resources

Attendance:

<u>Governors</u>		
Caroline Allan (CA)	Co-opted	Yes
Therese Comfort (TC)	Co-opted	Yes
Sally-Ann Hodgkinson (SAH)	Co-opted	No – No apologies received
James Plant (JPI)	Co-opted	No – Apologies received & accepted
Helen Morris (HM)	Foundation	Yes
Jane Reynolds (JR)	Foundation	Yes
Helen Pye (HP)	Headteacher	Yes
Jess Porter (JPo)	Local Authority	Yes
Neil Boycott (NB)	Parent	Yes
Howard Hall (HH)	Parent	Yes
Jodie Neill (JN)	Staff	Yes
<u>Other Members</u>		
Alex Bell (AB)	Clerk to Governors, North Yorkshire Council	Yes
Joanne Jackson	Bursar, North Yorkshire Council	Yes

Minutes:

18	<u>Approval of policies</u> HP opened the meeting at 18:00 with item 18.
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	<p>HP provided an update on the policy spreadsheet, confirming that all statutory policies have been reviewed and are currently in date. The policies presented for approval at this meeting had previously been approved, with only date amendments made in the most recent updates.</p> <p><i>18:09 – HH joined the meeting</i></p> <p>HH suggested that any future changes to policies be clearly highlighted to make it easier for governors to review amendments.</p> <p>CA recommended a minor amendment to the Premises Policy, changing the reference from the Health & Safety Committee to the Full Governing Body (FGB).</p> <p>Agreed: Governors unanimously approved the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Career Teacher (ECT) Policy • Behaviour Principles • Premises Policy (with amendment)
1	<p><u>Prayer</u></p> <p>The governors said the school prayer.</p>
2	<p><u>Apologies for absence, consents, declarations of interest and reminders regarding confidentiality and gifts and hospitality. Notification of AOB.</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from JPI which were accepted and given consent.</p> <p>JR advised in advance that they would be attending the meeting but would arrive late. Apologies for the late arrival were noted.</p> <p>There were no communications received from SAH.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interests, gifts, or hospitality. There were no items of AOB.</p> <p>HH reminded governors of the importance of attending the governing body meetings and to email the clerk or chair with apologies for absence prior to the meeting. Governors were also reminded of the standing orders and the policy on missing FGBs.</p> <p>Action: HH to email SAH regarding attendance.</p>
3	<p><u>Approve minutes for signature of the meeting dated 26th March 2025</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held of the 26th March 2025 were approved. The Chair signed the minutes and passed them to Head teacher to be filed in school. These would then be uploaded to the school website.</p> <p>Action: AB to send the minutes to the office manager to upload to the website.</p>
4	<p><u>Chair opening remarks</u></p> <p>There were no remarks.</p>
5	<p><u>Order of business</u></p> <p>Agreed.</p>
6	<p><u>Outturn statement</u></p> <p><i>18:15: JJ joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams.</i></p> <p>JJ provided further detail on the outturn paperwork previously shared with governors. It was reported that the school is currently £10,000 ahead of the revised budget. This</p>

	<p>surplus is primarily due to underspending in areas such as utilities, resources, building maintenance, and catering.</p> <p>Additional income was also received from the holiday clubs in Easter/Summer contributing positively to the financial position.</p> <p>Capital funding has been used as planned, with no carry forward remaining.</p>
7	<p><u>Approval of 2024-2025 Start Budget</u></p> <p>JJ presented the start budget, outlining income from specific grants and funding, which is based on the October 2024 census. It was noted that a new rate for free school meals has been introduced.</p> <p>JJ and HP reported a projected loss of income from Treetops. In response, staffing is being reviewed.</p> <p>Action: Review staffing for Treetops and costs.</p> <p>Q: Governors enquired how easy it was to predict the needs for this provision. A: HP explained it was difficult to predict as numbers fluctuate and breakfast club attendance varies weekly.</p> <p>Q Governors queried whether statutory regulations prevent generating income from before and after school provision. A: Uncertainty was expressed regarding this; further clarification is needed.</p> <p>JJ advised that the current costings for the before and after school club are inaccurate, as they only account for income and staffing. A more thorough analysis is needed, including consideration of energy usage, lighting, administrative time, and resources. While reducing food and craft provisions was suggested, it was noted that these are relatively low-cost areas. Significant savings would more likely come from staffing adjustments.</p> <p>Governors also discussed the timeframe for booking dates for the clubs.</p> <p>Action: Governors to discuss money saving options for the school clubs.</p> <p>Universal Infant Free School Meal is based on average from the October and January census. As of 01/04/2025, there has been an increase in funding.</p> <p>JJ provided an overview of the staffing costs included in the budget. These account for teaching staff, including those eligible for increments and a 4% pay award, as well as support staff and their respective increments. It was noted that unions are currently requesting a higher pay increase.</p> <p>The supply budget is allocated to cover teacher sickness, with staff absence insurance commencing from day 15.</p> <p>For services bought in, such as grounds maintenance, a standard inflationary increase has been assumed. Oil costs are based on previous years, while electricity has increased by 14%, with no further increases anticipated in future years. Learner resources are budgeted in line with last year's expenditure.</p> <p>In line with DfE requirements, IT expenditure has now been coded separately and is broken down accordingly.</p>

	<p>Catering costs are calculated based on pupil numbers, and professional services are those procured from the Local Authority.</p> <p>Financial Forecast</p> <p>By Year 3, the school is projected to have a deficit. Predicted pupil numbers are 104 for 2025/26 and 106 for 2026/27.</p> <p>It was noted that not all pupils were funded following the October census due to an issue involving two pupils.</p> <p>Q: Governors enquired whether the limit of 105 can be exceeded. A: HP explained there was no space to accommodate more children.</p> <p><i>18:38 JR joins the meeting.</i></p> <p>JJ advised that reviewing the in-year deficit for next year included the expenditure for ICT renewals and staff room refurbishment.</p> <p>Agreed: governors agreed the 2024-2025 start budget.</p> <p><i>18:42 JJ left the meeting.</i></p> <p>HP informed governors that a budget setting document is available for download from the NGA.</p> <p>Action: HP to photocopy and circulate the NGA budget setting document.</p> <p>HP provided an update on the staffroom kitchen project. Procurement has been carried out, with quotes also obtained from B&Q, IKEA and Magnet.</p> <p>HP also suggested exploring whether any local companies might be willing to donate a skip for the project.</p>
8	<p><u>Pupil numbers</u></p> <p>It was reported that 15 new pupils are due to start in September, bringing the total number on roll (NOR) to 103. There is a potential additional pupil for Year 2. If this place is confirmed, Year 2—and the school overall—will be at full capacity.</p>
9	<p><u>Staffing</u></p> <p>It was noted that JN will finish at May half term for maternity leave. AH is due to start on Monday, 12th May.</p>
10	<p><u>Attendance (Confidential item)</u></p> <p><i>Due to the sensitive nature of some of this discussion, aspects are recorded as a confidential minute and not included in the publicly available version of the minutes.</i></p> <p>Persistent absence currently stands at 12.2%.</p> <p>Governors discussed the potential value of comparing attendance data with other schools that have a similar demographic.</p> <p>Q: Governors enquired about possible consequences of the current attendance figures. A: HP explained that Ofsted would probably include a comment in their report. However, the school's documentation shows progress.</p>

	<p>Governors suggested that HP issue a document in September outlining the impact of pupil absence on school attendance figures. It was also recommended that this information be included in the school newsletter.</p> <p>It was confirmed that attendance be a standing item on every governing body agenda.</p> <p>Governors requested a more visual representation of attendance data, such as a graph. NB offered to create this.</p> <p><u>Actions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HP to share attendance system login details with NB. • NB to create a visual attendance graph for future meetings.
11	<p><u>Headteacher update</u></p> <p>It was noted that JN has two weeks remaining before commencing maternity leave at the start of the May half term.</p> <p>Governors enquired about the status of a recent issue involving a parent. HP confirmed that the matter has now been resolved and no further concerns have arisen.</p> <p>HP confirmed that the upcoming Edinburgh visit would have nine pupils attending. Two pupils are not attending for a range of reasons. As a result, the trip will now run at a financial loss. There will be three members of staff accompanying nine pupils.</p> <p><u>Upcoming Events</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SATs are scheduled to take place next week. • Sports Day is planned for the following Friday.
12	<p><u>Premises update</u></p> <p>HH shared maintenance guidance with HP and CA.</p> <p>HP reported that both the Health & Safety and Fire Safety inspections have taken place and were described as very thorough. HP has received the inspection report and will now work through the identified actions. It was noted that JN has already completed their assigned action from the report.</p> <p>The board agreed on the need to establish a small working group to meet regularly and progress building-related matters. JR has arranged for a contact, as well as the architect, to get in touch with HP.</p> <p><u>Agreed:</u> NB to chair the working group, which will include CA, JR, HM, and JPo.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> NB to check if JPI would like to be involved and to gather availability for the first meeting, which may be held via Microsoft Teams for convenience.</p>
13	<p><u>Health and Safety update</u></p> <p>It was confirmed that all staff have now completed first aid training and are fully certified.</p> <p>The fencing on site is scheduled to be removed.</p>
14	<p><u>Safeguarding update from HT (Confidential Item)</u></p>

	<i>Due to the sensitive nature of this discussion, this item is recorded as a confidential minute and not included in the publicly available version of the minutes.</i>
15	<u>Any bullying or racist incidents</u> HP advised there were no bullying or racist incidents to report.
16	<u>Supporting mental health and wellbeing</u> HP and JN informed governors that the staffroom was currently being renovated, which was expected to have a positive impact on staff wellbeing. HP reported that staff completed two twilight training sessions in recent weeks in place of the scheduled training days in July. Q: Governors requested an update on the issue around books. A: JN confirmed that the school had extended its book collection.
17	<u>Governor vacancies</u> It was noted that there were no governor vacancies. However, one vacancy was expected to arise in July.
18	<u>Governor monitoring – feedback</u> New governors recently visited the school to complete their induction and participate in strategic planning. Governors provided positive feedback, describing the day as extremely successful and informative. They noted how much they learned about the school and its challenges and highlighted the high level of interaction with pupils during their visit. HP expressed appreciation for the card and kind words received from governors. It was suggested that governors aim to visit the school once per term to maintain strong engagement and visibility.
19	<u>Governor training – feedback and upcoming dates</u> JPo completed safer recruitment training and uploaded the certificate to the shared drive.
20	<u>Correspondence</u> HH has not received any additional correspondence.
21	<u>Any Other Business previously notified to the Clerk</u> There was no other business.
22	<u>Date of next meeting</u> Wednesday 11 th June 2025 at 18:00 to be held in school with a general focus.
Meeting closed at 19:50	