

## SUTTON ON THE FOREST VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on  
Wednesday 9 July at 6pm at the school

*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.’*

**Present:** Jess Porter (JP), Chair, Helen Pye (HP) Headteacher, Prof. Howard Hall (HH), Caroline Allan (CA), Neil Boycott (NB), Sally-Ann Hodgkinson (S-AH), Jodie Neill (JN), James Plant (JP), Jane Reynolds (JR)

**Apologies:** Therese Comfort (TC), Helen Morris

### **In Attendance:**

Chris Walker (CW) – Senior Governance Office and Clerk (NYC)

Governing Body Functions

**Ensuring the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined**

**Ensuring that the Headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school**

**Ensuring the sound and proper and efficient use of the school’s financial resources**

		Actions
<b>PART ‘A’ - PROCEDURAL</b>		
1.	<b>Welcome and Introductions.</b> HH welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the meeting with a prayer. CW was welcomed to the meeting as the covering clerk.	
2.	<b>Apologies and confidentiality</b> Apologies had been received from Therese Comfort and Helen Morris in advance of the meeting and were consented to.  HH reminded governors of the need to ensure the confidentiality of all discussions and to declare any gifts or hospitality.  There were no declarations of interest for any items on the agenda.	
3.	<b>Approval of the minutes from the meeting on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025.</b> The minutes and confidential minutes were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chair and filed in school.	
4.	<b>Matters Arising</b>	

	<p>A review of actions from the last meeting was undertaken. All actions had been completed or were updated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor bios – ongoing.</li> <li>• Maintenance Issues: HP had not yet received a response from the LA to the outstanding questions (re land responsibility)</li> <li>• SIAMS SEF – to be shared in the autumn term.</li> <li>• Asset Management Plan – ongoing.</li> <li>• Vision and Values – will be revisited on the Training Day.</li> <li>• The next staff survey would focus on well-being.</li> <li>• The window in the kitchen would be addressed in the summer break.</li> <li>• The risk register would be considered at the next meeting.</li> <li>• Some finance training had been undertaken by governors. Further training to be arranged in advance of the approval of the next revised budget.</li> <li>• Land Ownership: Ongoing. Governors established the land ownership and that the owners are happy for the school to use it. NB to obtain papers from land registry and governors to ask the owner to sign a release. NYC needs to be engaged.</li> </ul>	
5.	<p><b>Chair's Opening Remarks</b></p> <p>HH had sent governors guidance about the recent changes to the Maintained Schools Governance Guide in advance of the meeting. HH highlighted the key changes at the meeting which included greater responsibilities on procurement and nutrition.</p> <p>This was HH's final meeting as Chair. HH expressed his thanks to all governors and HP for their support over the previous 8 years.</p> <p>Governors thanked HH for his dedication and support of both the school and governing body.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Order of Business</b></p> <p>Governors agreed to remove items 8 and 17 from the agenda.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Governors agreed to add a standing item on the new classroom on future agendas.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Governors agreed to hold future meetings at 6pm on Thursdays – dates to be confirmed.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>All</p>
7.	<p><b>Chair and Vice-Chair Election</b></p> <p><b>Election of Chair</b></p> <p>JP was the sole nomination and was elected as Chair for a period of 12 months. HH agreed to Chair the remainder of this meeting.</p> <p><b>Election of Vice-Chair</b></p> <p>TC was the sole nomination for the position of Vice-Chair and was elected for a period of 12 months.</p>	
	<b>PART 'B' -SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT</b>	
8.	<p><b>Classroom Project</b></p> <p>JP had shared a report in advance of the meeting and highlighted the key points which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The challenges of being able to access any funding which might support the project.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One option would be to submit a Capital Improvement Bid. However, approval was unlikely as this funding was targeted at projects where there was significant need or safeguarding concerns.</li> <li>• The cost was likely to be around £95k</li> <li>• Working with the community and Church as part of a fundraising strategy.</li> </ul> <p>JP explained that it was possible to get up to 3 years of devolved capital in advance. The fundraising strategy aimed to raise £8-10k plus there was £3k available from FOSS. The current devolved capital was £15k. This would mean a need to find around £67k.</p> <p>Governor questions  Q: Could we ask the PCC for this figure?  A: They have previously provided £50k to the school. We would need to discuss this in more detail with the PCC to check its viability and how it would fit in with their strategic plans particularly around providing spirituality etc.</p> <p>Q: How did you arrive at the fundraising figure of £10k?  A: I used AI to help model the various plans we are proposing.</p> <p>JP reported that the overall costs could be reduced depending on the specifications required.</p> <p>Q: Could we explore match-funding?  A: Yes – this is something we could look at.</p> <p>Governors agreed that it would be helpful to set up a Fundraising Committee and that a governor should be part of that committee.</p> <p>Other suggestions included contacting alumni and to consider re-directing savings made elsewhere in the school to this project.</p> <p>Governors agreed that further discussion of renewable energy was also needed.</p> <p>Governors thanked JP for all her hard work.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>The Headteacher's Report had been shared in advance of the meeting. HP presented the report at the meeting and highlighted the key points, which included:</p> <p><b>Pupil Numbers</b></p> <p>102 on roll</p> <p>15 starting in Reception in September</p> <p>106 on roll in September</p> <p><b>Attendance</b></p> <p>Overall attendance was good. The LA had expressed no concerns about the attendance data or management.</p> <p>At this point in the meeting there was a confidential discussion which has been recorded in a separate confidential minute.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report detailed the current staff roles and responsibilities as well as CPD.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SEA had recently undertaken a visit with a SEND focus. The subsequent report was positive.</li> <li>• Many of the priorities in the School Development Plan (SDP) would roll over. Some tweaks might be made in the light of the SATS outcomes once analysed.</li> </ul> <p>Governors were content to increase the fee for Treetops, as discussed at the last meeting. HP would be notifying parents via a letter.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>HP informed governors that there had been a safeguarding incident during the recent residential trip to Edinburgh. HP reported that she had discussed the incident with the LA Safeguarding Advisor and Educational Visits Advisor. Details had been shared also with the Chair. Lessons had been learned and systems put in place to ensure that a similar incident could never happen again.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Governors agreed to provide support to ensure that a governor would attend any future safeguarding meetings with HP and a parent/carer. All meetings would be minuted.</p> <p><b>SATS Data</b></p> <p>A data report was shared at the meeting. HP reported that she was pleased with the outcomes as a whole as this was not a strong cohort.</p> <p>Governors asked that their thanks be passed onto all the staff. The outcomes in Maths, under the guidance of Miss Palmer, were identified as particularly outstanding.</p> <p>HP reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maths at GD was slightly below national</li> <li>• There had been a dip in multiplication</li> <li>• Phonics outcomes were good</li> <li>• EYFS in line with national.</li> </ul>	
10.	<p><b>Staff and Pupil Well-being</b></p> <p>Item 9 refers. HP reported that the staffroom had been refreshed and had impacted on staff well-being.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Safeguarding Report</b></p> <p>JP had undertaken her termly visit to monitor safeguarding. The report had been shared in advance of the meeting. JP had undertaken the NGA safeguarding training and recommended that all governors complete the useful training. JP assured governors that the school continued to be effective in its management of safeguarding and that any actions identified in external reports were being addressed.</p> <p>JP had reviewed CPOMs and was assured of its effectiveness in supporting the management of all safeguarding incidents.</p> <p>Governor question</p> <p>Q: If you reduced all future visits, would they still be worthwhile or would most of the day, be spent travelling there and back?</p> <p>A: We use the train, which is all part of the experience for the pupils, which enables us to spend most of the day undertaking enriching and purposeful activities.</p> <p>Q: Would a longer trip be more effective in building resilience?</p>	

	<p>A: The pupils get very tired, and we should not underestimate the impact of a noisy city on our pupils. We need to think about the staffing too. There needs to be a balance.</p> <p>Q: Will you always go to Edinburgh and not say London? A: Yes. For the foreseeable future at least.</p> <p>Governors agreed to read the updated version of Keeping Children Safe in Education in advance of the autumn term meeting.</p> <p>All governors confirmed that they had read the latest version.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Any bullying or racist incidents.</b> None</p>	
13.	<p><b>Budget Update.</b> The latest monitoring reports had been shared in advance of the meeting. There were no questions.</p>	
14.	<p><b>Sports Premium</b> HP was in the process of completing the strategy on the new online portal. The deadline for completion was 31 July 2025.</p>	
15.	<p><b>External Visits</b> The reports from the recent SEND and Inclusion visits had not yet been received. Feedback on the day had been positive. Areas of focus had included spelling and the KS2 curriculum – feedback on both had been positive.</p> <p>John Banks had also undertaken a visit which had been particularly useful for ECT development.</p>	
16.	<p><b>FOSS annual report</b> The report was awaiting approval by the Charities Commission.</p>	
17.	<p><b>Governor Renewals</b> The recruitment to the vacant parent governor position would be undertaken in the autumn term.</p>	
18.	<p><b>Feedback from link governor visits</b> Feedback from a number of visits had been discussed earlier in the meeting.</p> <p>Governors agreed to review link roles in the autumn term and to consider the report template.</p> <p>HP had agreed to draft a monitoring schedule which would be shared in the autumn term.</p>	
19.	<p><b>Governor Training</b> HP reminded governors that the training provided on the NGA website was useful.</p>	
20.	<p><b>Governing Body Self-Evaluation</b> Previously undertaken in January 2025.</p>	
21.	<p><b>Policies</b> None</p>	
22.	<p><b>Approval of meeting schedule</b> Dates to be agreed at the first meeting in autumn.</p>	
23.	<p><b>Correspondence</b> None</p>	

24.	AOB None	
25.	Date of next meeting 25 <sup>th</sup> September at 6pm in school	

The meeting closed at 7.25pm.

Signed: ..... (Chair) Date: .....

