



Governing Body of Sutton CofE VC Primary School

Minutes of Full Governing Body Meeting	Date: Tuesday 5 th December 2023 Time: 6.00pm
Governors Present: Chris Shea (Co-chair, C Sh), Jessica Webb (Co-chair, JW), Mike Harrison (Headteacher), Rebecca Ayres (RA), Jonathon Cooper (JC), Kim Fleming (KF), Ryan Storey (RS), Hilary Sanderson (HS), Sarah Stant (SS) Associate Members Present: Ruth Garbutt (RG) Apologies: Peter Townsend, Chris Sanderson Clerk: David Barker	

Live actions

Agenda Item	Action	Owner	Deadline
Actions arising from this meeting held on Tuesday 5th December 2023			
3.1	Clerk to remind governors who still need to complete the Declarations of Interest on GovernorHub to do so as soon as possible.	Clerk	8/12/2023
3.12	For the clerk to email governors who have not yet confirmed reading/understanding of KCSiE 23, and all other appropriate school confirmations, including declarations of interests, to do so as soon as possible.	Clerk	8/12/2023
4.1	For the Headteacher/Governing Board to draft and distribute an email to all staff thanking them for their hard work.	Headteacher/ Governing Board	Completed.
4.13	Action: For the Headteacher to organise a meeting at the beginning of next year to discuss the finances and structure of Paintbox.	Headteacher	31/01/2024
7	To review the SEND information report at the next FGB.	Headteacher	13/02/24
8.1	To review the Sports Premium report at the next FGB.	Headteacher	13/02/24

8.2	For the Headteacher to publish and share with governors data showing achievement over time for Pupil Premium pupils.	Headteacher	13/02/24
11.3	For the Headteacher to amend dates within the Admissions Policy document.	Headteacher	As soon as possible.
11.4	For the Headteacher to submit to the Governing Board, for their review and approval, the school's pay policy.	Headteacher	By or at next FGB 13/02/24
11.8	For the Headteacher to amend the Assurance of Excellence policy so it reflects the school's values and its other policies.	Headteacher	As soon as possible.
12.1	For the clerk to provide role descriptors for the link governor roles.	Clerk	By the end of December term.
14.1	For fruit trees/vouchers to given to the ex-governor and for the school to organise a card and an invitation to the ex-governor to attend the school's end of term event at the Church.	Headteacher/ HS	By 19 th December 2023.
Actions arising from the meeting held on Tuesday 3rd October 2023			
3.19	School to create and populate with information from the relevant checks a separate part of the SCR dedicated to those members of staff who work providing additional provision on the school site.	Headteacher	31/01/2024
4.133 a)	The school to create a Governors' Corner space on the school newsletter which governors can use to promote various policies and aspects of the school.	Headteacher	For review at the next FGB 13 th February 2023.
4.133 b)	Governors to decide who will contribute what items, and when, to the Governors' Corner space on the newsletter.	Governing Board	For review at the next FGB 13 th February 2024.
7.13	The school to investigate aligning payment system for school meals so it aligns more closely with the school weeks.	Headteacher	By next FGB 13 th February 2024.
8.13	For the school to amend the school's attendance policy, taking out links with Paintbox and creating a separate attendance policy for the Paintbox provision to bring to governors for approval.	Headteacher	By next FGB 13 th February 2024

Meeting minutes.

ITEM	MINUTES
	HS led the opening prayers.
1	Welcome and apologies/note of absenteeism
1.1	The Co-Chair welcomed governors to the meeting.
1.2	- Apologies were received from Chris Sanderson and Peter Townrow, which were accepted by the Governing Board. - Pheobe Greenwood was not in attendance and no apologies were submitted.
2	Declarations of Interests
2.1	There were no interests declared.
3	Minutes of the previous meeting 3 rd October 2023
3.1	Actions update. a) From meeting held on 3rd October 2023. 2.1: for the clerk to ensure that updates to Declarations of Interest are an agenda item all future meetings. Action completed and closed. 2.3: Governors to update their declarations of interest on GovernorHub. Most governors have completed this, the clerk will remind those who still need to still complete this. New action arising. Action: Clerk to remind governors who still need to complete the Declarations of Interest on GovernorHub to do so as soon as possible. 3.19: School to create and populate separate SCR information related to those who provide additional provision on the school site. Action ongoing. 3.21: For the clerk to update the Standing Orders for Sutton and to circulate to all governors by email for approval. Action completed and closed.

3.3 a): For the clerk to update the Code of Conduct document and upload this to the confirmations section of GovernorHub. Action completed and closed.

3.3 b): For the clerk to remove any out-of-date Code of Conduct documents from the confirmations section of GovernorHub. Action completed and closed.

3.4: For the clerk to upload the Governor Visits Policy onto GovernorHub. Action completed and closed.

3.5: For the clerk to update the Terms of Reference to reflect new post holders. Action completed and closed.

3.51: For the Governing Board to allocate to a governor or committee the role of overseeing of Paintbox. This role has been taken by JW. Action completed and closed.

3.7: For the Chairs or school leadership to share the list of panel roles with the clerk for uploading onto GovernorHub for 23/24. Action completed and closed.

4.122: For the Chairs and Headteacher to lead on creating a proposal for link governor roles which builds on current expertise and is appropriate to the school's context and for this to be published on GovernorHub at the earliest opportunity. Action completed (see meeting notes) and closed.

4.133 a): The school to create a Governors' Corner space on the school newsletter which governors can use to promote various policies and aspects of the school. Action ongoing.

4.133 b): Governors to decide who will contribute what items, and when to the Governors' Corner space on the newsletter. Action ongoing.

4.3: For the Clerk to amend minutes from FGB 11.7.23. Action completed and closed.

7.13: The school to investigate aligning payment system for school meals so it aligns more closely with the school weeks. Action ongoing.

8.13: For the school to amend the school's attendance policy, taking out links with Paintbox and creating a separate attendance policy for Paintbox to bring to governors for approval. Action ongoing.

8.41: For the school to update the link safeguarding governor named within the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Action to be completed following this meeting. Action closed.

8.52 a): The school to amend the Whistle Blowing policy removing and replacing the word 'and' in the sentence indicated and replacing it with the word 'or'. Action completed and closed.

8.52 b): The school to make clear to all that the email address: concerns@sutton.cambs.sch.uk can be used to raise any concerns in line with the Whistle Blowing Policy. Action completed and closed.

8.6: For the clerk to align policies for updating, as described in the policy review schedule, with school meetings to ensure that policies are updated as appropriate. Action completed and closed.

11: For the clerk to send out invites via Teams for the virtual meeting scheduled. Action completed and closed.

3.11	Actions update from the meeting held on 9th May 2023. 027: For the school to update the CME policy on the website. Policy was approved in this meeting and will be uploaded onto the website. Action completed and closed.
3.12	Actions update from the meeting held on 11th October 2022. 006: For the clerk to ensure that all governors email KCSiE confirmations to Emma Wilkinson. There is now an updated KCSiE document now in place and the GovernorHub confirmations page is being used by governors to acknowledge reading and understanding the latest KCSiE documentation. Action: clerk to email governors who have not yet confirmed reading/understanding of KCSiE 23 to do so. 007: for the clerk to ensure that all governors have completed the pecuniary interests form on GovernorHub. Action: clerk to email governors who have not yet completed the declarations of interest form on GovernorHub.
3.2	Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October were unanimously approved.
4	The Headteacher's report
4.1	The Headteacher prefaced this part of the meeting by commenting that achievement data for pupils will be collated and shared with governors at a later date
4.11	Admissions. • The school has had a large number of requests for within-year transfers. These transfers raise a number of issues: i) All pupils transferring have SEN many with high level needs. ii) These transfers will require a re-thinking of class sizes with giving rise to the possibility of mixing year groups. The Headteacher commented that he is not happy for class size to be above 34. iii) There are financial implications of the above. Question: When are the children to be admitted? The Headteacher commented that there were a number of factors at play with this decision: i) The possibility of extra funding which could be brought into the school as the Headteacher has begun discussions with the Diocese who have asked him to carry out an additional day's consultancy work per week. The charge made to the Diocese for this would mostly cover the cost of an additional teacher. The school may have an additional teacher identified already as part of its planning for the possibility of it developing an ERB if their application is successful. ii) Allied with the above the school is looking to employ a teacher for the pre-school provision.

The Headteacher explained that if the school were to create an additional class and if an additional teacher is to be employed for this, he envisages these transfers would take place in January 2024 and before the Spring half term.

Question: Do you have to consult or notify parents if the school decides to mix year groups or change classes?

The Headteacher commented that the Governing Board would need to approve any such changes and there would be the need to inform parents.

Question: Are staff aware of the potential increase in pupil numbers as a result of the in-year transfers?

The Headteacher explained that staff know very little as these transfers have come about very recently.

Question: Would the school need to employ more TAs?

The Headteacher commented that this would be under consideration. He further noted that there is no further capacity within the school to manage additional pupil numbers.

Question: How would another day working for the Diocese impact upon the school and your well-being?

The Headteacher noted that school staff are very stretched and that staff absence, as he has reported, are having a profound impact.

4.12

Staff Absence.

Question: How is the school coping without a caretaker? Is everything as safe as it should be?

The Headteacher noted that other members of staff are helping out with the opening and closing of the school and gritting of paths. He expressed his gratitude, as did the governors, for everyone's help.

Question: What does no insurance for TA absence mean?

The Headteacher explained that it means that the school has to pay their salaries whilst they are sick as its too costly to take out insurance to cover the potential risks of this. He further noted that the school has to take out insurance to cover the cost of teacher absence through sickness as there is a statutory duty to ensure each class has a teacher.

Question: When are staff returning?

The Headteacher responded that staff should be returning by the end of January 2024.

Question: The situation seems quite unstable at the moment. What are you going to do? What is the contingency plan for January?

The Headteacher noted that they were coping now with everyone helping out and that this approach would continue. In terms of contingencies, he explained that these are provided by the SLT.

It was commented that staff absence is impacting upon staff well-being as there is often the need to cover or fill-in with little notice and well-laid plans have to change at short notice.

Question: How do we make a plan to bring some more stability?

The Headteacher explained that every school is in a similar situation. Supply teachers' costs and availability means that they are not easy to source. Additionally, having regularly unfamiliar staff in school is unsettling for the children, especially those with high-level needs.

Question: Is the experience of the current situation going to mean that employment contract terms/conditions offered to new staff, with regards to sickness pay, will be reviewed?

The Headteacher commented that as the Local Authority is the employer it makes it impossible for the school to change the contracts terms/conditions.

Question: Can we ask volunteers to lock/unlock the school?

The Headteacher commented that this is the case already.

Proposal: That the Governing Board sends an email to all staff thanking them for their hard work, commitment and teamwork.

Action: For the Headteacher/Governing Board to draft and distribute an email to all staff thanking them for their hard work.

4.13

Paintbox Update.

Question: Is the provision considering taking children as young as 9 months old?

The Headteacher commented that this was not something they were considering.

Question: What is the financial status of Paintbox?

The Headteacher commented that Paintbox is a separate entity, and their finances are ring-fenced.

Question: Who is responsible for managing the finances of Paintbox?

The Headteacher answered that the school oversees the finances of Paintbox.

Question: Can Paintbox pay the school a management fee for carrying out their financial management duties?

Governors further commented that if the relationship between the school and Paintbox is a symbiotic one, then why should the school not benefit?

The Headteacher recognised in principle this as a good idea, although noting that their budget is already 'top-sliced' to this effect. He further commented that Paintbox is not a solution for the financial situation of the school but is more about early support and identification for those with needs, so the best possible provision is given.

Question: Can Paintbox employ admin/caretaking staff who could also then support the school?

The Headteacher commented that to some extent this is already in place as some staff have been TUPEEd across and that employing a teacher in Paintbox will use the surplus they have.

Question: Will the finances of Paintbox roll into the finances of the school?

The Headteacher noted that this would not happen as Paintbox contracts are awarded on a 5-year basis and therefore budgets are kept separate.

Question: Why is Paintbox a charity?

The Headteacher explained that he understood it was a way of the Local Authority keeping hold of assets whilst other organisations manage them.

Question: Will the pricing of Paintbox be amended to reflect the enhanced offer, once a teacher is in place?

The Headteacher commented that this would be so.

It was agreed that the Headteacher would organise a meeting at the beginning of next year to discuss the finances and structure of Paintbox.

Action: For the Headteacher to organise a meeting at the beginning of next year to discuss the finances and structure of Paintbox.

4.14

PHSE.

Question: What has been the impact of the Be Loud and Proud initiative?

The Headteacher commented that the school is a tolerant place and there are only isolated incidences of bullying and that mostly this involves pupils with high level needs triggering each other. Since the launch of the Be Loud and Proud initiative the school has noticed that children are more open and willing to discuss bullying and this has led to a small increase in the numbers of incidents being reported. There have been no reports of discrimination.

4.15

Pupil Attendance.

The Headteacher drew to the attention of governors that 5 penalty notices have been issued and noted for governors that the school does not collect the fine, rather this is paid to the LA. This process is rigorously monitored by school staff as this is crucial to pupil achievement and overall attendance has risen substantially when compared to this time last year.

5

Updates from the committees.

5.1

Teaching and Learning committee.

The minutes were noted by the governors. CSh offered to move from the Finances and Resources committee to the Teaching and Learning committee so there would be a balance of governors across each committee. This was approved by the Governing Board.

5.2

Finance and Resources committee.

The minutes were noted by governors.

6

SDP.

6.1

Reading.

Question: Why does a reading culture still need to be developed?

The Headteacher commented that a great deal of work has been done with regards to this and Priority Area funding has brought about real changes, and phonics is progressing well, however more needs to be done. This

	applies particularly to improving the quality and range of reading books on offer, improving pupils' fluency, and improving pupils' enjoyment of reading so they feel like a reader. Question: Why focus on developing a reading culture when perhaps the focus should be on improving reading outcomes? It was discussed by governors how reading outcomes are impacted by a range of approaches, from the teaching of phonics, to the English curriculum, to pupils own reading- all of these feed in to pupils' outcomes. Question: How many books do you think you need? The Headteacher commented that it is hard to give a number, but lots of books would be good. He agreed to speak to FOSS about book donations/gift aiding books. It was commented by governors that it would be good idea to set up a small group to explore creative ways of sourcing high quality texts.
6.2	Training. An update was given as to the various training courses undertaken by staff. Question: Is there CPD overload for staff? Is it being effective? The Headteacher commented that the school currently benefits from Priority Area funding and there are funds allocated within this specifically for training. It was further commented on that the training builds over time, and what might look like a long list has taken place over time and is not a list of initiatives but rather indicative of the school's commitment to quality work. Staff are driving the change, and it is sustainable, creating their own versions to create what is in effect The Sutton Approach. Question: Is the Sutton Approach a tangible feature of the school's way of enacting change? It was commented that the school is developing its own approach, merging methodologies and taking ownership of its way of working. The Headteacher commented that this is also indicative of how well the distributed leadership has developed and is contributing to school improvement.
7	SEND information report. The SEND information report was not submitted and will be reviewed at a later date. Action: to review the SEND information report at the next FGB.
8	Pupil Premium and Sports Premium
8.1	Sports Premium. A report on the Sports Premium was not submitted and will be reviewed at a later date. Governors commented that it would be good to know the impact of the new PE teacher and how he has been deployed. Question: Have you sought pupil views yet? The Headteacher replied that this has not yet been carried out but it will be. Action: to review the Sports Premium report at the next FGB.
8.2	Pupil Premium.

Question: What are the gains over time for the pupil premium pupils?

It was commented that gains over time for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium could be a focus of the Pupil Premium link governor visits. The Headteacher commented that he will produce data for comparison purposes. He added that there have been many changes to the provision for these pupils and these include:

- Little Wandle.
- Reading Champions.
- Reading/Phonics interventions.
- Targeted daily phonics.
- ELSA support.
- Breakfast club.

Action: For the Headteacher to publish and share with governors data showing achievement over time for Pupil Premium pupils.

9	Pay Review Outcomes.
9.1	The Headteacher commented that the pay review process had been completed and approved by the Finance and Resources committee on 13.11.2023. Governors had no further comments to make.
10	Succession Planning
10.1	The clerk explained that two governors' terms of office were expiring early in the New Year and that the school would have to hold a parent governor election and staff governor election. He advised that each process would take around 4-5 weeks to complete. He also commented that the school should manage these processes. Question: What role can governors play in these elections? The clerk suggested that there could be a named governor linked to these elections, who could oversee them, support the school and act as a returning officer. CSh offered to take this role, which governors thanked him for. Governors also thanked the current staff governor for her service.
11	Policies
11.1	The Attendance Policy. Decision: The Attendance Policy was unanimously approved by the Governing Board.
11.2	Children Missing in Education Policy. Question: Is there a named staff member who leads in this area? The Headteacher replied that the named staff member was himself. Question: Are young carers an issue at the school? The Headteacher commented that there are not many and breakfast club is a support along with other supports in place for these children.

11.3	Decision: The Children Missing in Education Policy was unanimously approved by the Governing Board. Admissions Policy. Question: Is the oversubscription criteria a list of priority order in which admissions will be considered? The Headteacher confirmed that this was so. Governors commented that some dates needed changing within the document and with this as a proviso: Decision: The Admissions Policy was unanimously approved by the Governing Board. Action: for the Headteacher to amend dates within the Admissions Policy document.
11.4	Pay Policy. This was not submitted to the Governing Board and will be presented at a later date. Action: For the Headteacher to submit to the Governing Board, for their review and approval, the school's pay policy.
11.5	Feedback Policy. Questions: Governors raised questions relating to the application of the policy; are blue highlighter pens used? The Head teacher replied that was so. Does the school still use feedback terms such as 'paddling', 'snorkelling' and 'diving'? The Headteacher said that these weren't really in use anymore. Question: Is it worth defining the difference between marking and feedback? The Headteacher commented that that would be a worthwhile task. Question: What happens if a pupil's presentation is not of the required standard? Governors asked, would the pages of their book be ripped out? The Headteacher assured governors that this was not the case. There may have been instances in the past of a child doodling excessively in their book and this may have been dealt with in this way, but nothing else. Decision: The Feedback Policy was unanimously approved by the Governing Board.
11.6	ECT Policy. Question: should there be something more explicit in the policy about the ECT, and Induction tutors taking part of seminars and training? The Headteacher commented that he felt these elements were in place in the policy as presented to governors. Question: Is there a need to specify the levels of experience required to be an Induction tutor? The Headteacher commented that this was not necessary. It was also commented by governors that it would be helpful to have the full version of the title of the policy rather than the acronym on the front cover. This was agreed by the Headteacher. Decision: The ECT Policy was unanimously approved by the Governing Board.
11.7	Prevent Action Plan.

There were no comments made nor questions asked about the Prevent action plan.

Decision: The Prevent Action plan was unanimously approved by the Governing Board.

11.8

Assurance of Excellence Policy

Question: Who is the Ex-Officia Church Representative?

The Headteacher commented that there was no one currently in this role.

The Headteacher also acknowledged that the document required updating, eg., the core values should be more reflective of the school's and some of the language needed changing. With the above changes as a proviso;

Decision: The Assurance of Excellence Policy was unanimously approved by the Governing Board

Action: For the Headteacher to amend the Assurance of Excellence policy so it reflects the school's values and its other policies.

12

Governor Actions

12.1

Review updated Governor Responsibilities document.

After discussion of the governor link roles and consideration of alternatives, the following was agreed provisionally:

The proposed responsibilities are as follows:

C Shea: safeguarding and maths

J Webb: EYFS and SEND

Sarah Stant: vulnerable groups (PP, LAC) and English

Hilary Sanderson: church link and RE

Kim Fleming: extracurricular, enrichment and sports

C Sanderson: compliance and policies

R Garbutt: teaching and learning

J Cooper: finances

R Storey: online security and GDPR

R Ayres: science

P Greenwood: wellbeing

P Townrow: health and safety

The clerk commented that he would be able to provide role descriptors for the above link governor roles and the board agreed that this would be helpful.

Action: for the clerk to provide role descriptors for the above link governor roles.

13

Impact of the meeting on driving the school forward.

13.1

Governors commented that:

	• They had a greater understanding of the resilience of staff regarding the school's current challenges. • There was a robust discussion about staffing and an increased understanding of the challenges. • Paintbox has been secured. • Governors have an increased awareness of the school's status in the community and within CCC evidenced by the work the school has undertaken to secure the Paintbox contract, the discussion the school is having the CCC about an ERB and the consultancy work being requested by the Diocese. Question: Has EHCP funding been factored into the budget? This has not yet been factored in as the paperwork is not yet in place and there will be difficult decisions ahead to secure the safety of new and existing staff.
14.	Any Other Business.
14.1	The arrangements to thank and acknowledge the contribution that a governor who had served for 50 years on the Governing Board were discussed, with the Governing Board deciding to purchase fruit trees or a voucher for the ex-governor and to give a card. These will be given at the school's Church event to be held on 19th December, to which the ex-governor will be invited. HS agreed to liaise with the school and the Headteacher will send an invitation to the ex-governor to the Church event. Action: For fruit trees/voucher to given to the ex-governor and for the school to organise a card and an invitation to the ex-governor to attend the school's end of term event at the Church.
MEETING CLOSE	The meeting concluded at 8.15pm.