

GLADSTONE ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL
"Learning to Succeed"

MEETING OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

DATE: Tuesday 5th February 2019

TIME: 6.30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mr Keith Wright
Ms Jane Pepper
Mr Tim Drake

Mrs Helen Kindness
Miss V Lewis (Clerk)

Additionally Present:

Ray Williamson (C of G)

MINUTES

1. Welcome (2 minutes)

JP welcomed members to the meeting.

Action: None Required.

2. Apologies for absence; consider acceptance of apologies (2 minutes)

HH – childcare as husband away on business
TS – council meeting
CG - childcare

All absences considered and accepted. The committee is quorate.

Action: None Required.

3. Confidentiality (2 minutes)

There were no matters identified as confidential.

Action: None Required.

4. Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item (2 minutes)

There were no matters identified as being of interest to any governor.

Action: None Required.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting 16.10.18 and Matters Arising (10 minutes)

The Minutes from the meeting on 16.10.18 were presented. Proposed by JP, seconded by HK. Signed by JP and returned to the Clerk for filing as per procedure.

(8) Outcomes – updated in this agenda.

(10) SIDP – updated in this agenda. All objectives now allocated to link governors as follows: -

Obj 1 Reading	Jane Pepper
Obj 2 Pupil Premium	Cheryl Govan
Obj 3 Basic Skills / Teaching	Helen Kindness
Obj 4 Maths	Peter Southward
Obj 5 Curriculum Enhancement	Wayne Thickett
Obj 6 Governance	Ray Williamson

Additionally, Tim Drake is noted as the Attainment and Progress Data Link Governor to work with Helen Halliday.

(14) Prospective Parents Open Evening – the event went well, had a positive feel. Retrospectively, plan to hold the event earlier due to it being dark, cold etc. The event celebrated the broader curriculum and the school. Also, Y6 pupils visiting nurseries to read to pre-school children was positive and enjoyed by all parties.

RW: do we know how many starters in September yet?

VL: enough for 3 classes. Issue will be if we get later applications and go only just above the 3 classes mark. CS is liaising with the education office with regard to this.

KW: have looked to see if we can reduce our maximum and have a set 3 form entry but the LA say that this isn't possible as school technically has the space and capacity within the building to maintain 4 classes.

Action: Minutes from meeting 16.10.18 to be filed as per procedure

By: Clerk

6. Governor Training / Note of Learning Activities / Visits (5 minutes)

JP referred governors to her report. She visited last week with a link focus of Objective 1 of the SIDP - Guided Reading. She visited 3 different classes, and looked at features mentioned in the SIDP so the report is structured appropriately. Impressed with the consistent teaching observed and the consistency of elements throughout the school. Also impressed with how elements of storying were incorporated into the rest of the lesson. Focus on oral and spoken language – evidence says this is where language starts. Aim was to support comprehension, saw elements of this in the 3 lessons observed. Very sophisticated language, working collaboratively and independently. Behaviour was good, children were engaged, on task. Could see the progress between years. Enjoyed the visit.

TD: so now do we need to dip down into the data and information about groups such as pupil premium, EAL etc?

JP: yes. But wasn't interrogating for that this time. Saw whole class teaching which included those 'groups' but I couldn't spot them as all children were working inclusively in the same way. It's about ensuring that all children, regardless of any sub group they may feature in, accessing the same quality teaching and not singling them out. I want to look at the data re this but what's important was observing that in class all members are on task, nobody is singled out and that children were using their own knowledge of language.

HK: noted your reference to children using evidence of their own broader experiences which is important. But it must be considered that not all pupils get these enriching experiences and opportunities at home.

JP: yes, its important children get these richer experiences and that school can try to help bridge this gap with curriculum visits etc.

KW: 'cultural capital' – what experiences does the child get both in and out of school to build up their resume of social knowledge. These wider links make sense of the content and context of school and the curriculum. Explore how to give children rich experiences.

RW: the Opportunities Area funding is looking at this, providing enrichment experiences, opportunities, clubs and visits. If children who are pupil premium are not having interventions outside the classroom, does this affect the pupil premium strategy and how school assesses the impact?

JP: we have to account for how PP funding is being spent for those pupils receiving the funding. Using PP money to support and subsidise visits gives all children an experience, but allows those who wouldn't possibly normally get to go (ie. PP eligible pupils) do get that experience.

HK: teachers can identify the impact and progress on their learning. Governors shouldn't be able to know from looking at a class of children who is PP and who is not just by looking.

KW: there is recognition that the gap is still there between PP and non PP eligible pupils despite the funding.

RW: in terms of being able to report on how we have specifically used PP funding to the benefit of PP children – how can we do this if it is used for supporting a whole class endeavour?

HK: the funding is for the school to spend, some spending can be made that will target PP children but will have a far further reaching impact by affecting the rest of a class / cohort as an added bonus.

JP: what percentage of pupils are PP at the moment?

VL: 253 out of 781 so approx. 33%.

KW: for this year the PP funding has allowed us to have 5 classes in Y6 which has meant PP children are getting more teacher time and targeted support, however this arrangement has had the added extra of benefiting the whole year group.

Action: None Required.

7. Correspondence (10 minutes)

RW: Stewart Ball, Chair of Governors at Northstead School, has written to ask whether this governing body would be interested in the possibility of sharing personnel for instances where complaints, behaviour, discipline panels may need to be convened to ensure impartiality. He suggests possibly trialling such a system.

JP: this is worth considering, especially if there are issues re having enough appropriate members.

RW: KW to speak with Northstead Headteacher.

KW: some issues can be uncomfortable and unfamiliar individuals may make the other parties involved more at ease?

VL: the advice I received when asking about possibly using another governor when dealing with the behaviour panel review in Summer was that it is preferably not to need to but that it is an option if you simply do not have the personnel to act on the Panel.

RW: we can send a response saying that the idea will be discussed at the full meeting in March and in the meantime seek advice from the governance adviser to clarify if this is appropriate. Can see that it may look like governors from another school are making decisions for us and our school.

Action: Send letter to Stewart Ball

By: Clerk / RW

Action: Speak with Northstead Headteacher

By: KW

Action: Seek advice from LA and agenda further discussions under 'Correspondence' at full meeting on 19.3.19

By: Clerk

8. School Improvement & Development Plan (SIDP) Update (15 minutes)

KW: under Success Criteria with Milestones Red text relates to the Autumn Term and Blue to the Spring Term, with another colour to be used for Summer Term updates.

RW: can we have a code on the document identifying which colours relate to what?

KW: yes, I will update this.

JP: the link governors noted against objectives don't all seem to be correct? Can we refer back to previous meeting Minutes and update?

VL: I will send the information to KW.

Objective 1 – Reading

This was covered in JP's visit report and associated discussions at item 6.

Objective 2 – Pupil Premium Funding Outcomes

JP: PP funding – this is difficult to assess as there is no real evidence that there is a significant closing of the gap between those eligible and those not.

KW: this is a worry as if the funding does not appear to be having an impact the government could scrap the funding.

JP: some of the actions, such as monitoring, are noted as 'AS DESIGNATED' – is this happening?

KW: yes, it's being monitored at a management level, with Tina Jenkinson as key lead.

JP: is there evidence that there is an effect or impact on the attendance of disadvantaged pupils?

KW: yes. There are children on roll who have social and family support issues which include attendance and being late for school. It isn't unusual for families to move between schools to escape the perceived 'nagging' by staff but don't realise that schools do liaise with one another. Some children in school currently have LA agreed flexible arrangements to help them access education.

TD: do we ask classteachers to promote clubs with certain children? ie. targeted?

KW: we try to give regard to children identified as vulnerable or those eligible for PP. Some come but there may be issues with irregular club attendance, transport or being picked up late. We try to provide assistance in these cases by offering options such as a school paid for taxi from pupil premium money.

TD: do these pupils get invited over and above other non-targeted children?

KW: to a certain degree. Some clubs through the opportunities area funding, such as gardening, and the SJT outreach programme are specifically targeted at pupils eligible for pupil premium.

JP: the Children's University is targeted at ensuring disadvantaged children are able to take advantage of available opportunities, events, and clubs.

TD: seems to me that the opportunities area funding isn't necessarily always being accessed by the right families.

JP: it's difficult as those run in schools can be targeted but those run out of school, such as the Saturday morning music centre, cannot.

KW: the Children's University is now employing a specific 'champion' who will work with schools to hit the right parents and children.

RW: we need to educate the parents and get them engaged.

KW: the new Ofsted framework looks at whether a school is doing the very best it can to access support, initiatives, agency involvement, opportunities for identified children. It is clear that as a school we really do try to engage.

JP: things like the open evening, trying to break down barriers, making school welcoming to parents as well as children.

KW: a big priority to engage with parents, be visible, be available.

Objective 3 – Quality of basic skills / teaching

KW: Handwriting – looked at introducing cursive writing earlier but Sarah Stuart, EYFS Leader, explained that this might not be the best way forward for EYFS due to gross motor skills. At the end of KS1 pupils don't need to be able to join up, it's about correct letter formation.

JP: pencil grip and fine motor skills.

KW: some children are working in readiness for pre cursive style before the end of EYFS and we will get those pupils started early if it's appropriate.

JP: it's about fluency.

KW: external review of KS1 provision this week looking at where we are at, transition assessment and procedures. By Easter after EYFS, KS1 and SEND reviews we will have a real understanding of where we've been, where we're at now and what we're taking forward into the next inspection. However, it's

important to be aware that staff are working at capacity as it is, we don't want to overload them. We must balance needs, progress and future planning with the current status quo and momentum.

Objective 4 – Maths

KW: currently two extra maths groups operating in Y2 and Y6 during Maths lesson times with the aim of boosting those capable of greater depth.

JP: is there anything happening for Maths Month in March?

KW: we will be doing work on that.

JP: there are plenty of resources for schools and also to encourage children and families beyond the school day with wider activities and events to watch out for.

KW: the children like Maths, it gets mentioned a lot in Headteacher award assemblies.

TD: will there be extra Maths support, clubs etc as we approach SATs?

KW: there may be extra clubs and things to be confirmed later in the spring term. Some things such as online clubs won't be happening unfortunately due to the very high costs involved.

TD: the Times Tables RockStars tool is good but is only about multiplication tables. Look at extra things for other areas of Maths.

Objective 5 – Broader Curriculum Enhancement

KW: looking at getting the silver science quality mark. Need to enhance to save time rather than adding more to people's plates. This objective is still valid but will need to be a focus for next year, rather than 18/19.

JP: guided reading is about broader cross curricular content also.

Objective 6 – Governance / Leadership

Important that governors visit school, liaise with staff and learn about the SIDP objective they are linked with to ensure they can feed back and give a rounded view of the whole picture of their particular objective to the rest of the governing body.

JP: Education Endowment Foundation has produced a selection of guides which governors can access and download / print. They give evidence of best practice and DfE input into what effective. Some of the guides include: 'The best use of TAs', 'Implementation', 'Literacy', 'Metacognition'. But there are many others. The guides give non-educationalists benchmarks to look out for. Evaluated against costs and use. Governors can download by googling EEF and all the different brochures are there.

Action: Send information re link governors / objectives to KW

By: Clerk

9. SEND Report 2018/19 – Presentation by Amy Rhodes SENDCo (20 minutes)

AR: this is my working document which I thought I would share with you rather than providing a specific extra report. There are currently two focuses:

- Operational side and progress day to day
- Speech and Language which links to the SIDP.

As a personal target I would like to be able to talk to governors about data but what I can tell you is there is a definite gender difference trend. 70% of children on the school's identified SEND register are boys, whilst 30% are girls.

JP: how are pupils identified with SEND? They are significantly below in some aspects educationally?

AR: yes, we have identified pupils using the screening tool shared with governors at my last presentation. Children may be falling behind or have a specific problem identified using the tool. This is then discussed with the parents, classteacher and the child. These identified pupils are receiving different and additional provision for a sustained period which would then be the reason they are put on the register.

HK: is this gender split very different from national trends?

AR: would need to look further into that. At a recent Compass Buzz course it was also noted that mental health issues are higher in boys.

KW: wouldn't be surprised if this gender split was a national trend but it needs to be considered whether more boys are actually SEND or whether they are just not reaching national benchmarks?

HK: could be how the curriculum is presented – gender differences re female heavy staff populous, resources etc.

JP: is the curriculum appropriate for the needs as they present, are we making issues?

AR: need to be aware and to look at that. If we were perfect in the way we deal with SEND there would be no need for a register. I am aware of a school where they only have a total of 10% of pupils with SEND as they have fine-tuned their teaching and support. We have 16.5% which is in line with the geographical area, but higher than national which is 14.6%. It is obviously an extra challenge to the school.

RW: do all schools identify SEND the same?

AR: should do but don't always.

JP: the accepted identification is any child who has needs that are additional and different when calibrated against the norm.

AR: the screening tool allows for the consistent identification of pupils across the school. This will level out as time goes forward. **Higher** numbers of pupils being identified with SEND since introducing the screening tool is due to the installation of a **better way** of identifying those with SEND needs.

AR: EHCPs lower than average but writing some now.

JP: you note that there are additional challenges such as staff absence, minority of demanding parents interrupting planned flow.

AR: these are the nature of the issues. This year is really about improving the quality of provision.

AR: with regard to focus 2, Language, the limited rollout of the Clay project in Y1 for 15 minutes per day shows how children can learn independently without adult support. The idea of the initiative is that if pupils don't have the attitudes and dispositions to learn, they cannot build the skills they need to enable them to gain knowledge and learning. It's about working from the bottom and putting the groundwork in before growth can happen. There have been some lovely results already – children are very engaged. Hoping to continue developing this and rolling it out.

JP: this clay project come from storying? About appropriateness and independence.

AR: yes.

RW: what is storying?

JP: an approach which is about using young children's wholehearted deep level of interest in materials as a first level of representation: clay, role play, sticks. Children do something to make their own narrative. Practitioners follow children's threads of learning and bringing in language around whatever they are highly involved in. Clay is the medium Amy is using.

AR: using clay as a basis for this research. Looking at the role of teachers, TAs, good practice. The way success is measured is through language development but this cannot happen without early investment.

KW: this fits in with Ofsted's new framework as there is a focus on the curriculum and how school is using their knowledge of the pupils to shape and design their curriculum to ensure children access appropriate learning.

JP: in order to get funding for the Storying project one aspect identified was that boys tend to engage in more physical storying to learn, which backs up the gender gap identified in the school's SEND gender split. Brings teaching into where pupils are engaged.

AR: need to see authentic learning. Pupils sitting quietly looking like they're listening doesn't mean they are actually learning. Children need to be engaged to ensure they are and can be effective learners.

JP: language project Language Links from the Opportunities Area.

AR: targets the difficulties and closing the gap of those identified. Do have some reservations about the way the project is sold and how interventions are monitored and assessed and whether they are maintainable. My feeling is to tackle the deep original learning using methods such as the Clay research project.

JP: clear evidence that you need a quality first teaching base but then interventions to then target those who still need different and additional support. It isn't a single dimension. Language Link is teasing out those who need extra support.

AR: as an RI school there is a risk that clay play can look like we're not doing anything but the idea is to grow the practice.

KW: the framework actually gives a stronger basis for this project which suggests that where schools are looking at unique ways to address identified issues it is to be seen favourably.

AR: main threat is that new initiatives constantly being thrown at teachers can mean that it isn't effective. This project is small scale now but as research if taken further then we can look at SIDP objectives.

HK: Language Links only funded for 2 years.

KW: at the moment screening across the school and finding issues in Y6 even. Over time the goal is to find issues early and work on closing the gap.

AR: need to look at skills and attributes underpinning pupils' learning and also helping teachers to understand the science behind this. I am looking at how this can all work as one model and practice.

KW: some of the provision given to SEND can enhance all children's learning.

JP: Thank you Amy, clearly a lot of work, challenges etc. Need to look at resources to enable quality research but also ensuring that the daily, necessary, reactive work can happen.

KW: it can be difficult getting across to some teachers about meeting the needs of pupils and the responsibility they have as the classteacher – SEND is not just about outside interventions.

AR: we are getting there slowly.

AR: significant number of pupils identified as or on their way to being identified as autistic.

TD: significant – number?

AR: not easy to say an exact number. Deal with it daily which is new for me. Will come back with figures.

KW: Compass Buzz, school identified social emotional need that can sometimes be seen as autistic in the first instance. It's about ensuring definitions and diagnoses are correct.

TD: EHCPs? Hindrance to school due to work involved? No financial benefit?

AR: we have a duty to ensure that pupils identified as needing an EHCP are supported and are awarded a plan if appropriate.

TD: money from LA?

AR: yes, though there are already known funding issues at local and national level.

JP: real issue with cash crisis at local and national level.

KW: a lot of LAs are working in deficit with regard to SEND support budgets. There is a very real issue, funding is inconsistent.

TD: there seems to be a lot of Red in document – can we help?

AR: progress is ongoing, the document is a working, live piece of work. I feel very positive.

JP: communication champions?

AR: haven't got there yet – will get there.

TD: want to ensure that this committee can make the correct recommendations to the full governing body.

KW: the action plan is robust – it's better to identify objectives, work steadily and then adjust, re-set, alter content, objectives and review dates as needed to achieve the correct priorities. Working document, moving in the right direction.

AR: can be adjusted as we work.

KW: when Ofsted came in they did not identify SEND as a problem. Amy has come in and made it fresh, we have shifted and are moving forward. Not just accepted the status quo, looking to improve.

Action: Provide update report (possibly presentation) at meeting 21.5.19. By: AR/Clerk

10. Headline Assessment / Progress Data Summary Update (10 minutes)

JP: still find this report difficult to fully absorb without a key or any text to describe. Some narrative is needed.

KW: HH does the groundwork, looking at each year group and providing statistical analysis. Autumn progress is the teacher's judgement of pupil progress in current year's study against their previous outcomes.

Autumn attainment is where they are at now against age related expectations (ARE) (eg. in Y1 59% of pupils are already at the age related expectation. Targets are aspirational.

JP: the targets are aspirational but we are continually monitoring against them to ensure the data is robust.

KW: the data is complex and this is why there is the need to have it fully interrogated by a link governor with HH as it cannot be interrogated appropriately and effectively in a committee.

RW: it just needs a brief narrative below each table to put the figures in context. Need to have a document which allows us to understand and be able to comment on/about if we were to be asked a question by inspectors. Narrative and context. What's working well, what's being looked at. Are we on track?

KW: translation between EYFS and KS1 is not always robust due to the different curriculums.

JP: at the last Ofsted inspection it was the pupil premium/attainment data which Richard Adams (former chair) and myself were questioned about. However there's nothing in here drilling down to the groups.

KW: the data link governor will look at these groups at a more detailed level and then feedback with a summative report to the full governing body. They will drill down and give the headlines.

Y2:

- Need to work on progress in Reading, Writing, Maths
- Autumn attainment showing 55-60% on track for ARE based on teacher assessments and PIRA/PUMA tests
- Targets set based on end of EYFS outcomes plus other aspects which can be interrogated by link governor.
- There is an issue with some EYFS pupils who leave early years at the expected but don't appear to be transferring to achieve the ARE at end of KS1 - need to look at their characteristics.

Y6:

- Autumn attainment based on previous SATs paper – 55% achieving the expected in Maths. 64% in Reading. 70% in Writing which is really positive.
- Targets set based on end of KS1 outcomes plus aspirational value added.
- FFT50 is based on all pupils reaching ARE. FFT20 based on us being in the top 20% of schools. Working on being at that end.
- Reading – realistic target but progress not in line. Been a dip, but working closely on this.
- Most challenging cohort re previous attainment.
- Vulnerable and complex year group. Issues with engagement, behaviour. May be some pupils who are disapplied from the national tests.
- Maths attainment can be good but progress is being recognised as an issue. Next assessment should show a positive impact from the extra maths group aimed at those capable of greater depth.
- SATs in May, this term is critical.
- Outcomes are critical to ensure continued improvement and avoid issues with Ofsted.
- Last cohort being assessed against old framework.

Action: Ask HH to add a brief narrative / context / explanation to next / future Update Report. By: KW

11. Policies to approve and adopt: - (10 minutes)

SEN001A Accessibility Policy

AR: this plan essentially lays out how school addresses the ability to educate and welcome all pupils, staff, parents and other stakeholders regardless of their abilities, disabilities, language, culture, race and a variety of other needs. We plan to look at gaining the Inclusion Quality Mark.

AR: there is a legal duty to provide this document which needs to be available on the school website. Governors considered the document. Proposed by TD and seconded by HK. **Adopted.**

SEN001B Pupils with Medical Needs Policy

Model Policy, updated and personalised. Proposed by TD, seconded by HK. **Adopted.**

SW002 Anti Bullying Policy

Policy has been drawn up by Mrs Jenkinson, behaviour lead. Uses parts of the Behaviour Policy. Proposed by TD, seconded by HK. **Adopted.**

Action: File policies as per procedure

By: Clerk

Action: Put Anti Bullying and Inclusion Policies on the school website

By: NM

14. A.O.B. (2 minutes)

Shrove Tuesday Arrangements – in previous years when Shrove Tuesday has fallen within term time children have been allowed to leave school after lunchtime to partake in the local tradition of skipping on the foreshore. It is easier to allow children to go home after lunch as they are all back in classrooms together after staggered playtime. This year governors are asked to confirm they are once again happy to support this. Governors agreed.

Action: Send out skipping day letter

By: VL / NM

The Meeting was closed by the Chairperson at 8.45

Signed _____ Dated _____