

Strategic Meeting
Tuesday 6th October 2020 at 1.00pm (Virtual)
Minutes

Present:

Matt Whitehead	Executive Headteacher
Beverley Burrows	Headteacher
Lee Jamieson	(Chair) Co-opted Governor
Rev A Stanton	Foundation Governor
Sam Collins	Parent Governor
Kate Dean	Foundation Governor
Ruth Get	Foundation Governor

Apologies: None

In attendance

Danielle Wood Clerk

Any text in red bold italics represents a Governor question (Q); challenge (C); Governor and/or clerk support (S). Black bold upright represents decisions and actions.

1. Welcome, Introductions

- Governors were welcomed to the meeting by Mr L Jamieson.

2. Apologies for Absence

- There were no apologies for absence received.

3. Self-Evaluation Form

The Headteacher explained that the meeting was being held for governors to be involved with the planning and evaluation of the school development plan and provides an opportunity to discuss areas for development.

The Ofsted Handbook had been circulated to governors ahead of the meeting and would be referred to during the meeting.

Copies of the 2019-2020 School Evaluation Form were circulated and governors were referred to the points at the back of the document.

1:15pm Rev A Stanton in attendance

Governors were referred to page 49 of the Ofsted Handbook entitled 'Grade descriptors for Quality of Education'.

The Headteacher stated that governors would be asked to consider where they feel the school currently is working at based on the descriptors.

Governors were referred to page 41 of the handbook entitled 'The Quality of Education: Intent'.

The Headteacher read aloud key points from the section in the handbook.

The Headteacher stated that the school has Literacy Counts in place for English teaching and Number Fun in place for mathematics. To support teachers leading English lessons, the school is looking at non-fiction genres and has introduced Next Steps which runs alongside Literacy Counts. Children focus on fiction for the first half term and non-fiction for the second half. Children build on the genres each year.

As agreed during the summer term governing board meeting, the school has also introduced Early Years International Curriculum.

The Headteacher advised that during lockdown leaders were re-planning and formalising the rest of the curriculum and agreeing what it will look like. Subject overviews are available on the school website for each year group and have been produced on a two yearly cycle. This is the schools intent.

Governors heard that the school continues to provide opportunities for children with trips arranged where possible and visitors invited into school where it is safe during the current Covid-19 restrictions.

The Headteacher explained that there are links between subjects such as Design and Technology, History, Geography and Art with non-fiction writing.

Each subject leader has a page on the school website to talk about the intent and how they will implement this and measure the impact.

Governors moved on to page 44 of the handbook 'Implementation'.

The Headteacher reported that the school has completed a lot of work in English and mathematics, planning the curriculum and implementing this is where the emphasis will be this year.

The school has also purchased musical instruments to support with the introduction of music opportunities and a PE scheme to support teacher's subject knowledge.

The Headteacher read aloud key points from the Implementation section.

Governors heard that all subject leaders have produced subject overviews which can be shared with governors.

Governors moved on to page 46 of the handbook 'Impact'.

The Headteacher reported that a lot of work has been undertaken in English and Maths and both subjects are now in a better place than they were. However, the Headteacher explained that children are not meeting the age related expectations in subjects such as Music as they have not been taught the full curriculum. The school has introduced ICT Purple Mash to

support with ICT lessons.

Governors heard that following a review of children's books last year, it was identified that children were not accessing all of the working scientifically strand. This has now been planned and the full curriculum will be rolled out across year groups. Impact can only be measured when children have been taught complete programmes of study effectively.

Governors moved on to page 49 'Grade Descriptors for the Quality of Education'

The Headteacher read aloud the different judgements listed.

The Headteacher explained that during the previous Ofsted inspection the school received positive feedback for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Geography and History. However, the school has been focussing on Literacy and Numeracy and therefore other subjects have not had the same focus. Subject leaders are being supported to take ownership.

Governors were asked to review pages 49-51 of the handbook and consider where the school currently sits in the criteria.

Governors commented that they thought the intent of the curriculum is that it is ambitious and provides tools for pupils including disadvantaged pupils to succeed alongside others. Governors commented that they thought the school would be graded Good in terms of intent.

The Headteacher stated that the curriculum content is planned and sequenced and subject leaders now need to monitor this and time will be allocated for them to develop.

Governors discussed the benefits of Ms Charlesworth taking on the SENDCO role as she is very approachable and knowledgeable.

The Headteacher agreed and commented that Ms Charlesworth is doing a great job and discussions have taken place regarding how to ensure foundation subject plans meet the needs of SEND pupils. Separate planning is required to meet the needs of SEND pupils and the school has an adapted way to record them. English and Mathematics is an area detailed in Ms Charlesworth action plan.

The Headteacher reported that the intention this year was to ensure that all pupils access the whole curriculum and this is planned.

The meeting moved on to discuss 'Implementation' on page 44 of the handbook.

The Headteacher referred governors to the third point 'Teachers check pupils' understanding effectively, and identify and correct misunderstandings'. This would be a next step.

The Headteacher reported that when reviewing pupils English workbooks the vast majority are following the feedback policy and this is the same in mathematics. Governors noted the importance of ensuring all teachers are following the feedback policy and ensuring that all subjects are checking spellings and children have access to a word bank.

Q – The first bullet point 'Teachers have expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach'. If teachers are leading a subject area outside of their expertise what procedures are in place? All subject leaders have a file in place which includes scaffolding for what must be included and a contents page. Subject leader meetings took place to review the data and discuss where their subject was currently at and what needed to be put in place to move forward and how this will be monitored. Support is in place. Mrs A Lancashire has held meetings with subject leaders providing coaching and support.

Mr Whitehead stated that with regards to implementation and what he has observed, teacher's subject knowledge is good and informed by clear plans with intent. During walks around school the behaviour exhibited by children learning in lessons allows them to work. Intent and implementation are the stronger elements, however the school does not have hard evidence for the impact as the national data would suggest this is not as good.

The Headteacher stated that the school has some good implementation, teachers and leaders use assessment well in English and maths and this needs to continue in other curriculum areas.

Governors were referred to the fifth bullet point and the Headteacher reported that teaching materials were a strength and the environment focusses on pupils. Resources are being used in classrooms and this is engaging children. Governors heard that this is however not consistent across the school in all subject areas as the school has had a keen focus on targets raised following the Ofsted visit.

The Headteacher advised that she would consider the school to be on the top end of Requires Improvement and governors agreed. The school has some good features which will be highlighted as strengths and to move to Good the points need to be covered in all areas of the curriculum.

Mr Whitehead commented that progress in those areas next year alongside hard evidence in workbooks of the progress pupils are making will move the school to Good in this area. Numerous areas in this section are Good and now all areas need to be.

Governors were referred to page 51 of the booklet.

The Headteacher confirmed that reading is prioritised at the school, with high frequency words, phonics and an effective comprehension package purchased, reading is across the curriculum.

The school was considered to be almost good but not yet secure.

Governors were referred to bullet point 3 on page 51 and the Headteacher confirmed that the school has a sharp focus on ensuring younger children's phonics knowledge.

Continuing on page 51, governors moved on to discuss 'Impact'.

Q – The impact is not as strong, is this a time issue? I think we have had a keen focus on English and Mathematics over the last couple of years as the progress measures were low. KS1 data was very high and the local authority confirmed that the data is comparable to schools in more affluent areas of the borough. As a result of the inaccurate KS1 data, the progress data is inaccurate and unachievable. Progress will start to improve in a couple of years and the school currently looks at progress children make in year.

Governors were referred to bullet point one and the Headteacher advised that this is an area for improvement, as the school has focussed on English and maths and now needs to cover all subject areas.

Bullet point two 'Pupils are ready for the next stage of education, employment or training', the Headteacher commented that she feels that the school does a lot of work around transition and ensures pupils are ready for transition through year groups too. The introduction of the new PSHE curriculum will support with the social and emotional areas for pupils.

Governors agreed that the school is moving towards achieving Good in this area, however

some areas require further work.

Governors moved on to page 52 of the booklet 'Behaviours and Attitudes'.

The Headteacher reported that there have been no exclusions at the school so far this year.

Next, governors were referred to page 56 'Grade descriptors for behaviour and attitudes'.

The Headteacher stated that she would consider the school to be a secure Good with elements of Outstanding.

Governors heard that the schools attendance is high, reportedly 95.7% last year and currently at 96% compared to 87% nationally. The Headteacher explained the different coding system in place for Covid-19 related absences. It was noted that families have not been able to take term time holidays this year due to Covid-19 restrictions and this has helped overall attendance.

The Headteacher stated that attendance will continue to be a high priority at the school and they will continue to take swift and appropriate action.

Governors heard that during an Ofsted inspection the data would be triangulated with observations they make on the day. Low level disruption must not be tolerated in classrooms.

Q – If teachers challenge low level disruption would this be enough? Yes, it must be acted upon.

The meeting moved on to page 58 'Personal Development'.

The Headteacher reported that this is an area for development and needs to be built into lessons.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was highlighted as a strength.

Governors were referred to pages 62 and 63 and were asked to consider where they felt the school fit.

A governor commented that they felt that this is an area where the school is generally strong. The Headteacher added that the school is securely Good.

The Chair added that he considered the school to be Good with Outstanding features, many visitors to the school have commented on the exemplary manners the pupils have.

Mr Whitehead stated that the core Christian values; Belonging, Believing and Becoming, are lived within school and this is evident. Children's manners are exemplary and this shows the personal development of the children.

The Headteacher advised that the school would be working on British Values this year, however the rest of the area was a solid high Good.

Mr Whitehead added that British Values are very important.

Mrs R Gent agreed to email some useful resources from the Diocese to support with British Values work.

ACTION

Governors discussed the challenges the school faces as the values children learn at home may be different to those that the school teaches. The Headteacher confirmed that there are a significant number of children living in households with parents who do not share the school beliefs.

The Headteacher explained that the PSHE curriculum has been written in three different strands. The new curriculum will challenge some of the beliefs children come to school with. So far there has only been one hate incident this half term and parents of the child were communicated with.

Governors were referred to page 64 and 65 of the booklet 'Leadership and Management'.

The Headteacher highlighted that governors were included as leaders of the school.

The Headteacher commented on improvements in the governing board since the last Ofsted inspection and how these improvements must be celebrated.

Page 74 of the booklet provided details of the grade descriptors. The Headteacher explained that there would need to be a triangulation of the evidence. If leadership and management is outstanding then this would generally have a positive impact on the outcomes.

The Chair discussed how historically the KS1 data was overinflated and this will take time to move through the school. Leaders are ensuring the pupils are engaged and there is an improved interaction between leaders and members of staff with consistently high levels of support. The Chair commented that he would consider the school to be graded 'Good' in this area.

Referring to point 7 'Those responsible for governance understand their role and carry this out effectively', the Headteacher asked governors to consider where they feel that they are now.

The Chair commented that previously governors were restricted in their visits to school however now governors are able to visit the school freely and relationships between governors and members of staff have grown. One of the points on the previous Ofsted Inspection report was that governors lacked knowledge and there has since been a huge transition and governors now have an understanding of their role.

A governor commented that they feel that governor understanding of their role is good however work continues to ensure that governors carry out their role effectively.

The Headteacher referred governors to page 66 and the statutory functions of the governing board.

Mr Whitehead stated that since the school joined the Trust he has attended four local governing board meetings and observed a governance review. The minutes from meetings include challenge and questioning and governors spend time in school and are involved with the strategic planning. Mr Whitehead commented that he considered the governing board to be as strong as and possibly stronger than the other local governing boards in the trust.

Mr Whitehead stated that new governors have joined the board and governor's access to the school site has changed due to Covid-19 restrictions, however the governing board is operating well. Governors are challenging, supportive and holding the school leaders to account.

The Chair discussed his experiences before the current restrictions were in place due to Covid-19, where he used to support with guided reading sessions. This is access which governors were not previously welcomed to have.

The Chair advised that he is looking forward to delivering a railway safety lesson to children as he works for Network Rail.

Mrs R Gent invited governors to attend training provided by the Diocese for new governors to Church of England Schools. The training would take place online via Zoom. Mrs Gent agreed to share the link to the training.

ACTION

The Chair discussed governors improved knowledge of finances as reports are now shared and discussed.

Governors agreed that the school would be graded as Good in this area.

Governors were referred to page 77 'Evaluating the quality of early years education in schools'

The Headteacher moved on to discuss the challenges the school has faced in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Governors were aware of the instability in staffing last year and the historically high and aspirational results.

Mr Whitehead stated that the data submitted was comparable to schools in more affluent areas with children joining from very different starting points. Due to this it is more difficult to show progress.

Governors discussed page 79 'Intent'

The Headteacher read aloud the descriptors listed.

Governors heard that Ms Sarah Quinn was working with the EYFS team to create a new curriculum which is coherently planned.

The Headteacher reported that historically the EYFS curriculum was teacher led and it is now child led and this has made a significant difference.

Phonics is introduced in EYFS, with children joining the school below age related expectations. The Headteacher reported that due to Covid-19 it has been difficult to continue with this and there has also been a lot of instability in the staffing.

The Headteacher referred to the data and commented that it was not great, with no children on track to meet their age related expectations. The children would be required to make 5 bands of progress rather than the usual 3. This is considered to be aspirational.

Mr Whitehead stated that in terms of concerns regarding how the school shows impact, the school cannot change the data which has historically been submitted however the school can comment that they were not considered to be realistic. The school can complete a baseline assessment to determine where the children are working at now and this may be lower than they were before lockdown. Progress can be tracked over the year based on this data.

Mr Whitehead advised that whilst the school appreciates the national data does not show the required progress, internal assessment can provide evidence of the progress that children have made.

The meeting discussed the positive impact of book monitoring and subject leaders attending governor meetings to discuss their subject area and develop their confidence.

Governors were referred to page 81 'Impact'

The Headteacher reported that historically children make 4 or 5 bands of progress by the end of reception and the data for this is available. However the previous cohort may not achieve this and there are reasons.

To conclude discussions the Headteacher explained that all areas of an Ofsted inspection have been discussed. Input will next be sought from SLT and members of staff and examples from within school will be added. Once updated the SEF would be circulated to governors.

Q – Do you have an indication of when Ofsted are expected to inspect the school? They may attend this term to review the arrangements in school in relation to Covid-19, with formal inspections set to resume in the new year. An inspection was previously expected this academic year.

4. School Improvement Plan

Copies of the SIP had been circulated to governors ahead of the meeting.

The Headteacher explained the plan and highlighted that a Covid-19 column has been added and individual action plans support the SIP.

Quality of Education: Intent

Governors were advised that areas highlighted in red had been added and black areas were from last year and were not completed due to lockdown.

Curriculum overviews were completed during the summer term.

Governors AGREED that this covers all areas.

Quality of Education: Implementation

The Headteacher read aloud the section to governors.

Governors AGREED that this covers all areas.

The Headteacher provided an explanation of block teaching time and the processes in place.

Q – Now that the children are back in school is it possible to deliver a catch up curriculum or is the focus still on emotional wellbeing? We are delivering a bit of both. When children returned to school on Thursday and Friday these were wellbeing days. Children have accessed forest school and the feedback has been very positive. Each child has completed a wellbeing survey and Ms Charlesworth and the Family Support Worker have been reviewing these.

Governors heard that children are also encouraged to put their names on the face which matches their mood on doorways. Members of staff would then follow this up.

Q – Are all of the children engaging with the support? Yes they are all adding their names to a face on the doorways.

The Headteacher moved on to discuss the aspirational approach the school takes for all children, with plans in place to ensure that they are back on track. Interventions are in place,

one to one reading and phonics reading books have been introduced.

Quality of Education: Impact

The Headteacher read aloud the section to governors.

The Headteacher advised the meeting that a lot of the children will need to make at least 4 bands of progress to catch up and there are plans in place to achieve this.

Behaviour and attitudes

Personal development

Leadership and management

The quality of early years education in schools

Governors were informed that the school would be using Tapestry to document children's learning journeys. This was an online system which parents would be able to access.

5. Governing Board Development Plan

This would be discussed during the local governing board meeting.

Signed..... Date.....

Mr L Jamieson (Chair)

Meeting closed at 2:55pm

Summary of actions

- ACTION: Mrs R Gent agreed to email some useful resources from the Diocese to support with British Values work.
- ACTION: Mrs R Gent invited governors to attend training provided by the Diocese for new governors to Church of England Schools. The training would take place online via Zoom. Mrs Gent agreed to share the link to the training.