

Directors' Note for Portfolio Groups

Portfolio title: High Bickington LGB

Date of meeting: 9th November 2020, 6.00pm

Attended by (all virtually): Rob Norton, Susie Kevern, Jane Adams, Helen Carn, Helen Rowden, Emma Comber (observer), Ian Thomas, Verity Goss (clerk)



Brief overview of discussion

Procedural Items

Welcome and apologies

SK welcomed all to the meeting and introduced EC. No apologies had been received. SK stated Miriam Halpin had stepped down from the role of local governor due to other commitments.

Declaration of business interests

HR now employed by TEAM as a Teaching Assistant at High Bickington. No other interests declared.

Sign off previous minutes

Minutes agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters brought forward

No matters brought forward.

Correspondence

SK stated that High Bickington CPT had written to see if there was a possibility of appointing a local governor to their board of trustees – this had also been advertised in the school newsletter. SK encouraged LGB members to consider if they were able to become involved.

Monitoring and Accountability

Autumn Update/Covid-19

- Reopening – inc attendance, use of catch-up funding
- Curriculum

RN informed governors of the positive attitude of children coming back to school. Children's mental health was a priority – staff were being aware of any children that were finding things difficult. Some children were finding leaving their parents in the morning difficult, but settled down well once they were in class. Most were very happy to return.

All children had returned to school, except for one family with exceptional health needs. Had been five incidents of absence while awaiting test results – no positive results had been received in the school community.

Children had adapted well to new drop off/pick up arrangements, as well as the staggered break time and lunchtimes. Children had commented that they were missing meeting children from the other year groups, but they understood why they weren't at the moment. Class Four were missing the reading that they had been doing with the younger children before lockdown. Staff had made the school as positive an environment as they could.

Attendance – whole school attendance 92.5% - this included the family that had not returned to school. Attendance of the children who had returned was 97.5%. IT stated that the current national average attendance was around 90%. 75% of children at school had not missed any days.

Pre-school – not all children had returned, but all had remained registered.

There were currently enquiries for six more children, from families looking to move to the area.

Local governors agreed it was positive that attendance was high amongst children not affected by healthcare issues.

RN stated that staggering start times had given a small amount of additional time at the beginning of the day for KS2 children, who had a starter activity for the beginning of the day. Children came in to start the day with a good attitude. Children had missed their friends over lockdown – staff could see how much the children wanted to be in school.

Catch Up Funding – RN stated that staff had identified a need around transitions, especially reception into year one. Some catch up funding had been used for a teaching assistant for a day in KS1. Each class now had a visualiser which were used to demonstrate concepts on the interactive whiteboards. Children's work could also be used to demonstrate points for the whole class – children were responding to this really well. Some funding would also be used to improve the library – more books were needed at the lower Accelerated Reader levels.

Mental Health support – a teaching assistant was being trained to provide mental health support. RN explained how this would fit with classroom responsibilities. The staff member would be able to disseminate knowledge and skills to all staff members.

Curriculum – staff were now using Curriculum Maestro, which helped with planning. It linked to many resources, which meant staff were now able to spend more time planning how to tailor learning to a specific cohort.

Class Four were looking at Frozen Kingdoms, Class Three were looking at Rivers, Class Two the Seaside, and Class One were looking at many shorter topics. Class Three had managed to go on a trip to follow a river from its source to the sea.

Children were finding the topic very engaging. RN stated that the school now had use of Google Classroom, and children were being familiarised with how it worked so there would be a smooth transition in the case of future school closure. Some children had uploaded additional work they had done due to how much they were enjoying the topic. RN felt systems were ready in place in case the school had to move to remote learning.

School Improvement Plan (MAT issues) inc EYFS

IT felt that 'Life, Love and Learning to the full' was really relevant at the moment. IT stated that he was working closely with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure high quality learning throughout the MAT. IT explained the drivers contained in the development plan – Building Learning Power, Building Futures, Building Community (both local and global), and Building Self Esteem/Mental Wellbeing.

IT explained the introduction of BlueSky, which was being used to help ensure that staff performance management was purposeful, and that staff were accessing high quality training.

IT explained the purpose of SLT visits to each school – supporting and challenging. Staff assigned to the visits depended on the strengths of each school, and what the areas of development were needed. The number of visits depended on how well the school was doing – if the school was classed as 'requires improvement' it would receive more visits than a 'good' school.

IT explained the curriculum teams – support across the trust for subject leads, who were then able to share resources and planning.

School Specific SIP

RN explained that a lot of this was the same as the TEAM development plan, with some aspects that were particular to High Bickington. RN explained some of the targets in place, and what was being used to support progress towards these. RN highlighted the need to acknowledge when a staff member was in a new role – for example when a teacher had changed the year group they were teaching.

Gaps in children's knowledge due to school closure – RN felt that it would not be reasonable to expect the current Y6 to reach the normal expected standard at the end of Y6, although progress was being made. Children in Y5 and younger had more time to get to this point.

Were there any additional resources that could be put in place to help Y6 catch up? RN explained what was currently in place, and that staff were being deployed in the most efficient way they could be. RN explained how children who needed additional help were being supported – including the use of pre-teaching and revisiting topics with children who hadn't quite understood. RN gave an example of how this was being used in maths – staff were finding this to work really well, and it was being implemented consistently across the key stages.

RN explained how progress of children would be monitored through the year.

Group Specific Learning Support

Covered to some extent earlier in the meeting. RN stated all children had areas where they needed to catch up – specific groups were being established. IT stated that in the Ofsted visit to Umberleigh inspectors had been very interested in what work had been done to identify the gaps in children's knowledge.

Targets

Covered earlier.

Safeguarding Report

- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Local Governor to confirm have read.

RN stated that lockdown had produced challenges around safeguarding. The safeguarding trustee had reported on the commitment of staff during this time. RN stated Fran Trofa had done well at covering the safeguarding role during RN's absence.

Health and Safety: inc summer improvements

The playground equipment had been painted during the summer term, and was looking very inviting for children. There had been a lot of work on chalkboards, colourful prompts for reading etc.

Strategic

Review pupil numbers, projected numbers, pre-school numbers

Currently 77 on roll – potential new pupils as covered earlier.

Currently 11 children registered for pre-school.

Update on TEAM Academy Trust

Discussed earlier in meeting.

Meeting ended 8.02pm.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 25th January, 6.00pm – to share Curriculum Maestro.