



Directors' Note for Portfolio Groups

Portfolio title: High Bickington LGB

Date of meeting: 5th July 2021, 6.00pm

Attended by (all virtually): Rob Norton, Susie Kevern, Emma Comber, Jane Adams, Helen Carn, Helen Rowden (until 7.12pm), Verity Goss (clerk)

Brief overview of discussion

Procedural items

Welcome and apologies

SK welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Rev Tracey Doyle. SK informed local governors that Claire Large had stated she would stand down, due to business commitments.

Declaration of business interests

None declared

Sign off previous minutes

Minutes agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters brought forward

None.

Correspondence

Request from the Community Property Trust for Trustees – SK to reply. SK clarified that RN and the trust business managed attended where required.

Monitoring and Accountability

- Update on teaching and learning

- Review of pupils books
- Post lockdown catch up progress

RN stated there had been two summer term reviews of the school. The first was the TEAM internal review. Science had been a focus for one day – books had been examined across all the age groups, with a very thorough investigation into science in the school. RN stated that High Bickington was fortunate to have such an experienced Science Lead. Teaching aspects, and the way the lessons were planned and the content were all very good. Both KS1 and KS2 had two hours of science a week – RN had been told not all schools do science this frequently, but some schools having science themed weeks.

The visit had also examined the books of a middle attaining child in each year group. The review team had been very impressed with the books – good progress had been made since the review from Andrea Rice two years ago. Good presentation was being embedded – RN reported that children in Y5 and Y6 sometimes asked for a page to be removed from their book so they could start again if they were not happy with their presentation.

The second review was with an external advisor from the Dartmoor Teaching School Alliance, who was also an Ofsted Inspector. The focus was on early reading and phonics, as well as challenging the most able. RN gave an overview of the report, which gave an overview of the current position of the school. The report identified that the CEO and the Head of School had an articulate, clear vision for the school. A need had been identified for KS2 staff to understand the language used for Read Write Inc, for those children that needed more phonic input – specific language was needed for helping children decode words.

Questions were invited from local governors.

Were there enough books in school to be able to match the book to the sound the child is currently learning? RN stated that the school had a big book stock and did have enough for this, but always wanted to invest in more. Staff were sourcing specific books to match each stage of learning.

SK stated she was pleased the visit had focussed on early reading, as there had been much in the news about the effect lockdown had had on the early years especially. RN explained that staff had made excellent videos for home learning specifically for Read Write Inc, to ensure

consistency.

The advisor had also talked to children in the oldest class. RN felt that behaviour was a strength of the school. Learning behaviour was also strong – children took responsibility for their learning.

RN explained the action points from the report, and how these would be worked on in school.

RN informed local governors of the most recent in school reading data.

Y6 – 40% of children currently at greater depth, which had increased from 10% in September. 40% were expected, and 20% working towards. One child had only been with the school for two years, and had made a lot of progress during this time.

Y4 – 50% greater depth, 40% expected, 10% working towards.

Y3 – 43% greater depth, 28% expected, 29% working towards. A lot of catch up work was happening in this year group.

Y2 – 9% greater depth, 54% expected, 37% working towards

Y1 – 27% greater depth, 54% expected standard, 18% working towards

RN stated that these levels were above the national average.

The results seemed to suggest that the lower end of the school had been most affected? RN confirmed that this was the case – the percentage of school missed so far was greater. Staff had clear targets for where work on support was needed.

Would the school be receiving more catch up funding? RN confirmed that there would be some more catch up funding, but less that was received last time. This would possibly be used to buy books to support reading catch up.

Local governors felt that this was really useful feedback. RN stated that it was important to ensure staff were confident about answering questions about the curriculum, and saying why it was set as it was.

First meeting of the next academic year – local governors agreed it would be good to look into the books. RN explained what work went into the sketchbooks/topic books.

Post lockdown catch up – RN explained how staff had identified which areas needed support, and what had been put in place for this. *How was the accelerated reader programme used to help the focus on reading?* RN stated that this was mostly used in Class 3, starting when children finished Read Write Inc. Accelerated Reader was very useful in identifying suitable books for each child. The majority of children in Y3 and Y4 were currently using it, with a few children in Y2, and a few in Class Four who needed the additional support. RN explained how the Accelerated Reader program identified the level the child was currently reading, and gave a range of books at a suitable level for them to read. It tracked the books they read, and the difficulty of the words and vocabulary. It was useful for monitoring, including that older readers were reading enough of the right type of book for them.

Post Covid areas of development – were there common links across TEAM? RN stated he was not entirely sure about this yet – Ian Thomas was looking at the data to see if this was the case. After the first lockdown reading had definitely been an area for development for High Bickington, where now it was more writing, with elements of number and maths.

Engagement with parents – had there been a good enough working relationship with parents, especially with the older children? RN explained that staff had still managed to talk to parents where needed – parents had had the offer of parents evening, and also other meetings if needed. RN felt that there had not been much difference in parental engagement than there was during normal times.

HR left 7.12pm.

Health and Safety report

How was the change to drop off going? RN confirmed that this was going well at the moment. Things that had been put in place helped – it did seem quieter at the end of the day. Parents felt that the staggered timings helped. RN intended that staggered times would continue after Covid, due to the improvement of road safety.

Policy Review

- Outdoor Education – policy approved.
- Teaching and Learning (tbc) – not ready for this meeting.

Safeguarding Report

The safeguarding trustee had booked in to do her annual talking to children visit at the end of the term, as well as the head of school visit. No other issues to report at this meeting.

Strategic

Attendance inc PP data

Attendance since 1st September:

Whole School - 91.0%. RN stated that this was low for a normal year.

Without a family who had been absent for medical reasons – 96.5%, which was a normal level.

Pupil premium – 92% - this was due to children who had been eligible to attend school during the spring lockdown, but who had decided not to do so.

EHCP – 82.6% - again due to parents deciding not to take up the offered place during the spring lockdown.

Attendance since 8th March:

Whole school - 92.0%.

Without the family absent due to medical reasons - 97.5%, which was very good.

Pupil Premium - 97.6% - which was good.

EHCP - 98.7% - also very good.

Overall, with reasoning given, attendance was good.

Were there any children eligible for Pupil Premium who had not applied? RN stated that parents were reminded about Pupil Premium funding frequently.

How many Pupil Premium children were currently in the school? RN stated there were four children with different levels of support.

Review pupil numbers, leavers, projected numbers, pre-school numbers

RN stated there had been no leavers since Y6 leaving last July.

Currently 77 on roll – 10 Y6 would be leaving at the end of term, and 13 expected to start Reception. Approximately 7 children in pre-school.

Staffing Update

RN stated that budgets were stretched this year. One to one TA in Class four would be coming out of the class as the child was leaving. It was hoped that they could be re-employed to support an SEN group in Class Three.

One TA in Class Two had dropped a day a week, which had been picked up by the other TA in that class.

The job share teaching role in the FSU was continuing.

MAT Issues

Update on TEAM MAT

SK highlighted training opportunities for governors. JA reported she had booked the Ofsted training, and EC had completed part one of the induction training.

Size of local governing board discussed following CL's resignation. Agreed it was useful to have an additional local governor, as they did not want to get to the point where local governors felt they had to continue if they were not able to. RN to approach a possible new local governor.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 8th November

Meeting ended 7.44pm