

Directors' Note for Portfolio Groups

Portfolio title: Witheridge LGB

Date of meeting: 1st October 2020

Attended by (all virtually): Sue Wells (chair), Adrain Wells, Phil Asson, Kathryn Stewart, Lucy Ratcliffe (Head of School), Ian Thomas, Verity Goss (clerk)

Brief overview of discussion

Procedural Items

Welcome and Apologies

SW welcomed all to the meeting. AW led the opening prayer. SW informed local governors that Simon Clarke had resigned from the LGB.

Declaration of Business Interests

None declared.

Sign off Previous Minutes

Minutes agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters brought forward

None.

Correspondence

None.

Monitoring and Accountability

Autumn Update

IT explained the time taken over the past few months looking at TEAM moving forwards. The trust development plan had been created to focus on the core areas. Staff were now working on individual plans for each school. IT confirmed that the development plan did include impacts of Covid-19 – it was important to continue to monitor the impact of this, supporting children and staff.

Reopening of school – LR reported that this had happened relatively smoothly. Most procedures had been the same as they had been just before summer. All children had returned to school. One child was on a temporary reduced timetable due to additional needs. All staff had returned and were happy.

LR stated she had been impressed with the way the children had returned, especially YR who had not had their normal transition period. The two year olds attending pre-school had understandably found drop off time difficult, but had settled in well and were now much happier.

Changes to FSU building was very positive and had a good impact on the children.

The whole school was using the topic 'Saving the World', each class focussing on a different aspect. Class Four were looking at frozen kingdoms/climate change, Class Three rivers/coastline/seas, Class Two coastlines and woodlands, Class One woodlands. Small local trips were planned – the topic linked well to the local rural area. Normally there would have been a curriculum 'big event' trip.

LR explained some features of Curriculum Maestro, and how this was used for planning alongside the topic. LR reported that the assessment function was useful to complete after each lesson, which gave a clear picture of children's progress.

Were there fluctuations in attendance after reopening? LR reported that there had been a few coughs/colds leading to some individual/family absences while waiting for Covid-19 test results. So far all test results had been negative. Attendance was felt to be quite good considering the circumstances.

School Improvement Plan (MAT Issues)

IT outlined the areas covered in this document – Building Learning Power, Building Futures, Building Communities, Building Self Esteem and Positive Mental Wellbeing. IT explained that the vision and drivers should be evident in all TEAM schools. IT explained the strategic objectives for the year.

IT explained the use of Blue Sky to organise CPD/Professional Development.

School Specific SIP

IT explained that some of the objectives would be common to all TEAM schools, and some would be Witheridge specific. Witheridge SIP was still being worked on, but felt linked to the TEAM SDP.

IT explained the School Improvement Team within TEAM – core members of staff who would support each school to move forward, depending on the school's need.

Currently the children were completing tests to give a good idea of the level they were currently working at. From talking to the children it was evident that there were gaps in their learning, but that other skills had been developed – for example personal learning style. Staff were pleased to see where children had made personal improvements. LGB members agreed that these skills were also important, as was each child pursuing individual interests. LR explained that KS2 would start Learning in Depth projects this year – where children were able to work on projects related to a particular interest of their own. IT was going to visit the school to launch this.

Impact on learning time due to Covid procedures – LR reported that the staggered start times were going smoothly. Handwashing did take up a substantial amount of time – activities were planned that individual children could leave and return to, eg maths game activities. Most cleaning occurred at break and lunch times. Hand sanitiser was also used which saved some time.

Group Specific Learning Support

LR reported that some activities that had previously been in place (eg gardening group) were not easy to do at the moment as children in different bubbles could not mix.

It was hoped to start some smaller farm groups/forest school. Small groups within one class were possible.

Targets

After the tests were completed staff would have a better indication of what could be expected of the children. Currently the focus was on a successful return to school of the children.

Pre-School Update: inc hours, staffing, numbers, holiday club

LR reported on the success of the alteration work on the space. Children were responding very well. Some fencing on outside area to be completed. 16 children currently registered with pre-school – currently not able to accept any more two year olds. Staff were looking at the possibility of opening on an additional day. LR confirmed children still received government funded hours.

Staffing – currently no vacancies. Some pre-school staff had moved to a different role in the main school, some had reduced hours. Reception teacher was able to work closely with the pre-school class

Holiday club – currently looking at if it would be possible to run this in some way.

Safeguarding Report

All had received Keeping Children Safe in Education Document – IT explained some of the changes included since the previous year.

LR explained the impact of introducing CPOMS for recording any concerns. LR explained some of the work staff had done to monitor children who were considered vulnerable over lockdown.

Health and Safety: Including Summer Improvements

Covid-19 Risk Assessments were up to date. Autumn term H&S visit was being organised.

Witheridge had been awarded funding to replace the windows on the second round of CIF allocations. Work on this would start at half term – some disruption would take place – each class would have to spend some time using the school hall as their classroom while their classroom's windows were being replaced.

Strategic

Review pupil numbers, projected numbers, staffing, attendance

Current number on roll – 99 including pre-school. 21 Pupil Premium, 17 FSM. 18 children on SEN register. Projected numbers looking healthy.

Attendance – LR reported that this was good considering the circumstances – Pre-school 98%, Class One 91% (affected by phased start), Class Two 97%, Class Three 97%, Class Four 96%. Currently Covid-19 test results were being received fairly quickly, so children did not need to miss too much school while waiting.

Update on TEAM Multi Academy Trust

Covered earlier in the meeting.

Meeting ended 6.14pm.

Date of next meetings: Thursday 26th November – 5.30pm.