

Directors' Note for Portfolio Groups

Portfolio title: Witheridge LGB

Date of meeting: 26th November 2020

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

Brief overview of discussion

Procedural Items

Welcome and apologies

SW welcomed all to the meeting, and introduced DH as a potential new local governor.

Declaration of business interests.

None declared.

Sign off previous minutes

Minutes agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters brought forward

None not later on agenda.

Correspondence

None received.

Monitoring and Accountability

Head of School Report:

- Monitoring standards
- SIP update and progress
- Covid 19 Catch up

LR stated that teachers had completed their assessments, and shared the data with predictions for the end of the year. After the assessments the impact of Covid-19 had become clearer. The biggest impact had been on the younger children – this was not a surprise, as six months was a very large percentage of their time at school missed. The class teacher was pleased with the progression of these children since the tests – there would be another assessment at the

end of the term to confirm this progress.

LR stated that there was clear evidence that home learning had maintained where children were, rather than children's levels going backwards. There had been some disruption this term due to Covid – had been some children who had had to isolate/await test results. Feedback had been that it was now easier to book a test for those who needed them.

LR highlighted particular areas children had found difficult in each group. Spelling and Grammar was a concern in Y2 – this group were due to take their phonics screening this half term. Staff were expecting the majority of children to pass – catch up support was in place.

Y3 – LR reminded governors this was the group where only 40% had reached a good level of development in EYFS. There had been a decline in engagement with home learning when the group had not been able to return to school in June. The cohort had a high level of SEN. Maths was the area of most concern in this cohort.

Y4 – only six in the cohort. It was difficult to look at percentages in a small cohort, but the predictions for this year group was more in line with national levels.

Y5 – another cohort with high levels on SEN. There had been a large percentage of children who had had limited engagement with home learning. The cohort had generally had good results in KS1 assessments, but not the combined score. SPAG was also the area of weakness in this cohort.

Y6 – fairly strong cohort, but SPAG was slightly lower. Predictions were better than the outcomes from the October tests – still had time to catch up.

Across the year groups SPAG needed to be a focus. Catch up funding was partly used to focus on this. LR explained the use of the decision spelling programme and the interventions that were in place. Decision spelling program had been interrupted last year due to the school closures, but had been relaunched in Y2 – Y6. LR stated that White Rose maths was being used in KS1 and KS2, which included planning for missed learning. Staff were using the Nuffield Speech and Language program for reception children to help them catch up on missed language learning, and were investigating the use for Y5 teaching. Ofsted visits to school had noted that acquisition of language had suffered during lockdown, and it was an area that was being focussed on in the school.

Would staff be monitoring the impact of support against children's starting points? LR confirmed they would – it was good to have completed assessments fairly early in the term, and testing again at the end of term would enable formal monitoring. Teachers were able to see progress in the classroom.

School development plan

LR shared the SDP for the next two years – similar to the trust development plan, but more specific to the school. LR explained the links to the TEAM vision

and drivers. LR explained how the impact would be assessed.

Purpose and direction of the school. Part of the plan was linked to Covid, as well as curriculum and assessment. LR explained the use of Curriculum Maestro to help with curriculum planning, and the resources it had to engage children in their learning – it was known that children who were enjoying learning made more progress.

Assessment – new way of assessment had been introduced by the Head of School at Pilton, and was helping to provide feedback to children in a more timely manner. It also meant more work could be assessed by teachers, and there was not so much that had to be written in the books.

Target setting – not yet finalised.

LR explained the use of BlueSky to access and co-ordinate training and development for staff.

Learning in Depth – LR explained how it was used, and that it was going to be introduced in school soon. It was already being used in Pilton and High Bickington.

LR explained how the use of visualisers in classrooms were helpful in being able to model good quality presentation in class.

Partnerships – within the community and wider world. LR explained the goal was to form a global partnership with another school, as well as participating in the local learning community. The local learning community had half termly meetings, and would be useful for moderation. LR felt it was important to build and maintain these links, especially as most children went to Chulmleigh for secondary school.

Monitoring cycle – individual school reviews helped to ensure schools were working to the best they could, with support from the other schools in the trust.

Catch up funding – was the decision on how to use this responsibility of the head of school? LR confirmed this was the case – it was unusual for such money not to be ring fenced, but it was very useful to be able to focus on the areas of most need, and target the money appropriately.

Group specific learning support

Repeated reading in KS2 – LR explained the method, and that it had had a big impact on children last year. Additional phonics catch up was in place in KS1. Targeted maths catch up was in place where needed.

Targets

LR stated that the aim was for 78% of children at KS2 achieving a good level of development combined score, and 69% in KS1. This target came from 2019

SATs data, as there had not been 2020 SATs. From current data it looked like children were on track.

Safeguarding report

Local governors had received report from Sue Davies, safeguarding trustee. SW explained how the reports were put together – this year the talking to children section had not been able to happen. Question of whether the role extended to mental health wellbeing – SW to ask at trustees.

Were there any updates needed since the report? LR stated she would be meeting with SD again next week. Safeguarding was high on the agenda for all staff, and the use of CPOMs had proved useful over lockdown, as staff were able to record concerns remotely.

Health and Safety

Fence was being put up around the FSU outside area – PTFA was funding the materials, and a community member was doing the work at no cost. Materials had been ordered. Report stated old reception year hut needed clearing, after it had been used as storage during building works on the FSU building – LR stated this had been done, and the space was now set up to be used for PPA or an intervention space.

Covid risk assessment was still in place and updated regularly. LR highlighted that staff still needed to be vigilant – staff were wearing face coverings when moving around the school/in shared areas. This helped staff to feel staff. LR felt the children had not really noticed the change – were very used to seeing adults wearing face coverings in the community.

Bomb threats – a few local secondary schools had received hoax bomb threats, and dealt with it well. Emergency procedures had been reviewed so that all were aware of what to do should the school receive a bomb threat.

Windows – were currently being put in, looked good and were opening very easily.

Date of next meetings: Thursday 4th February – 5.30pm