

GOVERNING BODY OF HIGHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL
STAFFING, CURRICULUM AND PUPIL DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

7 MARCH 2023

Members: Ertan Hurer (Chair), David Wilson, Abigail Brown, Tanya Ahmed and Di Wren.

Italics denote absence

Also attending: Mandy Newell (Minute and Advisory Clerk)

MINUTES – PART 1

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for late arrival was received from Mandy Newell.

NOTED that all Governors were in attendance.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

NOTED that there were no declarations of interest made with regards to any item on the agenda.

3. MINUTES AND ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

RECEIVED the minutes from the meeting held on 15 November 2022 which were agreed as a correct record.

RESOLVED that these be signed on GovernorHub by the Chair.

ACTION: CHAIR

NOTED there were no matters arising to consider.

4. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

RECEIVED the School Improvement Plan (SIP), 2022-23, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book

REPORTED that the Headteacher did not want to spend a lot of time discussing this as he would update Governors at the next Governing Body but he did want to bring to Governor's attention to the following which was linked with the 3 year teaching plan.

- (a) the School was working with Academia who undertook work with the ICT computing, department and they were looking to develop skills of teachers within the school to use technology and to work in particular on iPads in the classroom to enhance children's learning sessions and learn how they could save and show that work;
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- (b) they were also trying to build capacity within the staff plan that was linked to that and to appoint two leaders of technology, one in KS1 and Early years and one in KS2;
- (c) it was planned to re look at lessons and think about how technology could be used to enhance lessons, the Headteacher and a DHT had visited some other schools and observed lessons. They had in one case, seen enhanced learning with children who were looking at the solar system. They had used playdoh to create planets and the commentary on it was brilliant;
- (d) the Headteacher said that teachers were really focused on what was best for the children and recognised it would take about a year to build up teachers' skills and to have the capacity within the leadership team knowledge of how to do this;
- (e) in the longer term plan it was planned to increase the number of iPads available to children with years 3-6 having access to one iPad per child eventually;
- (f) at present there were not enough teaching staff who had the skills to take advantage of this. [Tanya Ahmed asked whether the decision to focus on ICT technology was informed by any particular research evidence base?](#) The Headteacher explained that the EFF research showed that it did not enhance learning but having teachers who understood how to use it effectively was. He said that they wanted children to be active learners, and to do this they could use role play and producing video. [In response to a query from the Chair, the Headteacher explained that](#) it was difficult to manage on the school budget. He considered it would be better to lease as the School would get iPads for 3 years and at the end this period they would be able to get the resale value and then obtain new ones. This would be a more consistent cost than buying outright. At present there were 30 iPads per year group;
- (g) [Di Wren asked what other local secondary schools the Headteacher planned to meet with to help strengthen links with other secondary schools. The Headteacher said he would update the Governing Body about the conversations with the](#) two secondary schools they were speaking with which were Highlands and Winchmore. The School had closer links with Winchmore as more of the children moved on to there. Children had gone to Winchmore for PE and Science Lessons.

5. **PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT**

- (a) Progress and achievement update

RECEIVED Autumn 22 data, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that the Headteacher guided Governors through the data for each year group for pupil premium (yellow) and non PP (green). They reviewed the figures for children who were at ARE (age related expectations) or above and the figures for those who were below ARE. The following matters were highlighted. H

- (i) the Headteacher explained that looking at overall and combined figures showed the figures were consistent 60% children on track in all three areas. It was expected the figures would be slightly higher in Spring and Summer. There were still a small number of children getting support and approximately 6-10 children in Year 6 had still not caught up from the pandemic. It was a challenge to close the gap in Year 5 too. Reception and Year 1 had children with much higher needs than in the past and there was still work to do to bridge gaps between pupil premium and non-Pupil Premium., pre covid the two groups were closer together but the Headteacher hoped that non-pupil premium would be out performing pupil premium at end of Year 6.
 - (ii) Governors were informed that last year 50-55% of children were on track to be ARE in the older year groups. The figures were improving year on year and Governors were assured that the School would get the figures to where they wanted them to be. This year they were looking at 65-70% in each group reaching ARE;
 - (iii) there were concerns about the gap between pupil premium (PP) children and non PP. Work was being undertaken with the disadvantaged children, the gap remained but this did reflect the national picture. [Tanya Ahmed asked if the gaps were widening](#) and was informed they were not but were not closing as quickly as would be desired. The figures for year 2 showed that they bucked the trend but there was a need to take the overall picture and Year 2 was too small a group from which to obtain a true picture. They had to consider what was happening across the School;
 - (iv) [the Chair highlighted that English as an additional language \(EAL\) could be a barrier to learning from early years.](#) The Headteacher pointed out that when looking at where the School was pre-covid and where it was now EAL numbers had not changed. In the context being discussed it was possible that Barriers to Learning was the wrong phrase to use and that they could look at the makeup of the group. Genuine disadvantage was more of a barrier to learning than EAL and the Chair agreed that issues for some children in their home life was a major issue;
 - (v) [following Governors' questions,](#) the Headteacher explained that when they spoke to the children it had been noticed that as some disadvantaged children got older their self-esteem could be affected when they saw the opportunities that the non-disadvantaged children sometimes had. This was identified in the School and support offered. Place 2 Be offered some support and the proportion of disadvantaged children who accessed this was higher than you would necessarily expect. The Headteacher said they were mindful to give children as many opportunities in School as possible;
 - (vi) progress figures were discussed and it was noted that this was not as fast for some children as would be desired. During Tanya Ahmed and Di Wren's visit to the School today they had noticed that many PP children had issues with vocabulary and teachers were helping them with specific vocabulary issues in some cases. The Headteacher assured Governors that strategies in place ensured equity and the School recognised it had a duty to bridge the gap. [Di](#)
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Wren asked what other options there were available to help and was informed that School trips were available to all and there was a focus on free School clubs for KS2 in particular but KS1 were also increasing their use of these clubs as well. It was planned to put together a comprehensive updated list of clubs which would enable parents to see the wide variety on offer for their children. Disadvantaged and vulnerable children would be targeted for attendance at the clubs;

- (vii) Governors reviewed the Greater depth data. The Headteacher was pleased to inform them that a high number were on track to achieve this, 24% in Year 6 which was well above the national average. 15% of PP children were on track and this too was above the national average. However, the gaps between non PP and PP were clear. Following discussion, Di Wren pointed out that EAL children could also be disadvantaged and fall into more than one category. The Headteacher agreed but said that although EAL pupils would struggle initially, as time went on this reduced, particularly if they were proficient in their home language. Economic disadvantage was a bigger factor than EAL;
- (viii) the Headteacher explained that the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) reviewed social care referrals as issues involved with these were a significant disadvantage for many children.

(b) Interventions

RECEIVED the Whole School Intervention Map, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that

- (i) the Headteacher pointed out that the figures in green were high impact and the ones in yellow showed some impact. Brown highlighted areas showed where no impact had been seen and red meant that it was not yet possible to judge due to too few sessions taking place. The Headteacher stated that the School was very fortunate that they were able to provide a variety of targeted Interventions that catered for the varying needs of individual pupils. They were delivered by various highly skilled staff ranging from Deputy/Assistant Headteachers to Teaching Assistants. Interventions usually took place outside of the classroom and usually first thing in the mornings or afternoon. No interventions were put in place in the Autumn term for early years. At this stage the children were working 1:1 or 1:2 in any case;
 - (ii) in terms of SEND IDL had been successfully started this term and all children were responding very well to this daily, repetitive ICT programme to support reading and spelling. Children's progress in both reading and spelling age was being tracked and the attainment was clearly recorded. Lifeboat continued to offer dyslexic learners a secure foundation. SALT interventions (programmes and Word Aware) were in place and the active involvement of Elaine Dunn provided good training for key staff with positive impact on the quality of teaching within the intervention. A gap in provision had shown that it would be good to restart 'Balancing Bears' (Tiger teams) as staff were seeing more children with physical coordination issues. The Chair asked if the cookery club
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had started again and Abigail Brown informed him that it had been in place since the Autumn Term. This was an eight week programme for children with low self-esteem or SEND. Abigail Brown explained how much the children loved it and it was beneficial in many ways including teaching them to eat healthily. The Chair asked about Mr Numbervator and was informed by the Headteacher that this provision had ended but they were filling the gap in terms of what he had offered;

- (iii) Governors were assured that the timing of interventions was planned carefully. Children were not taken out of core learning or during a subject they really enjoyed. In response to a question from Tanya Ahmed, the Headteacher explained that Phase Leaders would review a child's progress to see if interventions meant it was greater than if they had only remained in class;
- (iv) Abigail Brown asked about the National Tutoring programme and the Headteacher explained this would remain in place until the end of the academic year. The School had to fund 40% of this but would continue with the measures that were in place for this year;
- (v) Tanya Ahmed asked about reading age programmes and was informed that the School used Little Wandle for the teaching of phonics. Year 3 had Project X in place which used a series of books to help with reading. The Headteacher explained that they did not conduct reading tests but did assess each child's reading and colour coded it accordingly. Children's comprehension skills were also assessed. Little Wandle was used to ensure all the books the children were reading were linked to the phonics sounds they were learning and interventions were in place for struggling readers which were helping them keep up with the progress being made by their peers. There was focus in Year 3 on the children who had not passed their phonics tests. There was also focus on the group just above this. A programme of 3 x 10 minute sessions were in place, mostly in the afternoon. Higher up the School pre-teaching might be put in place or small intervention groups were used. Assistant Headteachers worked with key children. The impact of interventions was reviewed and it was ensured that KS2 teachers used their phonics knowledge to help those children who still needed help in class. Tanya Ahmed said she had been impressed with the culture around reading at the School during her visit today. The Headteacher said that the children did love reading and this included the bottom 20% of readers.

6. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

RECEIVED the Spring term tutoring information, a copy of which is included in the Minute book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that

- (a) Governors reviewed the information provided and the Headteacher reminded them that the tutoring was partly funded by the Government (60%) and the rest by the School. The money was being used to employ a specialist to come into school and work with targeted children, particularly those who had fallen behind during the pandemic. Across the academic year the cost to the School was £7,800.
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- (b) alongside conversations with teachers as to how key pupils were adapting to the increased expectations of their new year group/s, Autumn 2022 data was reviewed to determine focus pupils for Spring Term tuition. Children who received tutoring in Maths and English in Years 2, 3 and 5 were chosen as they were 'cusp' children who were close to meeting ARE. Some required small group support and constant repetition to embed key number facts and strategies. Children chosen to receive additional support in SPAG were targeted because they had significant gaps in their learning which were causing huge barriers to learning and progress. Children were struggling with terminology and bespoke paced lessons were supporting them in remembering, and applying, these key grammatical terms. Children chosen for additional 1:1 Reading were chosen based on their lack of ability to read fluently and to comprehend what they were reading, as well as having very limited language and vocabulary. These children also had very little exposure to books at home and were rarely heard read by an adult outside of school. It was hoped with 1:1 help these children would not only become more confident readers, but that they would also read more for pleasure too;
- (c) Governors reviewed the intended outcomes and the Headteacher explained that it was hoped that the children receiving additional Maths and English support would reach ARE by the end of the academic year. It was hoped that the children receiving additional SPAG and Phonics support would be able to access the curriculum more confidently being taught in their year group following the intensive small group sessions provided by the NTP Tutor. The aim was also for them to be able to use and apply their newly retained understanding of SPAG/Phonics. It was hoped with 1:1 the focus children for reading would not only become more confident readers, but that they would also read more for pleasure too. It was already evident in speaking to these children that they now had a wider vocabulary and were now more able to access whole class texts;
- (d) [in response to a query from the Chair, the Headteacher said](#) Governors would receive an outcome report at the end of the year.

7. PUPIL PREMIUM FUNDING (PP)

RECEIVED updated PP information (December 2022) and the three year strategy, copies of which are included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that

- (a) Governors were reminded that the statement detailed the School's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2022 to 2023 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. It outlined pupil premium strategy, how the School intended to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within the School;
 - (b) [The Chair asked what the average of PP children was in the Borough.](#) The Headteacher said that the national average was around 23% and he believed that Enfield had a slightly higher figure than this but the School was in line with national;
 - (c) Governors discussed the fact the Mayor of London planned to offer all children in London free school meals for a year. The Headteacher pointed out that whilst he
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welcomed this initiative it could mean that less parents/carers would admit their child was disadvantaged which would in turn mean less funding for the School. There would be a need to convince parents to tell them if they were disadvantaged in order to get the additional funding that came with a PP child. [Di Wren asked if an increased number of children taking up the offer of free school meals could be a problem for the catering department at the School and the Headteacher determined that it could potentially be an issue in terms of being able provide food for many more children;](#)

- (d) Governors reviewed the information around Place 2 Be provision.
 - (e) [Tanya Ahmed asked about pupils' wellbeing and whether the School was seeing the effects of the cost of living crisis.](#) The Headteacher said that they did have families that they believed were struggling and they did keep a close eye on any children they were concerned about but parents and carers did not always inform them if they were facing financial problems. Governors were assured that staff monitored the contents of lunch boxes. [The Chair wondered if Sainsburys offered a free fruit service to school children in the same way Morrisons did but was told they did not.](#) Following further discussion, Abigail Brown informed Governors that some children did come into school on the strike days to pick up their free school meal;
 - (f) Governors reviewed the action plan that had been put in place for Spring 23. There was a high expectations for all pupils. Teachers knew where their pupils were and offered an exciting, enriched curriculum with a strong focus on well-being. All teachers had high expectations for all groups of pupils. There was a continued focus on cold calling, retrieval and feedback practices and modelling and explaining. Work was ongoing to continue to close the gap through high quality teaching, regular interventions/catch up programmes and clubs and enrichment opportunities. Catch up tutoring and interventions as well as AHT writing groups were in place. Bespoke catch-up programs/interventions would continue for identified individuals/groups of PP children to close the gaps in reading, Writing and Maths;
 - (g) specific PP interventions included PE club-to develop fitness and enjoyment of exercise for PP pupils who did not have the opportunity to exercise outside of school, and art Club and nurture intervention. Interventions supporting progress were in place, Talk Boost and Comprehension Groups and Pre-teaching was an effective intervention run by support staff. A Lego Club was in place along with extra phonic sessions and a Maths specialist teacher;
 - (h) each class had three targeted PP pupils to raise attainment with specific actions and robust monitoring in the Spring Term. The NTP-National Tutoring Programme-provision for writing was being utilised. Tracking and monitoring progress continued termly, half-termly in Years 2 and 6. To support pupils' mental well-being and emotional/social skills. Place2Be continued to offer counselling for pupils and offered Place2talk, through the curriculum, values, RSE curriculum, clubs/interventions and SMILE approach. PP KS1 Nurture lunchtime club was successful this year and would continue next year;
 - (i) Governors were informed that it was planned to try and raise PP attendance as a whole group back to 96%+ and target specific persistent absentees. Attendance in Autumn term was 92.5% This was slightly below non-PP pupils whose attendance this term was 94.3%. There had been high amounts of sickness such as chicken pox,
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viruses such as flu and seasonal illnesses. This had been a common thread across the country. Highfield Bears, attendance certificates, first day calling and monitoring of attendance were all strategies to help improve attendance;

- (j) there was a reading and phonics-whole school focus on developing early reading skills. Implementation of the Little Wandle Scheme had been successful and consistent. Writing had the lowest attainment in all year groups. It was planned to target specific pupils, using scaffolding and the breaking down of tasks for pupils. Verbal rehearsal would be in place before writing, following a talk into writing model. AHT writing groups were in place in years 2, 4 and 6.

8. STAFFING

(a) Staffing structure

REPORTED that there were no major changes to the staffing structure. The Headteacher was looking to appoint two Digital Leads, one for Early Years and KS1 and one for KS2.

(b) Annual cycle of Performance Management

REPORTED that mid-point reviews were due to take place next week. [In response to a query from Tanya Ahmed, the Headteacher confirmed this included support staff.](#)

(c) Continuing professional development

RECEIVED the CPD for 2022/23, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that

- (a) [Tanya Ahmed had spoken](#) to Abigail Brown about Subject Leads having protected time in order for them to develop their expertise in their specific area. The Headteacher assured her that they were given some time in order to do this but at the same time the capacity within a primary school had to be recognised. He explained that Leads were given an additional half day a term out of class plus additional time for any specific CPD needs. Abigail Brown explained that staff had network groups in place which also helped;
 - (b) [Tanya Ahmed pointed out that](#) research showed CPD needed to be done in small doses and drip fed on a regular basis. She was informed that staff met regularly with Abigail Brown and the Haringey Education Partnership (HEP) provided relevant CPD materials for staff. They were able to use these to enhance learning and then feedback to other staff. Staff also kept up with regular reading. Following further discussion, the Headteacher stated he recognised Tanya Ahmed's concerns around CPD but felt that staff at the School were given adequate provision and time around this. He considered the situation was different in primary and secondary schools and it had to be recognised that the Leaders were also class teachers and if they weren't in class cover would have to come from the SLT or supply. He considered there were different expectations of a teacher's knowledge in primary compared to secondary schools. The
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Headteacher said he would expect a Lead to know what was required of them around their particular specialist subject and considered that they received enough CPD for their needs at present;

- (c) [Tanya Ahmed commented that CPD was not just about attending courses and the Headteacher agreed.](#) He recognised that some staff would be prepared to use more of their own time to keep themselves up to date whilst others might not. Tanya Ahmed reiterated the fact she considered it vital that staff had time to develop their subject expertise. On her visit today she had considered that Leads focused on teaching and learning rather than academic learning. She and Di Wren had met with one subject Lead who had discussed her understanding of the subject but did not talk about the knowledge learnt and how this would help the children and develop their skills in later life. Whilst understanding the point being made, the Headteacher said that he felt the teacher in question would have had the relevant knowledge and that it was possible her answer could have been due to her interpretation of the Governors' questions. He thanked Tanya Ahmed for her feedback

(d) Staff absence

RECEIVED a copy of the staff absence report, February 2023, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that absence had improved on this time last year but there had been significant cold and flu viruses in the School.

NOTED the reasons for absence and the number of days lost due to these.

9. SIA CURRICULUM REVIEWS

RECEIVED the SIA report from the visit on 7 February 2023, a copy of which is available to view in the Minute Book and on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that

- (a) Dawn Ferdinand, the School Improvement Partner from HEP had attended the School with Claire Daly, A HEP support partner and the Reading Lead from the Willow, Lorna Wright. They had conducted a review of the reading curriculum in Years 2-6. They had been very pleased with the children's enthusiasm, behaviour, engagement and work. Their findings were discussed with the Headteacher, DHT and Reading Lead. [Tanya Ahmed asked how many lessons were observed and was informed it was five;](#)
- (b) it was felt that practice could improve by having more active learning in place and by having teachers doing more focussed modelling. It was considered that there could be even more checking for understanding taking place and children should be encouraged to use their phonics knowledge more widely if they could not read a word. In respect of adaptive teaching it was felt that teachers must ensure all children could access a text and that the task was adapted to give all children the opportunity to be successful;
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- (c) as well as the points in (b) above it was recommended that the School should consider tightly mapping the learning intentions to ensure coverage and progression. They should revisit expectations for the sequence for the unit of work and give more time to the Subject Leader to monitor what was happening. It was determined there was a bit of disconnect between what the Lead expected and what was happening on the ground;
- (d) actions for the next meeting were for the Improvement Partner to send an example of the reading scheme of work and for SLT at the School to arrange a visit to The Willow;
- (e) Di Wren asked if the children were read to every day in class and was informed this happened three days each week in both KS1 and KS2. Tanya Ahmed stressed the importance of reading aloud to pupils. The Headteacher said they recognised this and explained they would also be offering training on the recommendations highlighted in the report.

10. **POLICY REVIEW**

NOTED there were no policies due for review.

11. **GOVERNOR TRAINING**

NOTED that all training sessions were listed in the Governor Training Brochure 2022-23, available on Governor Hub.

Governor training could be booked via the School based booker, Catherine Moens.

12.. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

NOTED the date of the next meeting as 20 June 2023 at 5pm.

13. **ITEMS TO REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL_**

RESOLVED that no items be regarded as confidential.
