

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

12 March 2024



Members: Tim Guha, David Wilson, Tanya Ahmed, Sophia Loizia and Stephanie Morton

Italics denote absence

Also attending: Mandy Newell (Minute and Advisory Clerk)

MINUTES

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Sophia Loizia be Chair of the Committee for this academic year.

4. MINUTES AND ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

RECEIVED the notes of the inquorate meeting held on 14 November 23 which were agreed as a correct record.

RESOLVED these be signed on GovernorHub by the Chair.

ACTION: CHAIR

NOTED there were no matters arising.

5. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

RECEIVED the School Development Plan (SDP), a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that the Headteacher highlighted the following priorities and reminded Governors that that the SDP was reviewed at the end of each term;

- (a) a focus was to look at Walk Thru strategies and embed the procedures that were already in place;
- (b) work was being done around feedback and vocabulary development. This was going well and work would continue in this area. The impact on the children could be seen during observations. The target was to improve the teaching of vocabulary across the School. Reading outcomes had been weaker than writing and maths and whilst a number of pupils had good vocabulary a significant number did not. Work was being conducted around all areas to do with vocabulary. A real impact had been seen and good outcomes were predicted this year. [In response to a query from Tanya Ahmed, the Headteacher explained that they were focusing on key words, introducing them over time and using dual coding.](#) They discussed how words could be used in different contexts and their meanings and definitions. The teachers would clarify what the expected use works within the children's writing was and help them to understand how to use the new vocabulary. [Tanya Ahmed asked if a special type of vocabulary was being taught.](#) The Headteacher explained pupils were learning vocabulary needed for specific lessons and that linked to core texts. The plan was to give the children a wealth of vocabulary early on to help them with their KS2 SATS.

Stephanie Morton explained that teachers looked at words within words and there was a word of the week, particularly in Year 6. Dual coding was mirrored in the displays around the School and every lesson had a specific vocabulary element. Recaps were in place to embed learning. [Tanya Ahmed considered it would be useful for Governors to look at this during their visit day.](#) The Headteacher said that the Haringey Education Partnership (HEP) School Improvement Advisor had focused on this area during their visit. [Following a query from Tim Guya, the Headteacher explained that Governors would be able to speak to the English Lead about the work being conducted and review a selection of lessons across all key stages.](#) He went on to explain that in the past there had been too much focus on comprehension in lessons and it had become clear that children needed to be able to read faster, at least 90 words a minute in order to understand comprehension. Twenty minutes of each lesson was dedicated to reading aloud. [The Chair felt this was an excellent initiative and explained the work that had been done at West Grove called one million words. When a child reached the target they received a prize.](#) West Grove had also realised they had been focusing on comprehension too much. [In response to a query from Tim Guha, the Headteacher stated that](#) they did measure areas around reading and looked at planning too. Expectations in lessons were now clear;

- (b) the use of technology was being embedded to enable children to present their work in different ways. A focus was to ensure consistency across classes. The Tech Lead was working with staff around ways in which work could be presented and a STEM week was coming up;
 - (c) a focus was on increasing opportunities for creative and hands on learning outdoors and this included creative writing. Creative writing week really helped the children and they thoroughly enjoyed it. Work was ongoing to incorporate more creative writing into lessons;
 - (d) there was a focus developing the children's aspirations and some parents had visited the School to discuss their jobs. The children had been inspired by what they had heard and learnt about;
-

- (e) the Headteacher explained that they wanted to work towards further mainstream integration for Additional Resource Provision (ARP) pupils when they were ready. However, it was recognised that different provision would be needed for some children whilst others were able to spend some time in mainstream,. [Tim Guha asked if they would revisit this priority when they knew more about the children.](#) The Headteacher said that they did need to consider them joining mainstream but they also had to be realistic about their needs. [Tanya Ahmed pointed out that every case was so specific to it was not necessarily a good idea to have a general target and that something could be added to the point in the SDP to reflect this.](#) [The Chair added that she had visited the School today and seen the range of needs.](#) The Headteacher said he recognised the need to consider what parents wanted and the places available in terms of specialist provision. SEND was underfunded but the staffing in the ARP was good and the children made positive progress. [Tanya Ahmed asked if there were likely to be more SEND children joining the School and if so why.](#) The Headteacher considered there would be and explained that reception and nursery needs were increasing. There were now around 40 children with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs) in the School. The Headteacher said Covid was still affecting needs. It was possible that concerns had been missed at two year checks due to the way these were conducted on line during the pandemic and also a lack of parental support could be a factor. Governors were assured the issues were not just at this School and were widespread. There was a reduction of resources across the LA. Governors were reminded that there were no longer plans to open a second ARP but the Headteacher said they were keen to open a nurture group. If they had decided to open a second ARP the vast majority of places would be for children who did not attend Highfield and there were so many needs already within the School;
- (f) work was ongoing to ensure phonics was being taught effectively as per the Little Wandle Scheme and actions were in place around this to ensure teachers used the system properly.

6. PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT_

RECEIVED data for ARE and above and the Intervention Map, copies of which are included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that

- (a) the Headteacher guided Governors through the data and explained that the Autumn data usually showed a drop off due to the time the children had been on holiday during the Summer. Summer 2 2023-Summer 2 2024 would give a more accurate picture of how the children were doing;
- (b) the Headteacher was pleased to inform Governors that the overall trend showed a reduction in the gaps between pupil premium (PP) and non PP. There were still some significant gaps in some areas and support was being put in place and relevant children were being targeted. [Following a query from Tanya Ahmed,](#) the Headteacher explained that the green figures were non PP and the yellow ones were PP. He added that some of the gaps were still due to Covid. [In response to a question from Tim Guha about thresholds , the Headteacher explained that](#) the data was produced at different levels and key questions were asked. A change of
-

curriculum could affect the data, ie when a child moved from reception to KS1 and the Headteacher assured Governors that the data did not reflect inconsistent first quality teaching;

- (c) [the Chair asked about mobility at the School and the Headteacher said they had about the national average.](#) There was not much movement during the year and the School was full. Mobility was mainly seen at the end of the year when children moved from Years 2-3. This could be due to parents moving back to their country of origin or out of London;
- (d) Governors reviewed the intervention map. Impacts of interventions were assessed and progress reviewed;
- (e) the Headteacher said that the plans for the 2024 tests would be the same as in previous years. However, the School had been chosen by a research group and as a result of this they had been asked that Year 2 sit a SPAG test despite the fact that Year 2 SATS no longer took place;

7. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

RECEIVED SIA Visit reports, copies of which are included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that the LA and HEP SIAs had visited the School. The reports had been very positive. Discussion had been held about any forthcoming Ofsted visit and the fact that as the School had been graded as Outstanding they would have a minimum of four years before another inspection would take place. HEP had noted that work at the School was around first quality teaching and they had looked at What went well (WWW) and Even Better if (EBI). Following the observations the Headteacher had said that they did not have the finances to conduct 1:1 for PP children.

8. PUPIL PREMIUM FUNDING

RECEIVED the PP 3 Year Strategy, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

NOTED that this had been agreed last term. The Headteacher said they were on track to reduce the gaps and the data would be reviewed again in the Autumn term. The document had been uploaded to the website.

9. POLICY REVIEW

NOTED there were no policies to review.

10. STAFFING

RECEIVED various documentation linked to Staffing, copies of which are included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED

(a) Staffing structure

There were no changes but next year this might not be the case due to financial pressures and an adjustment in roles was a possibility. [Following a query from the Chair, it was established that backfilling roles was already taking place.](#)

(b) Annual cycle of Performance Management

Mid-point reviews would be taking place next week. Support would be given where necessary.

(c) Continuing professional development

Governors reviewed the CPD log. [Tim Guha asked if all staff were required to undertake CPD throughout the year.](#) It was explained that staff were asked to undertake external CDP linked to a school priority or an individual need and not all staff would necessarily need to do this but weekly CPD from the School did take place. Internal training was offered and a coaching model was in place. The Headteacher and Stephanie Morton explained it could be a challenge to get teachers out of class. A specific teacher might be asked to undertake some CPD and cascade it down to other staff. [Following a question from Tanya Ahmed, it was explained that practice around providing training from one staff member to others was part of the monitoring process.](#) If specific training on a specific subject was required a staff meeting was held to share good practice. Stephanie Morton added that all teachers were in professional peer relationships. They observed each other and gave feedback around WWW and EBI. The SLT quality assured the peer groups whilst wanting staff to be critical friends as well.

(d) Staff absence

Absence figure were not dissimilar to this time last year. Currently attendance was 96% compared to 94.2% last year. Prior to this attendance was badly affected by Covid. This year 364 days had been lost compared to 440 last year for all staff. The Headteacher had noted that a higher number of staff were having time off whilst overall absence days were less. He said there was a need to understand why so many staff were having absences. [The Chair asked if 364 days was a high number.](#) The Headteacher said that there were no national figures to compare with. [The Chair was concerned about absences linked to anxiety and depression and the Headteacher explained these were not school related.](#) Governors discussed the fact that 70% of staff were recorded as having a least one absence this year and this figure was up from 18%. It was concluded that the change in MIS systems and the way absence was now recorded could account for this and the Headteacher commented that he did not feel like there was so much absence in the School.

RESOLVED that the SBM be asked to clarify the absence data and confirm if the figures were due to a change in MIS.

ACTION: HEADTEACHER

11. **GOVERNOR TRAINING**

NOTED that all training sessions were listed in the Governor Training Brochure 2023-24, available on Governor Hub. The School did not buy into the LA Training but used it on a pay as you go basis. Some free training was available from HEP and could also be accessed on line.

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

<https://traded.enfield.gov.uk/professionallearning>.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

NOTED Information Sharing – There is a weekly Round Up of news items on the Hub. A lot of offers and useful information from LBE is placed on there. To sign up to The Hub newsletter, please email sts@enfield.gov.uk
