

THE BEECHES PRIMARY SCHOOL

MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Wednesday 28th September 2016 at 6:15pm

MINUTES

Present: Chris Buckler (Chair), Tim Smith (Headteacher), Emma Chester, Charlotte Johnson, Bill Peasley, Hilary Faulkner

In Attendance: Will Fisk (Deputy Headteacher), Suzanne Arnold (Clerk)

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present. There were no apologies for absence.

2 Declaration of Interest

None declared.

3 Appoint Chair of the Curriculum Committee

Chris Buckler was appointed as Chair of the Curriculum Committee.

4 Review of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Curriculum Committee had been previously circulated for review. The committee approved the Terms of Reference, for ratification by the Full Governing Body, and would recommend to the Full Governing Body that the committee changed its name to the "Curriculum and Standards Committee."

5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th April 2016 were agreed as an accurate record and were signed as such by the Chair.

6 Matters Arising

6.1 Reading Cafes

It was confirmed that dates for Reading Cafes for the summer term had been circulated to governors. Governors were encouraged to access the school calendar on the website for the dates of future sessions. Will Fisk would ensure that dates were published, once current technical issues with the website were resolved.

Action: Will Fisk to arrange for dates for Reading Cafes to be published on the school website.

Governors were advised that The Beeches would be working with other schools who were implementing Reading Cafes, to share good practice.

Governors asked how the impact of the cafes was monitored. The Headteacher advised that this was through parental questionnaires, and through monitoring attendance of parents at the events. The final impact would be seen in improvements in attainment and progress in reading, as the Reading Cafes were one of a range of strategies to improve outcomes for reading at the school.

6.2 Reading Buddies

It was confirmed that governor Hilary Faulkner had worked with the school to arrange a reading buddy programme involving students from Thomas Deacon Academy. The initiative would be repeated this year.

The Headteacher advised that students from The Kings School were also volunteering at The Beeches, as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award.

Governors asked how the impact of the reading buddy scheme was measured. The Headteacher advised that this was through tracking the progress in reading of those children who worked with a reading buddy. Sometimes a child with a reading buddy would make average progress in reading, but this could still be an improvement on their previous rate of progress. Deputy Headteacher Will Fisk added that children who worked with a reading buddy could be set up as a separate group on Target Tracker, and a report generated for this specific group.

It was recognized that where children's progress in reading accelerated, this could be due to a variety of factors and interventions, of which reading buddies was one.

Governors asked whether reading buddies were made aware of relevant policies in school, and whether they received safeguarding training. The Headteacher advised that all volunteers in school received safeguarding training and it was agreed that governor Bill Peasley would check the relevant documentation when he next carried out a safeguarding monitoring visit.

Governors suggested that buddy readers should also be supported with training in current reading strategies and receive an update on how phonics was being taught in the classroom, as this would increase their impact upon attainment and progress in reading; the literacy leader would be asked to take this forward by arranging an information/training session.

Actions:

Bill Peasley to monitor safeguarding training for reading buddies and other volunteers in school

Will Fisk to arrange for literacy leader to deliver information session for buddy readers

6.3 Finland Trip

Governors asked for a report on the impact of the staff trip to Finland. The Headteacher advised that it was currently too early to assess the full impact of the strategies which staff were implementing as an outcome of the trip, but that impact would be reported during the year. It was confirmed that several of the actions in the school's development plan for STEM were based on learning from the trip. Governors emphasised the importance of demonstrating value for money from the trip.

6.4 Extra-Curricular Clubs

Governors asked whether take up of extra-curricular clubs had reduced as a result of the school now implementing a charge in some cases. The Headteacher advised that there had been an initial reduction in take-up, but that this had later rallied for the most part. However, the number of clubs had reduced, due to reduced manpower. It was hoped that new clubs would be introduced during the course of the year.

6.5 Reading Displays

A tour of reading displays would take place before the School Development Plan meeting, to be held on 31st October (see item 11)

6.6 Pupil Attitude to Reading

Deputy Headteacher Will Fisk confirmed that a survey would be carried out of pupil attitudes towards reading, based on the Ofsted pupil questionnaire. The Chair suggested that governors may wish to assist with this.

Action: Will Fisk to arrange for survey of pupil attitudes to reading; governors to provide practical support where possible

7 Pupil Progress and Attainment Report

7.1 The Pupil Progress and Attainment Report for 2015-16 had been previously circulated. A revised version was issued at the meeting. Acting on advice from recent governor training, the Deputy Headteacher had sub-divided the "any other white" ethnicity grouping, and had included data for the numbers of children achieving over 90 on the scaled score (although these children had not met the expectation of a scaled score of 100, they would have achieved the expected standard had they sat the test the previous year, as the expectation level had increased this year).

For this year, a score of 90 or above was considered as "working towards", 100 as meeting the expected standard, and a score of 110 as achieving "greater depth".

- 7.2 **Governors asked how the school was ensuring a greater level of accuracy in its predictions for maths this year.** The Deputy Headteacher advised that predictions were expected to be more accurate this year as last year's data and tests were available as a model.
- 7.3 **Governors asked how the school knew that its teaching had been appropriate to the curriculum last year** and were advised that the school had worked closely to the interim statements of attainment which had been issued by the Department for Education (DfE).
- 7.4 **Governors asked what quality assurance processes were in place for ensuring an improvement in outcomes for 2017.** The Headteacher advised that there was an emphasis this year upon planning, particularly for reading, and that planning would be monitored by leaders as part of the regular lesson observations. Observations would be carried out by the Senior Leadership Team for each year group for a morning on at least a termly basis, with a focus on the provision for children who had been flagged as vulnerable in achieving the required level of progress. Observations would also include book scrutinies, and comparisons with data for the year group for the previous year.

Monitoring on a weekly basis was carried out by team leaders, with the focus for this identified by the Senior Leadership Team as an outcome of their formal termly observation.

Governors asked whether this formal scheduled observation programme was supplemented by informal drop-ins, from which leaders could react to findings. The Headteacher confirmed that leaders dropped in to lessons frequently, including to provide support. Teachers were challenged in any cases where they were failing to implement strategies which had been introduced during staff CPD.

- 7.5 Governors discussed the attainment outcomes for Key Stage 2. The combined attainment measure had been of 28% of children achieving the expected standard in all of reading, writing and maths. Outcomes for writing and maths had been much higher than for reading.
- 7.6 Progress data was discussed; it was noted that good and exceptional progress had been made by most groups of learners in writing and in maths, based on children's prior attainment at Key Stage 1. Governors discussed areas where progress was RAG rated as red, which was as follows:
- Reading: boys, Pakistani boys, Roma
 - Writing: boys
 - Maths: Reception starters, Pakistani (both boys and girls).

Exceptional progress was noted for the Roma group, in both writing and maths.

- 7.7 The Headteacher referred to Fischer Family Trust (FFT) data which had extrapolated data for 2016 with data for previous years; this had suggested that attainment outcomes for maths had improved this year, although attainment in reading had declined. Progress had increased significantly on the previous year.
- 7.8 Governors discussed data showing prior attainment of the Year 6 group for the end of Year 2, and the percentage which had converted to a scaled score of 100+, 97+, 90+ and 110+. The data was RAG rated to show where the school's outcomes were meeting or exceeding national figures, based on data from Target Tracker schools nationally.
- 7.9 RAG rated data for attainment and progress of other year groups was presented and discussed. Comparisons had been made with national figures for Target Tracker schools, and RAG rated as red where performance was lower than these national figures.

Governors asked about target setting for this year's Year 5 and were advised that the current prediction was for 48% to achieve the expected standard in reading. Performance was RAG rated as red for most areas for this year group.

Governors noted that a proportion of the Year 5 group had not achieved the B (Beginning) standard; the Deputy Headteacher clarified that these children were still working to the previous year's standards and the group included children with SEND. **Governors asked for data for the SEND group to be included in future data reports.**

Action: Will Fisk to include data for SEND group in year group data reports

- 7.10 Governors discussed the data presented for Year 4. It was emphasised that this data was provisional, as teacher assessments were currently being moderated by leaders. Finalised data for both Year 4 and Year 1 would be forwarded to governors in due course.

Action: Will Fisk to forward finalised data for Year 4 and Year 1.

Governors noted that the outcome data for Year 4 was low, and thus did not fully correlate with the judgement of the quality of teaching and learning, which was assessed as Good with elements of Outstanding. The Deputy Headteacher confirmed that this anomaly had led to the decision to carry out a moderation of the assessments.

Governors asked how teacher judgements were moderated and were advised that consultation took place with the Headteacher and with other leaders, as well as with other schools. The school was aware of a training need for staff in some cases, for assessing under the new standard.

- 7.11 Governors asked whether the school held pupil progress meetings and were advised that these meetings were held prior to the formal lesson observation process. Leaders would thus discuss the data with teachers, and then see how this was demonstrated in the classroom. A log was kept of all pupil progress meetings. Governors asked whether the school tracked the impact of any interventions which were implemented as an outcome of pupil progress meetings and were advised that intervention children were the specific focus of the lesson observations; these children could also be set up as separate group on Target Tracker.
- 7.12 Governors emphasised that the school needed to reduce the number of children RAG rated as red in each year group. The Headteacher advised that the school's progress indicators continued to improve, and that the school's target was to be included in the top 20% of schools for progress for the combined indicator for 2017, based on Fischer Family Trust data.
- 7.13 Governors discussed the data for Year 1, noting that this year group's data for GLD (good level of development) when they had ended the Reception year had been low. The Headteacher advised that the usual pattern was for an acceleration of progress in Year 2.
- 7.14 The Headteacher advised that this year (2016-17) baseline data on entry for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) was being collected using a scheme from the University of Durham. This had identified low starting points. A further test would be carried out using the same scheme when the children entered Year 1, thus providing an indicator of progress. The EYFS leader would be asked to attend the next meeting of the committee to report on the baseline tests.

Action: Headteacher to invite EYFS leader to deliver presentation to next meeting, on 12th January.

- 7.15 Governors discussed outcomes for EYFS for 2016, which had been good, although below the national figure. It was confirmed that assessments had been moderated. Speaking had been identified as an area of relative weakness, and boys had performed less well than girls.
- 7.16 Governors discussed the data for Year 1 Phonics which showed that 69% of all children had achieved the standard, and 79% of the school's core group. It was emphasised that the school had worked very hard to achieve these results. For retakes in Year 2, the school had achieved close to its target for the "all children" group, and had exceeded the target for the core group.

Governors noted that some children in Years 3 and 4 were shown at a low phase for phonics; Assistant Headteacher Emma Chester advised that some of these children were new arrivals to the UK, and some had failed the test in Year 2.

- 7.17 A summary of areas for development for each year group was circulated, for reading and for maths. Governors noted that for Year 6 maths, the reception starters group was one of the areas of concern. Attainment of Roma children in reading was a concern in nearly all year groups; the Headteacher noted that this correlated with the school's attendance data, as the Roma group presented with the highest figures for persistent absenteeism.

- 7.18 **Governors asked why the pupil premium group continued to be flagged up as an area for development, and whether this meant that interventions for this year group had failed. Was the school's use of its pupil premium funding not succeeding in diminishing differences?** The Headteacher agreed that interventions would be reviewed where the data indicated that they had not been wholly successful, and that data would also be analysed on the basis that children were included in a number of different learner groups (venn diagram data).

Governors recognised that the pupil premium group was not flagged as a development area in all year groups, and suggested that the school could look at whether it was doing anything differently in year groups where pupil premium children were performing well.

Governors asked for the updated pupil premium report to be published on the school website, based on the data for 2016-17.

Action: Headteacher to arrange for publication on website of pupil premium report for 2016-17

- 7.19 The Deputy Headteacher advised that The Beeches had been identified by the local authority as a target school for reading, and as such would be accessing various interventions.

The school had analysed the impact of the Power of Reading programme and had established that impact had varied between different classes. In response to governor questions, the Deputy Headteacher advised that the programme would continue in school as it was valuable for providing children with motivation to read; however, other programmes were also to be implemented, particularly to focus on higher order reading comprehension questions, and the school would be working with Fulbridge School to take this forward.

Governors asked whether the school had undertaken a question level analysis of the Key Stage 2 reading paper. The Deputy Headteacher confirmed that this had taken place, and that the main issue raised had been vocabulary; schemes were therefore to be implemented to address this.

- 7.20 Governors concluded that the school's leaders demonstrated a good knowledge of the school's performance data, and were using this to focus on weaknesses, and to set priorities for the future.

Deputy Headteacher Will Fisk and Assistant Headteacher Emma Chester were thanked for their work.

8 English Language Assessment

Training material from recent training delivered by the EAL Academy would be circulated to governors by e-mail. The Headteacher advised that the school's EAL (English as an additional language) lead had attended the training, which focused on a new requirement to provide data in the school census about languages spoken by families and pupils' proficiency in English. The census also required an entry for countries of birth; families at the school had been asked to provide this information.

Teachers had been asked to assess pupils' proficiency in the English language, for completion of the census information by administrative staff. The school's EAL lead would be moderating the teacher assessments.

9 Policy Reviews

- 9.1 The Policy for Managing Difficult and Violent Visitors had been previously circulated, and was approved.

- 9.2 The Behaviour Policy had been circulated and was approved. It was suggested that section 2 of the policy could be used as the basis of the Governing Body Behaviour Principles Written Statement. Chris Buckler and Bill Peasley would also look at examples of Behaviour Principles statements from other schools.

Action: Chris Buckler and Bill Peasley to arrange for publication of Governing Body Behaviour Principles Written Statement (as per section 8.3 (9) of the Governance Handbook and section 88 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

10 Any Other Business

The committee noted the Science Report for 2015-16, and the Cross Curricular Maths Report, copies of which had been circulated. It was noted that Science was amongst the school's development priorities for

the coming year.

11 Dates of Next Meetings

- School Development Plan Meeting: Monday 31st October at 2:30pm (book walk to take place at 1:30pm)
- Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting: Thursday 12th January at 6:15pm.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8:10pm.