

Staffing and Curriculum Committee Meeting
Meeting held on Tuesday 12th March 2024
at 6pm at the Sherwood Hill Campus



Fran Boto (FB)	Co-opted Governor (Chair)	Present
Penelope Fox (PF)	Parent Governor	Present
David Murden (DM)	Ex-Officio Governor / Headteacher	Present
Harriet Nicholson (HN)	Staff Governor	Present
Beth Brooks (BB)	Deputy Headteacher	Present
Anna Richardson (AR)	Wellbeing; Trans-disciplinary Specialist	Present
Rosemary Viggiani (RV)	Clerk	Present

	Item	Action
1.	<p>Welcome; Apologies for absence and quorum (3) All were present. FB opened the meeting 6:05pm and welcomed all to the meeting.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest regarding items on the agenda.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th November 2023 DECISION: The minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2023 were approved as a true and complete record of the meeting.</p> <p>Matters arising: The actions are recorded and updated in the table at the end of these minutes.</p>	
3.	<p>Headteacher's Report <i>(report circulated prior to the meeting)</i> The Head was thanked for his report which was circulated before the meeting. The report was taken as read and taken as a springboard for comments and questions.</p> <p>Staffing capacity DM gave the background to the current staffing position noting that the school has been growing school for several years and it has been difficult to grow the staffing in tandem with this. However, the situation regarding recruitment is improving and the school is now getting close to the number of staff needed both in terms of teachers, TA's and support staff. The position is now becoming more stable and this is showing through in the teaching and learning. Some gaps remain, e.g. regarding mid-day supervisors at the Hill; some gaps remain at the Park including some key teaching positions which has had a significant impact on one class in particular.</p> <p>These staffing issues also affect the non-operational leadership giving the need for significant levels of troubleshooting. The situation ebb and flows but the school's success is based on the culture and ethos.</p> <p>The capacity has also been dictated by the financial position which is now becoming clearer. The People Committee at the LA have now taken the decision to wipe out the school's cumulative and in-year deficit; the school is still awaiting the letter but this was unanimously agreed at the People Committee. Until this letter is received the decisions are still a bit limited but the Head wishes to progress with recruitment and hopes that will be possible in the near future.</p> <p>AR noted that the school is also seeing the positive impact of the additional Inset Days. The additional time available for teaching teams to meet on Tuesdays is much appreciated, allowing them to focus on key areas and class teams. Although it was also noted that key agency staff do not attend the Inset Days. Permanent staff will be essential in future.</p>	

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<p>It was noted that the Inset Day approach is the best from the parents view point allowing them to use the day for family time and places are quieter during term time. There had been positive feedback from parents who appreciated the consultation.</p> <p><i>Governors asked about the effect on staff? Were they feeling less pressured and more empowered?</i></p> <p>HN responded that, as staff governor, she was not able to speak for others but she has found the additional class time on Tuesday refreshing.</p> <p>AR noted that Ciara in HR will be undertaking a staff audit and that will include questions around the impact on CPD and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Head noted that, from his time earlier in his career as a classroom teacher, any time to speak to the team at the end of the day is very valuable. All seem to be genuinely recognising the value of working together and finding time and space for teams to talk.</p> <p>Governors asked if the school would be reviewing the impact of the INSET days to check on benefits compared with the other previously proposed approaches/</p> <p>The school confirmed that they would be allowing it time to bed in then presenting a full review this time next year. It is felt that it needs a full year of operation to be able to fairly review the impact. However, the review will be more about how to use the time as effectively as possible and would not be revisiting the decision regarding the alternative Friday afternoon option.</p> <p>Governors thanked the Head for his update.</p>	
<p><u>Wellbeing update for all staff including the Headteacher</u></p>	
<p>It was noted that staffing capacity has the biggest impact. Being able to fill the key support staff to support management will have a significant impact on wellbeing.</p>	
<p><u>Equality and Diversity</u> (including consideration of the DfE draft non statutory guidance on Gender Questioning Children and note any feedback provided - consultation period closed today)</p>	
<p>Governors asked if the school had contributed to the consultation?</p>	
<p>The Head confirmed that he had not responded on behalf of the school.</p>	
<p>As regards gender questioning it was noted that it is important to involve children. The school's approach is to allow everyone to be who they are – whether that is not masking stimming or their gender preference etc. One member of staff recently asked if they could announce that they are changing pronouns and identifying as Trans – this was a moment celebrated by them with their colleagues. The school advocate, and expect, this attitude.</p>	
<p><u>Attendance</u> (to consider new DfE Guidance "Working together to improve school attendance")</p>	
<p>The Head confirmed that, with regards to the new DfE Guidance, the school are more than fulfilling the stated expectations as set out in the Guidance.</p>	
<p>Whilst 90% is a helpful marker, many children are below that given the challenges in their lives and with their health. The trans-disciplinary working is really valuable in this context with meetings and supporting the family. All of our classes do these things naturally.</p>	
<p>It was noted that Board oversight of attendance is also key.</p>	
<p>Where the school slips below the markers they rely on the safeguarding tracker and the Safeguarding Link governor has insight into the school's techniques. In this regard, attendance is secure but it was agreed that it would be helpful to make attendance a standard item on future committee meetings.</p>	
<p>ACTION: Include Attendance as a standing item on future S&C Committee Agendas.</p>	34
<p><u>Ofsted Preparation</u> and consideration of the School Inspection Handbook</p>	
<p>The Head noted that the school's main focus has been around assessment – in particular articulating our assessment process. It is not new but we appreciate that we tend to normalise excellence – particularly with regards to our trans-disciplinary approach.</p>	

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	<p>We have found it hard to find other schools as advanced as us in terms of the integration of this approach in our day-to-day work. We want to be able to effectively showcase the journey we have been on and need to recognise and articulate how our approach has changed our pupils and their families.</p> <p><u>Pupil Performance including use of the National Tutoring Programme</u></p> <p>Pupil performance was discussed and questioned. It was noted that it would be helpful to include more on the impact of how PP funding is used – e.g. to have examples of its use for music / the orchestra.</p> <p>ACTION: Review the format of the Headteacher’s report with regards to Pupil Performance and the use of PP funding e.g. with regards to its use for music and the orchestra.</p> <p>It was noted that PP students are performing on a par with, or above, other students. The school are still working to ensure that all eligible parents are accessing PP funding. <i>Governors commented on the very robust PLPs noting the analysis and apparent fluctuations.</i></p> <p>The Head noted that, at the current time, all the analysis relates to the Hill – the Park are doing component analysis but the report at the mid-year stage will provide more meaningful data. It will not be tracked each term but the school will know whether or not they are on track due to the trans-disciplinary approach.</p> <p><i>Governors asked about the staffing – noting that some lunch time staff are missing.</i> The Head confirmed that the school are recruiting lunch time supervisors and also recruiting an HR Manager. Mid-day supervisors and teachers are needed as well as managers in several areas.</p> <p><i>Governors were pleased to note the positive outcome from the EYFS tribunal which has resulted in a good relationship with the family.</i></p> <p>It was further noted that Sherwood Park Schools are restraint free schools. Also that the school are not using the tutor programme.</p>	<p>35</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Standing Updates: Safeguarding and GDPR</p> <p><u>Matters arising for Governors’ information</u></p> <p><u>Update re reporting from Sleuth and MyConcern</u></p> <p><u>Update on Safeguarding from the School</u></p> <p><u>Safeguarding audit issued by LSCP and to monitor progress against actions.</u></p> <p><u>Implications of the updated “Working Together to Safeguard Children” guidance</u></p> <p><u>Safeguarding Governor report</u></p> <p>The Head gave a brief update; the Safeguarding Link Governor had circulated a report before the meeting and reiterated that, overall, she is very impressed with the school’s approach to Safeguarding. The regular meeting held by AR is central to the school’s robust approach. Whilst long, it is very thorough and feeds into the learning tracker</p> <p>The school are constantly reviewing all pupils who are looked at on an individual basis. AR confirmed that staff are amazing at highlighting any risks as they know the children well. The Head confirmed that this had been a strong development area since the last Ofsted. AR noted two Freedom of Information (Fol) and ICO requests relating to the use of quiet rooms and whether the school lock children in rooms.</p> <p>It had been good to be able to respond positively and celebrate how we are working. Transparency is key.</p> <p>AR updated the Governors with regards to the SCR noting that significant work has been put into updating it – and this is mostly about removing staff who have left rather than indicating any deficit in the record for staff currently with the school.</p>	

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	<p>The key risks were noted as lying mostly with the LA and relate to holding children in locality teams with social workers and not in disability teams. Social workers do not have enough understanding of the risks to families and children.</p> <p>The other risk is the loss of Joanne McLaughlin the Educational Psychologist from CAMHS; she has not been replaced and her work is being moved into the wider SW London team. Requests are being dealt with much slower and they no longer have the key contacts.</p> <p>Examples of the problems that this can give rise to were discussed without identifying any individual children.</p>	
5	<p>Policies for review and recommendation to FGB in December 2022</p> <p>It was noted that the following Reports / Policies are due for review but will be presented straight to FGB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Gender Pay Gap Report (205 staff)</u> - <u>Equality Information and Objectives (PSED Report)</u> - <u>Careers Education and Guidance (incl Provider Access and Work Experience)</u> - <u>Educational Visits Policy & Emergency Outings Guidelines</u> - <u>Induction and Probation Policy</u> - <u>Staff Grievance Policy</u> <p><u>SEND Policy</u></p> <p>It was noted that the SEND Policy had been approved by the Board in December.</p>	
6	<p>Presentation: Assessment Update and Overview</p> <p>The Headteacher reiterated that Assessment is a real focus for us and has been for several years. This has been built on the feedback from the short Ofsted inspection in November 2018 where the recommendations were that the school should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the new curriculum pathways are fully embedded</i> - <i>new assessment approaches are developed alongside the curriculum pathways, in order to fully capture the progress pupils make.</i> <p>Both of these areas have been developed and the biggest development covers both through our trans-disciplinary working. Over the past three to five years these these been developed across the whole of the school and the whole curriculum. There has been a significant change in the robustness of the assessment.</p> <p>All schools like ours use some form of independent learning plan feeding into the EHCP, outcomes and destinations. We have followed the evidence over the past 20 years and our pupils are pedagogically vulnerable; highly complex with learning needs that vary for each child. We cannot have one curriculum.</p> <p>This has been a huge piece of work that has been recognised; the trans-disciplinary ways of working have impacted on the curriculum as well as the assessment and delivery.</p> <p>All schools have PLPs and assessment with targets subjectively set by the teacher. The concern is with that subjectivity – by just one person setting the targets and being answerable to themselves. What we have brought in with our trans-disciplinary approach has provided a 360° view of the student’s needs, progress and outcomes. The team identify the most appropriate outcomes – it is highly scrutinised and reviewed and reported on by the trans-disciplinary team with other team members proof reading / scrutinising.</p> <p>This approach is unique to this school and a real strength. You can see the benefits in the student outcomes and wellbeing. Even more exciting is that it captures the whole range of skills and knowledge. The PLP drives to the long term learning outcomes and is painfully robust with transition reviews at the end of each key stage.</p> <p>Comments from parents have suggested that this is the first time these objectives and reviews describe their child.</p>	

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<p>The question from Ofsted was with regards to assessment around the curriculum; we use the curriculum to focus on the PLP; it is broad and brings in the full range of learning opportunities.</p> <p><i>Governors asked how the Head ensures deliver on a daily basis - delivering to the individual PLPs for the children in the class?</i></p> <p>The Head noted that all our children have significant needs in their ECHP. No children have same target but all work within the four realms: eg “the world around me.”</p> <p>The PLP targets are set across the breadth of the curriculum and how aware each child is of their own targets is dependent upon their age and level of their development.</p> <p>The Head described how the Equals Curriculum is implemented and how the school places each child on a pathway, grouped according to the level at which they are functioning.</p> <p>Each lesson will have a common theme and the individual child’s PLP will be used to determine how that theme is applied in order that their individual needs can be met across a range of lesson scenarios.</p> <p>Lesson observations will look at the key things that are a universal offer re differentiation; looking at how well PLPs are embedded. There are trans-disciplinary lesson observations. And teachers better work with the wider team as a result of our approach.</p> <p>Our ethos is that “learning happens everywhere” so children are not constrained to learning in the classroom. The TA and STA are essential in supporting the teacher and it is important for the teacher to be able to communicate how they can deliver to the outcomes.</p> <p>HN confirmed the importance of everyone being on the same page – each member of staff with their one student delivering on a 1:1 basis; everyone needs the co-ordination, training and understanding of what we are delivering.</p> <p>The Head confirmed that this requires all TAs and STAs to be highly skilled and is the reason why the school have not constrained themselves to the normal TA / STA pay grade boundaries. The Finance committee have struggled to understand why this is but our teaching is very hands on and on a 1:1 basis.</p> <p>AR reiterated that it is important for everyone to feel safe and secure and able to communicate in different / effective ways. When a child is well regulated it is possible for them to demonstrate their learning and the team can capture evidence against targets. But that need lots of people who can adapt in the moment.</p> <p>The Head noted that PLP achievement is increasing and can be seen in the percentage achievement. The quality of attainment is increasing within the years. Because of their wellbeing and the skills of the TA’s we are peeling back the learning barriers to achieve a higher level of learning. Targets being set higher on the basis of these learning barriers being stripped back.</p> <p>The PLPs are robust, they are checked by the trans-disciplinary team at transition points and the achievement rates are high and destinations solid.</p> <p>Ratings may be done by our NHS and SaLT colleagues. With regards to dysphagia, for example, we are dealing with unprecedented risk – an increasing number of children with greater needs. But we can track their journey across key stages. We can see the outcomes against the plan but not how their need for support has reduced. Needs are not static depending upon their health and outside lives. It is difficult for the Local Authority (LA) to keep up with an urgent need for support to reduce risks and manage safely. Our aim is to improve the provision and reduce risk.</p> <p>We have now produced a tracker for all students at the Hill and many at the Park. We manage a range of risks – medical, feeding, nursing, positioning and seating, manual handling etc. The manual handling risk is higher at the Park.</p> <p>The Staff risk addresses whether we have got the right staff in place – it is not about</p>	

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<p>individual staff but whether have we got enough people trained to meet day to day needs in the classroom and wider community.</p> <p>The Head described the various risks.</p> <p>It is encouraging that the LA have agreed to use our way of assessing the level of support which is then driving / matched to the funding.</p> <p><i>Is this done on a termly basis?</i></p> <p>Yes; we have developed a buffer to meet needs in house on a short term basis. It has been a huge piece of work and has needed a significant increase in the budget – most going on staff in classrooms and their wellbeing.</p> <p>Without these factors being in place there is still an incentive to take less complex children but we have demonstrated that our transparency has been key to our success in bringing the money in. Only with this approach and levels of support can we create the environment required for some children to make real progress and be able to be in the same room as other children.</p> <p>DM described the different trackers and how it is expected that changes in the level of achievement will be evident across a key stage, not by term.</p> <p>Annual evidence is used to be able to place children in the appropriate class for the following year.</p> <p>The Head explained the importance of toilet training alongside other independence skills and thus the importance of the work of the continence team. Their work can help a child to move on to another setting where the curriculum better meets their needs.</p> <p><i>Governors asked who developed the manual?</i></p> <p>All wider leaders have been heavily involved; AR started the work and the leadership team have taken it on board.</p> <p>It was noted that this process has driven really collaborative discussions. The descriptors have taken a long time to develop.</p> <p>The aim is that, once a year's worth of data is available it can be presented in a report to the parents as part of the annual review. There may also be a link with ongoing funding and provision as the school will be able to evidence how they can deliver for the child.</p> <p>Governors thanked the school for their presentation.</p>	
<p>6. Governor Visits and Training</p> <p>FB had circulated a Safeguarding Link Governor report prior to the meeting; this was discussed under Item 4 above. AR noted that Governors are always welcome to visit.</p>	
<p>10. Confidential items</p> <p>Governors agreed that there were no confidential items.</p>	
<p>11. Any other business / Dates of future meetings</p> <p>There was no other business.</p> <p><u>Forthcoming Meetings:</u></p> <p>FGB: 26th March 2024; 9th July 2024</p> <p>Strategy Day 21st May 2024</p> <p>Staffing and Curriculum: 18th June 2024</p> <p>Strategy Day: 21st June 2023</p>	
<p>The meeting closed at 8:00pm</p>	

Signed: Francis M. Botto Print Name: FRANCIS M. BOTTO
Chair Date: 18th June 2024

Action list

Item	Action point	Who	By when	Update
Actions arising from the meeting of 14 th November 2023				
27	DM to arrange a presentation on Post 16 outcomes at FGB in December.	DM	Dec 23	For March FGB; action closed
28	DM / AR to include a list of the common acronyms on the bottom of the headteacher's report; also to ensure that it is clear which school term the data relates to.	DM/AR	Spring 24	Started but to be completed. RV to add to glossary; action remains open
29	AR to arrange an online link to allow TA to join the meeting on 7 th December. FB will attend in school. The meeting will be from 10 – 12 and TA will join for a part of the meeting at a time to be agreed according to the agenda.	AR	Dec 23	Action past and closed.
30	HN to provide some feedback to FGB in her link role relating to Pupil Premium / Disadvantaged Children.	HN	Dec 23	Statement on the agenda
31	RV to circulate information regarding Link Governor Roles and a visits template.	RV	Nov 23	Circulated to FGB on 17 th November 2023; action completed and closed.
32	DM and FB to liaise as to what link governor support is required in terms of HR / Finance and strategic leadership to manage through this period of significant growth.	DM/FB	Summer 24	To address as new governors are recruited. Action remains open
33	RV and DM to liaise with regards to the timescales for the review of the Careers Education and Guidance Policy.	RV/DM	Dec 23	Dependent upon recruitment; recommend to FGB a review date extension to the Summer Term; action remains open
Actions arising from the meeting of 12 th March 2024				
34	Include Attendance as a standing item on future S&C Committee Agendas.	RV	Summer 24	
35	Review the format of the Headteacher's report with regards to Pupil Performance and the use of PP Funding e.g. with regards to its use for music and the orchestra.	DM	Summer 24	