St James & Emmanuel Academy Trust

Didsbury CE Primary School | West Didsbury CE Primary School | St Wilfrid's CE Primary School

West Didsbury C of E Primary School
Local Governing Body Meeting
Tuesday 12th March 2019 at 4.00pm
Minutes

Present:

Paul Blackburn	Chair of WDCE GB
Felicity Bradley	PCC Governor & Parent
Paul Good	Chair (MDBE)
Julia Heatley	Staff Governor
Hannah Large	Head of School
Marie Turnbull	Parent Governor (elected)
Matt Whitehead	Executive Headteacher

Apologies:

Lisa Lijie Cui	Community Governor
Tracy Marshall	PCC Governor
Lucy Noden	PCC Governor & Parent

In attendance:

Kathy Crotty	Clerk
Jane Dunn	Assistant Headteacher

Any text in red bold italics represents Governor question (Q); challenge (C); Governor and/or clerk support (S). Black bold upright represents decisions and actions.

1. Welcome, Introductions and Opening Prayer

- The chair welcomed Governors to the meeting and Matt Whitehead led the opening prayer

2. Apologies for Absence

- Apologies were received and accepted from Lisa Cui; Tracy Marshall; and Lucy Noden.

3. *Literacy presentation from Mrs Dunn; GD across the curriculum; and a focus on the foundation subjects.*

- Jane Dunn gave a written report to Governors and boys writing has been identified as a key area to focus upon as well as GD across the curriculum. The Head of School and the Assistant Headteacher have been holding data meetings with staff and these include the monitoring of GD children and these children's predictions are monitored.

£700 has been spent on books for reluctant boy readers and library is being made more purposeful as a library.

- Jane Dunn reported on a Literacy Shed course attended which explored engaging children in writing. The leadership intend to plan an INSET day on writing

Q: Could the feedback from this course be shared across the Trust?

Yes, this will be shared.

- The vocabulary gap means children need ten new words per week and there are strategies to enable this. Children will benefit from a clear planning helped by the use of a proforma which is consistent across year groups to help them with their writing. This will be developed over the year.

S: Governors were keen to attend this INSET which will be in the new academic year. (The first INSET day will cover the new Ofsted framework)

- Children who did not pass phonics are receiving interventions. Guided reading monitoring is occurring to ensure the progress remains. Writing moderation is occurring in staff meetings. There has been a focus on the cusp children, this is children who are on the cusp of ARE (age related expectations) and the cusp of GD (greater depth).

Q: How do you ensure children with outside OT (occupational therapy) are having additional support in school?

Jane Dunn works with Emilie Smith to review fine motor skills are developed as part of interventions.

C: There are many key priorities identified in the report and data is informing the interventions. Is there any hard data to show impact?

It is too early to assess the impact of the interventions. Assessments occur each term and these do show progress, if progress was not evident the intervention would be changed. Some interventions will be evident in the results. The intervention timetable does change occasionally in response to assessment of effectiveness.

- In reading the 83% of reception children are on track to achieve / exceed. Nine children are not on track. Many are exceeding in this cohort.
- In Yr1, the data for reading predicts 75% to 85% of children will attain with 66% currently on track.
- The Yr2 data is strong, and this data has been taken from practice SATs tests. There has been an increase in the proportion of children being predicted for GD. Spring 1 data shows 75% of children are expected to attain ARE and 30% of this cohort are predicted for GD. Last year this was 9% at WDCE and national this was 36% so this is much improved. The guided reading structure has changed slightly but the staff have prioritised reading.
- In Yr3 77% of children are expected to attain ARE for reading and one class has many EAL; SEND and children who are new to the school.
- In Reception, 87% of children are on track for writing. One class had no children predicted to exceed and this has been a target, now the writing has been moderated and some children are exceeding.

Q: What do you do extra at this time of year to improve the progress in writing?

There is a focus on coding and phonics work, and increasing fluency. There is a focus on learning the shape of words and flash cards are being used. Daily reading occurs. The Head of School explained writing has been a priority and the children are more resilient for learning new things at this time of year. This is a whole team effort and the moderation process is helping. The January meeting with reception parents covered strategies to help reading.

- In Yr2 73% of children are at their ARE for writing and 23% are predicted to attain GD. Last year there were no GD at Yr2 and national standard was 26% so this school is moving towards the national average.
- The Yr3 writing data is low, 65% to 70% of children are on target and the reasons for this are being investigated further. This might be a Yr3 dip and it might be teachers are being cautious. Moderation has focused on key areas and reception teachers now know what is expected for GD in Yr2.

Governors reviewed writing samples from Yr2 children and Governors were asked to match the samples to the working towards statements; expected criteria; and the GD criteria.

Q: Do you correct all spelling?

The evidence suggests children improve spelling more from editing their own work than teachers' corrections and teachers are mindful of self-esteem issues.

- Governors discussed the writing samples reviewed and noted the content and the presentation. Governors were informed the samples were all from the same child and this shows the progress made. Governors noted this child is a cusp child and is aiming for GD and yet was 'emerging' in Yr1. This is an EAL child and the work on vocabulary is demonstrating impact. The broad and balanced curriculum is also improving vocabulary.

C: Has this child's parents helped at home or is this progress just from school?

The parents are very supportive.

S: Governors noted it was a pleasure to see this progress in writing

- The Executive Headteacher informed Governors the new Ofsted framework (when implemented) will encourage schools to spend more time on the broad and balanced curriculum and this Trust already has a wide curriculum.
- Governors were informed 55% of children enjoy reading when they leave primary school and many children do now have their own books at home. Schools are keen to nurture the love of reading and Governors acknowledged the role of the library which has benefited from donations. Many children however do not have access to books in the home and Governors discussed strategies to compensate for this.
- There is a proposal to produce a video of an adult reading with a child and talking around the text. This idea was welcomed by Governors.

C: Homework is often maths, could writing be a focus for homework?

The Head of School explained there is a different focus in the different year groups and this idea will be welcomed. Staff will look at new words which parents can introduce in advance of new topics. Governors discussed language development and the role of parents in sharing new words in different sentences.

- Governors discussed how the love of reading reduces at secondary school and children gain less words, this makes primary work so essential in developing vocabulary.

Q: World book day tokens give access to a free book but many parents do not use them. Can the school buy the books?

Action: HL to contact the independent bookshop in Chorlton to see if they will order the books for the children to use their voucher.

4. Notification of AOB and Confidential Items

- There were no items of any other business.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held 15th January 2019 and matters arising including confidential minutes

Governors formally approved the minutes of the meeting held 15th January 2019 including confidential minutes

Action: Governors asked for a breakdown of PP attainment for the autumn term
This was sent to Governors 11th March 2019. Some children are slightly below ARE and this links to SEND. Children on the cusp are expected to be attaining by the May data. The Yr2 PP children are significantly lower in writing. This is linked to SEND rather than PP. There are two PP children making phenomenal progress even though their data is low. It might take the full seven years at primary level to enable the children to reach their standard.

Q: Do you forecast where you expect children to be at the end of the year?
Yes, this was demonstrated to Governors in the colour coded charts.

Q: Do PP children automatically receive interventions?
All children receive a one-page profile which identifies interventions if needed. Funding can be used for other things where academic progress in on target, it can be used for example for music.

Q: Do parents ever ask how the money is being spent on their child?
One parent has asked the school. The PP report is on the school website and this details how the money is spent.

Q: Does every PP child know they are a PP child?
Possibly not, the UFSM (universal free school meals) complicates the issue as the forms are not required to be completed. The school is informed who is entitled to FSM

- Governors noted this was a sensitive issue. There might be a stigma attached unlike with SEND funding. The Head of School explained if a parent does ask then this information will be shared. The school can explain how the additional spending is allocated to the child for support. Parents can be asked for their views on the expenditure when the one-page profile is shared with parents.

Action: HL to share the GDPR Information Audit with Governors.
Governors agreed to carry forward this action.

Q: Governors asked about school phone numbers on school trips
Governors agreed to the purchase of three pay as you go phones for school trips.

Q: Governors asked is it acceptable under GDPR to carry parents contact details?
Yes, these phone numbers are issued as emergency contacts and would be signed in and signed out and if this was lost this would be reported as a data breach. Safeguarding is a priority over GDPR. Governors discussed the pyramid approach to cascading information and agreed the current system will suffice.

S: The clerk advised staff do not download school emails via an app on personal mobiles.

Action: MW to review the process for securing the information contained in the 'grab folders'
MW JH and HL met and discussed this. At 4pm the 'grab bags' will be locked in the office as after school clubs have their own information.

Action: MW to explore costs of lighting for WDCE playground

- The Executive Headteacher has contacted Bowkers and they raised the issue about lights impacting on neighbouring properties. Downlighting is available. The school needs to decide if this is a priority. Governors discussed the PTA being able to funding these. The school lights would switch off by 6pm or could be sensor lights.

6. Head of School Report - verbal

- There have been four new arrivals and four children have left the school.
- The forest school work has involved the planting of some mature trees. The PTA have provided £700 of trees.
- Church links were outlined and the 'lent buddy' scheme will be undertaken with the school pen pals. The NSPCC visited the school to participate in an assembly and the school raised over £1,000 for the charity.
- CPD was outlined and there is a Trust wide group looking at mental health and well-being for staff and children. The school has experienced some staff absence this winter and staff are looking at initiatives which value staff. The target tracker assessment system requires some training and the staff are keen for this to be operational.

Q: When will this target tracker be used?

St. Wilfrids are using this already. DCE will attend the training at WDCE to review if they are going to implement this. It has been trialled with new teachers?

Q: What were the staff views from the initial trial?

Five people were chosen to trial this programme reflecting a range of opinions to see if this system is user-friendly. The feedback is positive and staff are keen to use this system.

- Erasmus funding for Spanish is under way and MFL is going well in the school. The Trust wide INSET was positively received by staff. Staff enjoyed the subject leader INSET.
- Recruitment of four staff has occurred for the new academic year. Governors were informed the calibre of applicants was extremely high. This Trust is regarded positively by students.
- Attendance is 97.4% which is the highest for this school. The Head of School suggested the school uses a bell to improve punctuality and Governors were informed there is an issue with punctuality. The Head of School was advised to ensure the children are able to distinguish between a bell and a fire alarm.

Q: Is punctuality an issue at the other schools?

It is more of an issue at WDCE than the other schools in the Trust. Parents at this school do travel further but this is not always the reason?

Q: How do you deal with this problem of poor punctuality?

The school prints out a report of punctuality and parents are written to where there is an issue.

- The parking is raised as an issue with parents but they can use local facilities. Punctuality will be talked about with the children. Punctuality is mentioned at parents evening and the doors are open at 8.45am giving children an extra 15 minutes practice on handwriting before class begins. Governors suspected the late children are more likely to arrive by car. Teachers do raise this with parents as lateness has a negative impact on the children.

Q: Is lateness mentioned on other reports?

Yes, and the registration report identifies the number of lates.

- Governors noted the differences in punctuality between the schools in the trust. Governors are not keen to spend school income on a car park with a fob system.
- The admissions for 2019 has increased and many children this year have been given places based on siblings and faith and very few places were given based on distance.
- Governors suggested the school makes a video of the first 15 minutes of a lesson and share this with parents to show what a child is missing, but the committee felt this

effort will not be effective with the parents who need to change their behaviour. Governors felt there are some parenting skills to be addressed where parents claim the children will not wake up in time. Lateness can amount to a child missing two weeks of schooling over the academic year.

Q: Is the child admitted into the school or do they have to stay into the reception area?

The child is brought into the school. Governors felt the parent should be made to wait until staff are available to escort their child.

Action: HL to review the strategy on dealing with lateness, starting with working with parents. HL will work with teachers on guidelines for discussions with parents.

Q: Do Ofsted look at punctuality?

Yes, attendance is more significant but punctuality is important.

7. Behaviour and safety of pupils

- There were no behaviour or safety incidents to report. There have been no changes regarding child protection issues since the last report

8. Executive Headteacher report - Update on Trust issues

This is reported in the Part 2 Confidential Minutes.

9. Governing body matters

Training undertaken

- Paul Good has attended three training courses recently including the Chairs Briefing run by Manchester LA where topics covered included the new Ofsted consultation. GDPR was included in the briefing and schools were reminded of the need to keep a record of any breaches and actions taken. Helena Miller is the DPO for WDCE and her report needs to be shared with Governors. The school newsletters are now more anonymised.

Link Governor visits

- There were no link Governor visits to report at this meeting.

Parent Governor election

- The new parent governor election has occurred and the new Governor will attend the next meeting. The new parent Governor is a member of the PTA.

Q: How many people voted in the parental election?

More than 100 parents voted which is pleasing.

10. Policy Review

Staff Health and Well-being Policy

- Governors were complimentary about this policy and welcomed the working party as a positive starting point. Governors noted the children are displaying more issues nowadays. Teachers unlike other professionals have limited opportunities for debriefing from situations. Governors discussed a key person being trained as a mental health first aider. Governors felt the pastoral aspect of the Trust gives wider opportunities to staff for signposting to neutral support. The PCC and clergy can support the Trust. The "Dads and tots" group at Emmanuel was mentioned as one example of initiatives to promote positive mental health. SLT acknowledged the importance of valuing staff as part of promoting good mental health. Ideas of health

well-being initiatives were suggested. The well-being committee are devising a questionnaire to measure impact of initiatives undertaken.

- Governors recommended the use of the school budget for health and well-being initiatives

Q: Does the message need to be reported quickly from this LGB to staff that Governors are keen to promote good health and well-being.

Action: Staff to discuss well-being initiatives (to be included in the budget).

Governors formally approved the Staff Health and Well- being Policy.

11. Any Other Business

Q: How do the staff receive the school newsletter?

Some staff are not on email and copies of the newsletter are on the noticeboards in staffrooms. There is a staff meeting weekly and a staff WhatsApp which does not include official information as some staff chose not to use this medium.

- Governors suggested a box in the office for thank you notes which can be used by children or adults. 'Thank you' cards and messages were welcomed as a positive initiative. The staff noted they do receive presents and thank you cards from parents at key times of the year. Governors discussed well-being initiatives and ways to demonstrate to staff they are valued.

Action: HL: SLT to explore ways of showing appreciation to staff and developing positive well-being initiatives.

Action: MW to plan the Directors and Governors end of year event.

12. Date & Time of Next Meetings:

- Tuesday 7th May 2019 @ 7.30pm
- Tuesday 25th June 2019 @ 4pm (meet the children)

1.

13. Closing Prayer

The closing prayer was led by Matt Whitehead

Signed.....Date.....7.5.19

Mr Paul Blackburn (Chair)

Meeting closed at 18.30pm

Summary of actions

- Action: HL to contact the independent bookshop in Chorlton to see if they will order the books for the children to use their voucher.
- Carry forward action: HL to share the GDPR Information Audit with Governors.
- Action: HL to review the strategy on dealing with lateness, starting with working with parents. HL will work with teachers on guidelines for discussions with parents.
- Action: Staff to discuss well-being initiatives (to be included in the budget).
- Action: HL: SLT to explore ways of showing appreciation to staff and developing positive well-being initiatives.
- Action: MW to plan the Directors and Governors end of year event