

Governors of Fairisle Junior School

Minutes of a Meeting of the Whole Governing Body Tuesday 15 January 2019, 3.30pm

Governors present:

1. Steph Thurston (Chair)
2. Peter Howard (Headteacher)
3. Alison Powell
4. Jess Planter-Dixon
5. Brent Schwarz
6. Katherine Minns

Associate members present:

Bev Bessey

In attendance:

Sophie Lee (Clerk)

1) Apologies

Mike Dant, Phil Chapman, Nikki Webb.

2) Declarations of Interest

Declarations relating to today's agenda: none. Changes to the business interests register: none.

3) Presentation From the Maths Leaders

Maths leaders BB and Holly Cleveley explained that since September each class has had two mixed ability sets. Two classes have a top and a middle set and then there is one lower set.

All teachers decided to follow a spiral instead of block curriculum, where staff go back to look at objectives and keep revisiting the same topics. This was reviewed with year leaders with mixed views received.

Y3 had gaps in their learning from KS1 which we have had to fill. Y6 have deviated from their overview due to assessment for learning (AFL) for mock SATs. Leaders are pleased with the flexibility staff are using to meet the needs of children and neither children nor staff are bored as they are not spending too much time on each objective.

All staff plan maths together so there is continuity and planning is quicker. We need to watch to see year groups where they are not planning as well as possible. There is a clear understanding of progression and it helps leaders to hold staff to account. The maths sets are not fixed so children move between them. Leaders have looked at the books of most able children.

In Y3 there is a clear concrete/pictorial/abstract (CPA) approach. Pupils are far more independent now and can respond to challenges by structuring their own explanations. Y3 have spent a lot of time on place values and have gained a more secure understanding. Misconceptions are being addressed.

Y4 have been doing rich, open-ended tasks and problem-solving with proving and disproving. There is progress in times tables. There is some evidence of the CPA approach and some bar modelling but we would like to see more. Presentation and pride could be better and pupils are not always responding to feedback.

In Y5 there is evidence of deeper thinking activities and children are creating their own representations for problems. Reasoning is being used with correct vocabulary and they are solving SAT-style problems. There is progression over a series of lessons and CPA is evident. Times table challenges are used and pupils are applying skills to new situations.

(JPD entered the meeting.)

Y6 are practising arithmetic and SATs problems regularly. Books show many opportunities to problem-solve across topics. We need to see more opportunities for children to work logically and systematically and more exposure to CPA.

Next steps include addressing inconsistent use of bar modelling and some staff will attend a course on this soon. We will put in extra support for planning and delivery in Y4 for main and higher sets. CPA is embedded but there is scope for improvement and leaders have ordered more equipment.

In lesson observations 60% were Good or better. Of the 40% below Good, one lesson was not representative of the teacher's usual lessons and one teacher has received more maths support. Leaders will consider if one staff member is teaching the right set.

A maths teaching assistant has been hired five days a week and is helping with assessment for learning and addressing misconceptions. Year group leaders report that this is having an impact.

A higher profile has been developed for times tables. Pupil conferencing has shown that if a tables question is presented differently it throws the children, so more problem-solving with times tables has been used and children are now seeing a clear link. Y3 do not know tables very well so an after lunch tables practice slot is running regularly. Y4 continue to have whole-class lessons on tables and we have bought online tables tests which can be done at home.

Several teachers have joined the maths team so BB and Holly Cleveley will back off slowly to train more leaders. Governors thanked the maths leaders for their time.

Question from AP: Is the maths assistant factored into the budget?

The Deputy Head confirmed that she is and is very passionate about maths. She runs a Y6 booster group.

Question from AP: Are you members of the maths centre for resources?

The Deputy Head replied that we have our own resources now.

4) Governor Visits

Attendance, 9 January

AP discussed attendance with the Headteacher after comparing attendance figures for autumn 2018 to autumn 2017. Statistically there were substantial decreases in attendance for some categories such as term-time holidays, SEN and pupil premium. The number of fixed penalty notices and persistent absences increased and minutes lost to punctuality also increased.

The Headteacher explained that federation colleagues have reported similar attendance issues. He has looked at attendance for Fairisle Infants and Nursery and found our current Y3 cohort has a history of poor attendance and punctuality.

Governors were shown attendance figures for local schools which show the infant school has lower attendance than FJS and higher persistent absence figures. For example, Fairisle Infants had 18.3% persistent absence (PA) for half-term one in 2017/18 with 10.42% PA for FJS.

To address attendance we are sending letters to parents reporting a child's individual attendance for the previous term, with five different levels of attendance and a graph included. If the child has very poor attendance both fixed penalty notices and prosecution are mentioned. If we know a good reason for absence such as a health

problem the Headteacher writes a note on the letter to reflect this. Assemblies have been moved to first thing in the morning as children do not want to come in to them late.

Question from KM: Are the figures in the letter for the term just gone?

The Headteacher explained that figures in the first letter were for September to Christmas and for the next letter they will be September to Easter. They are always from September because children could get a higher percentage in one term but still have poor attendance overall.

There has been no negative feedback from parents about the letters. Poor attendance letters mention the education welfare officer as PA children are open to the EWO. For some poor attenders such as anxious pupils staff do personal handovers in the morning.

One Y3 child was on a part-time timetable for the first half-term and has been built up to full-time from October half-term. We use part-time timetables sparingly and have none currently, sticking closely to the guidance on their use.

AP and the Headteacher also discussed incentives to improve attendance. We offer termly certificates, an assembly each half-term and at year end children receive a £5 book voucher for every year they have achieved 100% attendance.

There is a weekly raffle for punctuality with prizes and an annual raffle has prizes of a bike and sustainable travel items. We have now asked local cinemas for free family tickets to reward supportive families and could also ask restaurants for free meals.

If parents wish to remove children for ceremonies we ask for documented evidence and if it is not received or is incorrect a penalty notice is issued. The Headteacher rarely authorises absences. SIMs does not show us KS1 attendance figures but the Headteacher talks to the Head of the infant school, particularly about siblings.

Question from AP: Are sanctions fixed nationally?

The Headteacher confirmed that they are in money terms, with a £60 penalty rising to £120 if not paid in 28 days. He does the paperwork and the LA decide whether to issue a penalty notice or a warning letter. If the child is above the school attendance target after the absence the LA issue a warning; if below they give a penalty.

Question from AP: Do the LA keep the money?

The Headteacher said they do, £60 per parent per child. The LA can also prosecute which results in a criminal record, either fast track prosecution or going to court. If it goes to court there is a victim surcharge which also goes to the LA.

(ST entered the meeting.)

5) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes from 11 December 2018 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

6) Matters Arising – Including Action Points

All actions from 11 December are complete except those listed below. Governors have received a spending wishlist from the computing leaders and approved £11k of funding for equipment.

Action A: Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance.

Action B: Write the termly newsletter paragraph.

Action C: Write a health and safety report once a term following the H+S audit.

Action D: Attend one visit between meetings plus events emailed from BB. Clerk to

All gobs
NW
BS
All gobs/

email date reminders.

Action E: Complete another self-evaluation of governance.

Action F: Repeat the parent safeguarding questionnaire. BB to email the questionnaire.

BB met the science leaders and found that they were not concerned about having too little time out of class and knew about the sheets to fill in to ask for support. They did not want staff meeting time for marking. They will share the staff questionnaire with others. They have asked the Headteacher for more observations just for science and the SLT will discuss this.

They do not want a new scheme of work but will ask Andrew Clark about the cupboard. They agreed to encourage a cross-curricular approach and need to do a book study. Books and children for the science link governor will be sorted by next week.

PH completed the internal fire risk assessment review and received a quote for fire doors underneath the staircase but this is not on the new action plan. The fire assessment should technically be redone in April but due to the extension build will be done in September. BS has contacts who could do the assessment for free, plus a health and safety audit leading to a full-blown report.

The NI payments issue with HMRC was resolved with no schools found to owe money.

Action G: Examine DfE financial benchmarking report/Arbor report/SFVS.

8) Governor Roles and Subject Links

ST = safer recruitment, teaching and learning

MD = curriculum

JPD = curriculum

NW = safer recruitment, SEND/Inclusion/Safeguarding/More able pupils/Attendance

PC = SEND/Inclusion/Safeguarding/More able pupils/Attendance

AP = budgets/finance/pupil and sport premium

BS = health and safety

KM = standards and progress

BB = safer recruitment

Maths and PE = AP

English = MD

Computing/e-safety = ST

SMSC = NW

Science = KM

History/geography = PC

Art and DT = BS

9) Election of Chair/Vice Chair

ST was re-elected as Chair and NW as Vice Chair.

10) Behaviour Discussion

A behaviour report is on Google Drive.

Action H: Email questions on behaviour report to BB.

11) Governor Reports (Continued)

Safeguarding Questionnaire Y4

ST spoke to Y4 pupils on safeguarding.

Pupil Premium, 9 January

Robin Hayes has analysed the £201,960 pupil premium and discussed it with AP. It is being used effectively, as shown by reports on outcomes for FJS disadvantaged pupils

Clerk
All gobs
BS/AP/KM/
BB

AP

All gobs
AGENDA

versus LA and national non-disadvantaged pupils. In these comparisons our outcomes for reading and maths are well above, with writing slightly above.

We identify high achievers and push them if needed. English set texts are not switched every year so may not be suitable for every cohort.

Ten licences for Clickr7 software have been purchased and it is very effective in improving writing skills of lower achievers. It is expensive but we can use it 10 times at once. Robin Hayes would like an extra English TA in Y3 as there are more pupils.

Question from AP: Will the careers event take place this year?

The Headteacher said he believed it would as Robin Hayes would like it.

Question from AP: What are your views on an extra English TA?

The Deputy Head noted that one English TA is on maternity leave and may return at Easter. The current English TA has a contract ending in September and is doing Fischer Family Trust English for Y3 which is quite intense.

The Headteacher stated they will review this in the new financial year. The TA on maternity wants to come back four days per week. PP money pays for the TAs. JPD noted the rest of the school is missing that provision as the TA only works in Y3.

Question from AP: Will you review the set reading texts?

The Headteacher reported that they review them all the time and do change them if they are not interesting enough.

AP concluded that she has no concerns about the pupil premium.

12) Health and Safety Report

BS conducted a health and safety inspection on 11 December and found conditions to be reasonable. He has a concern about the current fire risk assessment due to the company which undertook it. He has discussed getting the outdoor activity area ready for the summer with Andrew Clark. The deadwood tree outside the staff room may need looking at as it may have central rot.

The Headteacher noted that we had a tree audit done. About three years ago the LA stated that trees are the school's responsibility but Graham Pugh promised to do everything possible within our grounds maintenance contract and has been doing so. We have had a lot of work done on trees along the path such as cutting low branches.

We do have a record of the last playground inspection. Actions from the fire risk assessment are not shown on the Info Exchange system.

Next steps include a new fire risk assessment to take place after the extension build and an audit of the management of health and safety.

Action I: Email Andrew Clark to arrange audit of H+S management.

BS

Y5 Safeguarding, 6 December

MD spoke to Y5 pupils. He stressed the importance of reinforcing the safety message.

(Paul Atkins entered the meeting.)

13) Update on the Extension: Paul Atkins

Paul Atkins shared the extension timetable: complete the design by 31 January, tender period to 18 February, tender review to 18 March, appoint contractor 1 April and practical completion by 30 August. The building will be ready to occupy on 30 August, although it is usual for a good contractor to get ahead and we can ask for earlier access. It should not take long to equip the rooms once furniture is delivered.

Question from AP: How many days will you need to equip the class once handed over?

The Headteacher stated that if equipping the room is part of the build that should negate any issues. Paul Atkins stated that we can co-ordinate issues such as installing the interactive whiteboard but school staff do not need to be on site for that.

The server will be moved to the upstairs IT room and this room and the reprographics room must have in-built fire protection, with air conditioning for the server.

The Headteacher met the contractor group on 19 December and found the project had moved forward. The design looks like an exact extension of the current building.

Paul Atkins noted that the design has been completed and will be a straightforward tender with some float in the timescales. Work will start 1 April and although the design stage is flagged 'amber' Paul Atkins does not believe there is cause for concern, it is simply flagged as we do not want to be complacent.

Question from BB: What is your role now, is it to make sure the timescale is kept to?

Paul Atkins agreed it is.

Question from AP: How likely is it to be ready to occupy before the beginning of term?

Paul Atkins said the contractors can do it in 22 weeks and will work through all school holidays. The Headteacher will ask them to be mindful of SATs week.

Question from ST: Are there any points that will impact the classroom already there?

Paul Atkins said not that he was aware of.

The Headteacher noted that a blockwork partition will be new and if possible contractors should do that in holidays.

Paul Atkins stated they could consider doing that as weekend work.

Question from PH: The LA made it clear we would not be asked for the £30k contribution schools are usually asked for, will you honour that?

Paul Atkins agreed that he was not expecting to ask the school for £30k.

The LA were going to contribute £10k towards new fencing but Paul Atkins arranged payment of the full £14k invoice for which governors thanked him.

Question from ST: Will the contractors talk to us about access, using the car park etc?

Paul Atkins stated that Faithful and Gould use the Pagabo framework and the contractors all have extensive experience of working with schools and know the constraints. He has no concerns about that whatsoever.

Question from AP: Why are 'budget' and 'resources' coloured red under key considerations? Could there be a delay again due to budgets?

Paul Atkins reported that the red colours are internal city council pressures. There will be no delay as the allocation has been made and a decision made by cabinet. There is no financial pressure there. The budget has been set aside and as a cabinet decision has been made the council cannot go back on it.

Governors thanked Paul Atkins for his time.

(Paul Atkins left the meeting.)

14) Leadership Cycle

Governors are invited to attend any of the following events from the leadership cycle.

Lesson observations: Wednesday 16 January, any time from 9am to 12.30pm or 1.30-

2pm, Thursday 17 January 9-10am. KM will attend on 16 January.

Learning walk and book looks may take place in the week beginning 21 January; BB will email details to the clerk if so. Governors are welcome to come in during the week beginning 21 January at 9am to see the mock SATs (any day apart from Tuesday 22 January).

Y4 pupil progress meetings: Monday 4 February starting 9am (governors can stay for as long as they wish to). ST will attend. Y4 are doing comparative writing judgements next week and the results will inform these meetings.

Safer internet day: Tuesday 5 February, KM will attend.

Y3 pupil progress meetings: Thursday 7 February, start 9am. Y6 pupil progress meetings: Monday 11 February, start 9am. Y5 pupil progress meetings: Tuesday 12 February, start 9am.

Mandy Gard visit: Wednesday 13 February, start at 10am. (It is important that all governors attend for Mandy's visit.)

15) Safeguarding

There were 96 safeguarding incidents from 10 December to 15 January. Reports of incidents are sent to the Headteacher 24 hours a day. The designated safeguarding leads will attend training on 6 February and on 15 February there will be an update to Team Teach training.

16) Policies

The behaviour policy was discussed.

Question from BS: Do staff have training on searching?

The Headteacher replied that we would follow the DfE guidelines on searching, screening and confiscation and this has been clarified in the policy.

Question from BS: Why are there no defined responsibilities for staff in relation to behaviour management?

The Headteacher stated that behaviour is everyone's responsibility. OFSTED rated FJS personal development as Outstanding and found that pupils say staff are always available for them and respond quickly to requests of adults. Behaviour in lessons is very good. Experienced teachers who join FJS say how different it is working here as they can actually teach. There is a clear hierarchy of how behaviour is dealt with and low exclusions. Governors have interviewed pupils and attended learning walks.

Question from BS: Does the school have a least hands-on policy?

The Headteacher stated that our physical intervention policy reflects DfE guidance and intervention is the last resort. Therapeutic intervention is used and staff are well-trained in this. We run a 12-week therapeutic program and use feelings diaries for issues such as bereavement. We refer pupils to NSPCC and CAMHS and work with school nursing.

Question from BS: Do staff have conflict resolution training?

The Headteacher explained that all SLT are Team Teach trained. Teachers and support staff are trained on an INSET day. We are leaders in the city on inclusion and support other schools on positive behaviour management.

Question from BS: What about harassment and its link to bullying?

The Headteacher noted that our equality policy clarifies our stance on harassment linked to protected characteristics. We asked pupils what they think harassment is and have added a paragraph on harassment to the behaviour policy.

Governors approved the behaviour policy.

For the sex and relationships policy Robin Hayes has added some objectives to Y3 and Y4 but there are no significant changes for Y5/Y6. In Y3 there is more on naming body parts, keeping safe from sexual abuse and safe touch. In Y4 there are additions about puberty and pregnancy. Governors approved the policy.

Governors approved the governor expenses policy which was unchanged.

17) AOB

17.1 Question from AP: Is there an update on the audio-visual system?

The Headteacher reported it will be installed in February half-term.

17.2 Abi Saunders passed the tests to become an LA KS2 writing moderator and will moderate in other schools. Governors congratulated her on this achievement.

Question from AP: Will we receive financial reimbursement for her time out of school?

The Headteacher said yes, both for training time and when she goes out of school.

18) Time and Date of Next Meeting

The next whole governing body meeting is on Tuesday 12 February 2019 at 3.30pm.

The meeting closed at 6.00pm.

ACTION POINTS FROM 15 JANUARY 2019			
	Action to be completed	By whom	By when
A	Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance.	All govs	Penultimate week each term
B	Write the termly newsletter paragraph.	NW	End spring term
C	Write a health and safety report once a term following the H+S audit.	BS	End of term
D	Attend one visit between meetings plus events emailed from BB. Clerk to email date reminders.	All govs/ Clerk	Ongoing
E	Complete another self-evaluation of governance.	All govs	Spring 2019
F	Repeat the parent safeguarding questionnaire. BB to email questionnaire.	BS/AP/KM/ BB	12 Feb
G	Examine the DfE financial benchmarking report/Arbor report/SFVS	AP	12 Feb
H	Email questions on behaviour report to BB.	All govs	12 Feb
I	Email Andrew Clark to arrange audit of H+S management.	BS	12 Feb
Agenda Items for Future Meetings			Date
	English leader/science leaders		TBC/TBC
	Behaviour report	All govs	12 Feb
	Curriculum	All govs	TBC
	Agree newsletter updates on the budget, decisions made and governor roles	All govs	Once a term
	Safeguarding (standing item, to include CPOMS reports and safeguarding meeting summaries)	PH	Ongoing