

Governors of Fairisle Junior School

Minutes of a Meeting of the Whole Governing Body Tuesday 5 December 2017, 4.00pm

Governors present:

1. Steph Thurston (Chair)
2. Peter Howard (Headteacher)
3. Nikki Webb
4. Alison Powell
5. Phil Chapman
6. Mike Dant

Associate members present:

Bev Bessey

In attendance:

Holly Cleveley (Maths Leader)
Sophie Lee (Clerk)

1) Apologies

Jess Planter-Dixon. Justin Cook was absent without apology.

2) Declarations of Interest

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

3) Presentation By The Maths Leaders

Maths leaders Bev Bessey and Holly Cleveley explained that a teachers' meeting was held in the summer term to discuss whole-class and maths sets. Y3/Y4 staff presented on their trial of whole-class teaching and pupils were asked for their views on setting. Following these discussions, we decided that we would have two groups of medium/higher in each year group and a group of children who need much more support.

Staff have attended training courses and observed whole-class maths teaching and are more positive about the approach since doing this.

Other schools who include SEN children in whole-class teaching have more support staff than we do. We have achieved good maths results over the last few years and do not want to lose the concrete/pictorial/abstract approach and the improvements made.

We are aiming for whole-class teaching in maths but if there are still gaps in learning we could take pupils out to plug gaps; this approach was observed at St John's School. Bev and Holly could take a year group each to focus on.

Question from ST: Could you adapt whole-class teaching with some lessons in sets if needed?

Holly Cleveley replied that they could do. Expectations have been raised for individual year groups and they want all children to achieve the year group's objectives. In whole-class teaching all are on the same objectives. It is about not putting a ceiling on children's learning. Already they have seen Expected pupils improving more quickly as they are hearing explanations from the most able children.

By teaching the groups in this way we are also ensuring challenge for our most able pupils.

Question from ST: Are the supported children keeping up?

The Deputy Head said they are doing really well within the groups. Holly Cleveley stated that expectations for children in the supported groups need to be really high. At the moment many children have gaps in learning and some would not cope with the pace of learning elsewhere.

(Mike Dant entered the meeting.)

Whole-class teaching is working well at the moment and we have had good outcomes for maths lesson observations. Pupil progress reviews took place today with a very positive picture seen in maths books. Richer activities are being planned with more use of practical apparatus and bar modelling across the sets. The language pupils are using is very good.

One staff member is being developed as a maths leader and attending the mastery courses and two staff members are participating in maths research.

Governors were shown some maths books. Correct vocabulary is being seen in the most able pupils' books and pupils are making connections between areas of learning. Times tables folders have been produced and for each step of the times table progression we have developed some challenge activities and times table targets. This is a new approach and will need to be reviewed.

Question from NW: When will you review this approach?

The Deputy Head stated they will review at the end of January.

Holly Cleveley said that the profile of times tables has been raised and they want to see whole-class lessons on a particular table. They are starting to plan generalisations into lessons.

Similar learning opportunities are given for Expected and more able children which really challenges pupils. Teacher subject knowledge is deeper. Y3 and Y6 are trialling the S Plan approach to planning, where a teacher thinks through each tiny step of knowledge a child needs to know. This pre-empts a child getting stuck at one stage.

Question from ST: Does that risk starting a lesson at too low a level?

Holly Cleveley explained that each lesson includes independent practice and challenge which is thought-provoking, so challenge is built in.

Governors noticed that when they accompanied the senior leadership team a few weeks ago on lesson observations they saw children doing the challenges. When the deputy questioned learning leaders one said he liked maths more due to the whole-class input.

Question from ST: What happens in the independent learning?

The Deputy Head said that is when children practice.

Holly Cleveley stated that children think about "Have I listened well and understood, can I apply it to a different context?"

Question from AP: How easy is it to monitor the new process against the old? Do you have comparable achievement figures?

Holly Cleveley noted it is difficult as the new assessment system only has Y6 examples of learning nationally. They have seen far more challenge in books and can also look at planning last year compared to this year. They can compare our books with other schools' books and in the spring term there is a maths moderation. For staff well-being we need to bear in mind that the S Plan does take a long time to plan.

The Deputy Head said they can monitor the teaching of maths and compare observations. Looking in books will tell you as well as listening to children.

Question from ST: Will the planning get quicker in time?

Holly Cleveley said she thought it would. We have purchased the maths No Problem scheme which has had brilliant feedback and helped with staff workload.

Question from MD: What is the reason for the change in approach?

The Deputy Head stated it is the new curriculum which involves mastery and more

challenge. We could not stay where we were as pupils were not making maximum progress and staff needed more CPD on maths.
Holly Cleveley said it is about not limiting any child, using high ceiling/low threshold activities which are very inclusive. It has come from DfE-led research groups.

Question from MD: Could you have introduced the S plan system before?

Holly Cleveley explained that it is new with materials released a few months ago.

It is a completely different approach. Every lesson starts with some sort of representation whether concrete or a picture etc.

Question from ST: Do you believe it is the right approach and will make an impact?

The Deputy Head and Holly Cleveley said yes. There is some room for teachers to go at their own pace. In Y4, slowing down learning slightly has helped. Pupils must speak in full sentences and repeat sentences over and over.

In summer 2017 maths KS2 tests, FJS were ranked second in the whole city for Expected (95.5%) and close to the top for Greater Depth (38.6%). This scheme must make a difference to results to be worthwhile, particularly at Greater Depth.

Children were wasting time before, for example by using a formal method when it might not be needed, so it is helping them be more efficient.

Question from ST: How do you measure your impact as maths leaders?

The Deputy Head stated that they use the maths action plan and its milestones.
Holly Cleveley said they have set up an Excel document in every year group to track where children start from in times tables so they can see the percentage of pupils achieving at each target each term.

Question from ST: As you have changed methods will you re-evaluate the target on the maths action plan for 30% teaching and learning to be Outstanding?

The Headteacher replied that autumn figures were 25% Outstanding and we always aim higher than 25%; we are still aiming for 36% Outstanding at the end of spring term.
Holly Cleveley said we ask why it is not yet Outstanding and what can we do to help teachers become Outstanding. It will take staff a while to get used to something new.

Question from ST: Should we set targets for times throughout the year rather than have one we have not achieved?

The Headteacher replied that if one more teacher was Outstanding we would reach 30%. We have one NQT and two staff on sick leave (not work-related). Although Holly has not been part of PPA sessions she has still had planning sent to her for which she has provided feedback to teachers.

The Deputy Head said that we need to look at individual teachers when we set targets. We did not expect the sickness and our capacity to develop staff has been affected as senior leaders are teaching. If the sick leave continues in 2018 we will need more of a structure.

Action A: Meet maths leaders in spring term. PC will email BB to arrange.

PC/BB

(BB and Holly Cleveley left the meeting.)

4) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes from 14 November 2017 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

5) Matters Arising – Including Action Points

All action points from 14 November are complete except those listed below.

Action B: Look at progress in book bands within the FFT English interventions.
Action C: Arrange for ST to attend another coaching meeting.
Action D: Look at no sets maths.
Action E: All governors to meet their subject leader by the end of term.
Action F: Repeat the behaviour questionnaire in six months.
Action G: Look at rewards in January.
Action H: Ask staff about their wellbeing.
Action I: Inform governors what actions have been taken as a result of safeguarding reports.

ST
ST/BB
PC
All gov's
NW/PC
All gov's
All gov's
PH

6) Reports From Governor Visits

10 October, Observational Walk with Mandy Gard

On this visit NW followed up her behaviour walk on 27 September, when she and PC had noticed one staff member was not ideally positioned and not engaging children. This was fed back to senior leaders and during a walkthrough on 10 October with Mandy Gard they saw the employee in a much better position with children much more engaged. Mandy Gard was pleased with the impact of this observation from governors.

15 November, Safeguarding

NW checked the single central record and NSPCC training records. One person had not attended NSPCC training and was contacted with a view to attending training as a matter of urgency. The majority of staff have now provided their qualification certificates and the remainder are being chased.

17 November, Y4 Reading

MD listened to Y4 children and found most read adequately but comprehension varied widely. One child had a comic book from the library and poetry was also used when more simple texts may be appropriate.

Question from ST: Is a comic book appropriate?

The Headteacher replied that he would have to know the child, but the children reading with MD are those who need practice. They have a library book of their choice and a reading scheme book and they should bring the scheme book or both. These sessions are also about engendering a love of reading.

Action J: Ensure pupils bring reading scheme books plus library books to adult readers.
Action K: Ask English leaders about the books children read with adults.

PH
ST

Question from NW: Do teachers look at the library books children choose?

The Headteacher confirmed that they do.

MD found children did not try to read complicated words and struggled with comprehension. These children probably do not read with their parents.

Question from AP: Is there guidance in the library on suitable books? Are there shelves containing for example Y4 or Y5 books?

The Headteacher stated that teachers help pupils pick books, but they are not grouped by years as within years there is a wide reading age variance. Reading scheme books are all levelled.

Question from MD: Do pupils see reading scheme books as books they have to read?

The Headteacher explained that children do not have to read all the books on one reading scheme level, the teachers can move them up.

MD expressed a concern about reading based on his visits. However, the Y6 reading result at Expected or above was very high (90%+) in 2017. MD is reading with a small number of fairly poor readers who need lots of practice.

It was noted that adult readers share reading with children but are not teaching them to read. PH has given out 135 books as rewards for reading at home. It would be helpful if MD could hear some able children as well to see the variance. Adult readers are not asked to judge the reading of the children.

Action L: Rachael Woods to share her introduction to being a reading volunteer with MD/MD to read with able children.

Rachael
W/MD

23 November, Behaviour Walk in Y3 with PH

ST asked children about Respect, Ready, Safe and found children have a very good understanding of school rules. Behaviour was different from new to established teachers. Most children said naughty children get more attention than those who behave and most said they changed their behaviour for different adults.

Question from ST: How will you address naughty children getting more attention?

The Headteacher said that children may think teachers say "Get on with your work" more often than they give praise, but there are lots of other mechanisms to reward children for doing things well. It is about experience, knowing the children and them knowing the staff.

Question from ST: Can you look at rewards given from different teachers?

The Headteacher has a spreadsheet of rewards and will look at PP versus non-PP, boys versus girls etc.

Question from ST: How do you feed back information from the walks to teachers?

The Headteacher explained that they feed back through coaching. Headlines are recorded from learning walks to check they have an effect and these are fed back to the staff. They are followed up each time.

Question from MD: When you punish children do you broadcast that to other pupils?

The Headteacher stated that it depends; what works for one child may not work for another.

Generally the behaviour ST saw was very good; it was described by Mandy Gard as "exemplary". ST noted that children did not change their behaviour when she and PH entered the class which was good to see. PH noted children are respectful for visitors and hold doors open but do not always thank other children for helping them; this was covered in an assembly yesterday.

24 November, Behaviour Walk in Y4 and Questioning in Y6

NW and PC conducted a behaviour walk. One child pointed out a mistake the teacher had made and the teacher acknowledged this. Children admitted they were naughtier for teachers they do not know. One child did not understand that it is not respectful to new staff if they do not behave for them.

There was an issue with iPads and laptops not being charged which wasted time. Governors suggested an end of day procedure to ensure all devices are plugged in. There has been a problem with the use of iPads for dinner money due to an issue with iOS11 so laptops have been used instead.

The charging lockers stay plugged in and it is the teachers' responsibility to ensure gadgets are charged. Governors suggested introducing a sticker saying "Have you charged devices?" on the charging locker.

7) Headteacher's Report to Governors

A table shows actions taken to address feedback from Mandy Gard's visit on 10 October.

Safeguarding

We have now used CPOMs for one year and incidents are shown from 14 November to 1 December. The four designated safeguarding leads have attended all city network sessions and Robin Hayes attended the local safeguarding board annual conference.

Question from PC: What actions have been taken following these incidents?

The Headteacher stated that there were no referrals to MASH for the incidents listed.

Attendance

Attendance is at 97% this academic year; class attendances are listed and compared to the school average.

Question from NW: What is happening in the Y5 class with attendance 1.68% below average?

The Headteacher explained that this class has two shared teachers. Two Y4 classes with below average attendance (-0.61%/-0.63%) both have teachers off sick.

Question from ST: Is there a specific reason for the -1.68% class?

The Headteacher said there was no specific pupil causing the issue. At the end of autumn 1, 10.4% of pupils were persistent absentees across the school.

Question from ST: Are you looking at why attendance is lower in some classes?

The Headteacher noted that 1% is not a massive difference, with 1% of sessions equivalent to about 1.2 sessions at this point. Today is only the 60th day of the school year so it is not massively significant.

Question from AP: What is the highest class doing that the lowest is not? What steps are you taking to improve the lowest attending classes?

The Headteacher explained that attendance below 90% means a child is a persistent absentee and becomes part of the education welfare service audit. We write to parents of children at risk of PA and tell them the consequences.

Question from AP: Could you increase the PA threshold to 92%?

The Headteacher explained that 90% is a national guideline, with the national PA figure for primary schools 8.7%. We hold a raffle every week, we contact parents of children taking odd days off and it gets to the point where no authorised absences are given if no medical evidence is provided.

Question from AP: Has the 48-hour sickness policy affected the figures?

The Headteacher said that it will have done but only by a fraction of a percentage. We must also think about the children and staff.

Question from PC: If a child takes two weeks holiday how does that affect the figures?

The Headteacher replied that it would be unauthorised and the child would be PA as at this point in the year it would take them below 90% attendance. The numbers of PA children per term are shown.

Question from PC: If you discount PA children how does that affect figures?

The Headteacher said that if PA children had 100% attendance we would be at 98/99%.

Attendance is very good at FJS but we always think it could be better. Pupils receive raffle tickets for non-broken weeks, the number of which dropped by 15 to 20% when the raffle was introduced.

Question from PC: If this year a parent takes a two-week holiday, what would happen if they did it next year?

The Headteacher replied that some parents say it is still more cost effective to take term-time holidays. In the second year we put in for a penalty notice or the LA go to prosecution and we have had another couple of cases go to prosecution. If PH knows a parent has had a penalty notice and is applying for holiday he writes on the form that taking this holiday may result in a further penalty or prosecution which could mean a criminal record. One parent had a £850 overall charge.

Question from AP: Do you have data for boys/girls and different groups and have you seen any trends?

The Headteacher confirmed that this data is produced every half-term with year groups, boys versus girls etc. Gender figures are very close across the school but pupil premium children do not attend as well as non-PP and this is reflected nationally.

There were 123 sessions missed due to term-time holidays in the first half-term of autumn 1 with 168 last year. Seven penalty notices have been issued this year, with only one issued last year because the city were not issuing them.

Question from PC: Do you authorise absences for religious festivals?

The Headteacher confirmed that he does, under the R code, but there are very few requests.

Admissions and Leavers, Pupil Progress, Appraisal and SIP

Four children have been admitted and three left. Pupil progress meetings were held today. The appraisal cycle has started. The SIP has been evaluated with milestones shown.

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Quality of teaching percentages are given.

Question from AP: Why has the Outstanding percentage dropped from 38% in summer to 25% in autumn?

The Headteacher noted we have two teachers off sick and one NQT. This time last year 54% of teaching was Requires Improvement or Inadequate but now there is no Inadequate teaching and only 25% RI. Figures do not include observations for teachers off sick as they have not been in school.

Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare

The FAST (Families and Schools Together) project was brilliant with parents graduating. Ten equality forms have been completed this term, two regarding incidents outside school. The words 'gay' and 'retard' are sometimes used.

Question from AP: What actions have you taken to address these incidents?

The Headteacher stated that parents have been involved on every occasion and each case was treated on its merits.

Question from MD: How many children from ethnic/nationality minorities are at FJS?

The Headteacher stated that the percentage of children with English as an additional language is probably less than 10%.

Question from MD: Do pupils understand what the word 'gay' means?

The Headteacher said that they make sure there are no misunderstandings. Most pupils know they should not use it in this context because they only use the word 'gay' to mean something negative.

Debt Management Policy

The total dinner money debt was £13,789.50 on 27 November. We ask city catering to transfer debts to the account of any younger siblings and we continue to chase the

parents. Parents with a debt over £30 are called if their child books a lunch.

Question from ST: What else happens after the £30 phone call? Could we give sandwiches instead of a dinner?

The Headteacher said that they write and meet with the parents.

Question from PC: If they needed a lunch wouldn't the child get free school meals?

The Headteacher said that some children are just above the threshold for FSM so parents can be worse off financially but do not qualify for FSM.

Governors discussed reviewing the debt management policy, the possibility of providing sandwiches instead of a 'free' meal from debts that are written off and the standard of school meals versus sandwiches. There is no incentive to pay at the moment.

Question from MD: Do you sue for these debts?

The Headteacher explained that they refer cases to the LA who do not sue as the debt is written off by city catering when children leave the school.

Action M: Meet with city catering to discuss debt management policy.

ST/NW

8) SCC Information Sharing Protocol

This policy has been changed in line with the general data protection regulations which will be implemented in May 2018. Governors approved the policy.

9) Eligibility for FSM/PP Under Universal Credit Consultation

The government are running a consultation on eligibility for FSM/PP under universal credit.

Action N: Study the FSM/universal credit consultation and consider responding.

ST

10) AOB

10.1 AP received a reply from the LA regarding the slowly updating budget; it did not say anything substantial and did not address our concerns. However, governors have made their point and will not take further action.

10.2 Governors need to review their own performance with a 360 degree review. This will take place at the 9 January meeting with a shorter agenda to accommodate it.

Action O: Send out 360 degree review details before Christmas.

AGENDA
ST

10.3 A pupil premium review by Robin Hayes and a sport premium review are both on the Drive; please send any questions to AP.

Action P: Meet Robin Hayes/Simon Woods on pupil/sport premiums and report back to governors on 9 Jan.

AP

10.4 In June we produced a plan for our underspend. PH received an email sent on behalf of Paul Atkins at the LA stating that we had not replied to an email of 31 October asking for our spending plans. However, we had not received this first email and other Heads had also not received it. The LA said any excess in our budget would be taken back if we did not communicate by 8 December.

PH replied to explain that we had already submitted our June plan for the underspend and due to changes to the extension made by the LA it was not reasonable to submit costings for this as it is still in an early stage.

10.5 A consultation is taking place on proposed changes to the Southampton in-year fair access protocol; it closes in January.

Action Q: Look at the in-year fair access consultation. ST/PH.

ST/PH

10.6 Question from MD: When will we see plans for the extension?

The Headteacher replied that we were promised plans before Christmas.

11) Time and Date of Next Meeting

The next whole governing body meeting is on Tuesday 9 January 2017 at 4pm. PC gave his apologies for this meeting. *The meeting closed at 6.25pm.*

ACTION POINTS FROM 5 DECEMBER 2017			
	Action to be completed	By whom	By when
A	Meet maths leaders in spring term. PC will email BB to arrange.	PC/BB	Spring term
B	Look at progress in book bands within the FFT English interventions.	ST	Spring term
C	Arrange for ST to attend another coaching meeting.	ST/BB	Spring term
D	Look at no sets maths. BB to email PC to arrange.	BB/PC	Spring term
E	All governors to meet their subject leader by the end of term.	All govts	21 Dec
F	Repeat the behaviour questionnaire in six months.	NW/PC	April 2018
G	Look at rewards in January.	All govts	Jan 2018
H	Ask staff about their wellbeing.	All govts	9 Jan
I	Inform governors what actions have been taken as a result of safeguarding reports.	PH	9 Jan
J	Ensure pupils bring reading scheme books plus library books to adult readers.	PH	9 Jan
K	Ask English leaders about the books children read with adults.	ST	9 Jan
L	Rachael Woods to share her introduction to being a reading volunteer with MD/MD to read with able children.	Rachael W/MD	9 Jan
M	Meet with city catering to discuss debt management policy.	ST/NW	9 Jan
N	Study the FSM/universal credit consultation and consider responding.	ST	9 Jan
O	Send out 360 degree review details before Christmas.	ST	21 Dec
P	Meet Robin Hayes/Simon Woods on pupil/sport premiums and report back to governors on 9 Jan.	AP	9 Jan
Q	Look at the in-year fair access consultation.	ST/PH	9 Jan
Agenda Items for Future Meetings			Date
	360 degree review of the governing body	All govts	9 Jan
	Feedback on impact of revised behaviour form	BB	Jan 2018
	Safeguarding (standing item, to include CPOMS reports and safeguarding meeting summaries)	PH	Ongoing