

Governors of Fairisle Junior School

Minutes of a Meeting of the Whole Governing Body Tuesday 20 November, 3.30pm

Governors present:

1. Steph Thurston (Chair)
2. Peter Howard (Headteacher)
3. Alison Powell
4. Phil Chapman
5. Jess Planter-Dixon
6. Nikki Webb
7. Mike Dant
8. Brent Schwarz

Associate members present:

Bev Bessey

In attendance:

Laura Milford (Geography Leader)
Andrew Clark (Business Manager)
Sophie Lee (Clerk)

1) Apologies

None.

2) Declarations of Interest

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

3) Presentation from History and Geography Subject Leaders

History leader JPD explained the aims of the new national curriculum, which emphasises chronological order plus pupils being in charge of their own enquiries and self-led learning, not just facts and dates. Pupils also think about the significance of history to their own lives.

The progression of skills document shows how history is taught progressively in each year; a Y5 sample was shown. JPD has thought about learning opportunities to help support colleagues with their planning to ensure those skills are taught progressively.

JPD has discussed planning with Holly Cleveley (Curriculum Lead) as JPD was planning almost the whole unit for teachers and including all the learning opportunities meant it was too big. To ensure each year group and topic has an enquiry focus JPD has produced six-step enquiry documents which give ideas for lessons, resources, key questions and deeper thinking questions to base planning around.

Question from ST: If teachers do not use that and ask the right questions will they not cover the right things?

JPD said teachers are going to use it. It was introduced at a staff meeting but it was not as clear and complete as needed, so another meeting will take place after Christmas and it will roll out across the school.

Question from ST: What are the staff doing now?

JPD stated she is working with colleagues to use it now but they need that clearer format. Staff are still using the skills progression but it is that over-arching idea of enquiry-based history that is missing.

Question from ST: How would we see that?

JPD explained you would see it on SMARTS from people's planning.

Question from ST: How would we see that from the children?

JPD noted that any questions and enquiry will be in books.

Question from MD: There is an emphasis on crime?

JPD said that is the Y5 sample for the crime and punishment unit. The Headteacher explained there are a range of topics over the year including settlement and invasion and down by the river.

Question from ST: Is there enough content so everyone is being challenged enough?

JPD said there is a lot of content and with enquiry you take it as far as you can. You provide the resources and children question as much as they are able to, there is no limit. We provide resources and the questioning provokes pupils further.

Question from ST: What if some pupils are more engaged than others?

JPD said it happens on the spot. You ask key questions and you can bounce back questions to the children. It is not about giving children the answers.

FJS offers a wide range of visitors, activities and trips such as Highclere castle, a live invasions activity, hire of artefact boxes and the World War II Beaulieu visit. Pupils think critically about sources and it brings the subject alive.

Pupil comments on history were shown, including "history can be about what happens in your family". Children realise it links to English, PSHE and geography. They love any real-life hands-on experience.

The biggest priority in history is rolling out enquiry-based learning, plus providing cross-curricular learning opportunities. By the end of spring term all topics will be centred on the six-step enquiry.

Geography leader Laura Milford gave a presentation on her impact. The main document is the skills progression document. She spoke to Oasis about missing skills and facts in Y7/Y8 and found locational skills and general facts/world knowledge were missing. Locational skills have been linked to trips, eg: map work at Marwell. Learning objectives and opportunities tell teachers what to do to make sure the skills are covered.

(Brent Schwarz entered the meeting.)

In KS1 children revisit key information at least twice a half-term eg: continents, UK countries, seas and oceans. Information is revisited in each year with more information added each time.

Question from ST: Why was retention a problem?

Laura Barton said she did not know. We use songs, flags and maps, but we did not go over it very often.

The Headteacher noted we do talk about over-learning and the Deputy Head said children are not taught nursery rhymes etc and parents may not be teaching them.

All pupils were given a pre-assessment this year on continents, countries etc and this will be repeated in summer 2 to see improvements. Governors were shown geography activities with challenges. Drip-feeding is the most important thing.

Question from ST: How do you challenge the most able if pupils do not retain the basics?

Laura Barton explained that in Y3 they start with basics and it then gets harder each year. In the end it links to deeper questions, expanding the questions and not just facts.

On every trip pupils complete a sheet of locational knowledge, eg: map reading and satellite images. They do orienteering in PE and use compass skills. Pupils are taught the symbolism of flags and their history. A problem was identified with insufficient or out-of-date atlases so they have been reshuffled, with newer ones going into Y5/Y6, so now most classes have enough for one each.

The curriculum did not have enough cross-curricular links so we now have Fairisle Day and Natural Disaster Day. In computing the geographical information system Digimap program is used and Laura has produced a whole skills progression for Digimap.

Y3 work on the tin forest, Y5 go to Selborne and work on co-ordinates and Y6 look at buffer zones. Y4 play a role and write a diary. Purposeful, engaging trips include a trip to the New Forest which children compare with Lordshill and study river depth, velocity and do maths work.

There was a problem with the tight Y6 timetable and some of the natural disaster topic was not being taught. The solution was the whole-school Natural Disaster Day which is different in each year and covers topics such as volcanoes. Children write diaries of how an earthquake affected them and answer questions about a picture which is an activity open to all abilities.

Laura Milford is working with Holly Cleveley and Sustrans and all pupils planted a tree and learnt about air quality. A recycling day will link to English. Pupils will take five-minute walks from school to see if parents could park further away.

Next steps in geography include:

- continue to monitor outcomes
- ensure the KS1 revisited skills are being taught
- monitor this by asking children to do another assessment
- ensure Digimap is being taught
- develop sustainability
- challenge of Greater Depth children, how are they being developed? Is this being shown in different ways, not just written?

Governors thanked Laura and Jess for their presentations.

(Laura Milford left the meeting.)

4) Business Manager Presentation on Compliance Within Health and Safety

(Andrew Clark entered the meeting.)

Andrew Clark presented information on statutory compliance for the safe running of the school. This is governed by guidelines, regulations and laws which are turned into policies and processes that we follow.

The LA use the Info Exchange online system and we upload FJS records to it. Currently the system shows three red "overdue" items, but these have actually been completed or are not due. Andrew Clark and the Headteacher have logins and governors can ask to see the system. It shows a current status bar, the name of the item and the frequency of uploads needed/what information is needed.

Responsibility for compliance is split between FJS and the LA. We arrange various compliance tests and have three months to upload the reports. The LA arrange the rest of the areas and also have three months to upload, but are slower at doing this. We do chase reports. Two of the red items have been completed (Andrew Clark showed visitors round in September) but they have not yet prepared their report.

Question from BB: How many times have you chased? How quickly do reports come through on average?

Andrew Clark replied that for this set he has chased them once. Most reports do come through straight away. There is no phone number now for the compliance department.

Question from ST: What are they sending you?

Andrew Clark said that for example the fixed electrical testing is due by June 2022 from the LA. We are responsible for the water hygiene (legionella) risk assessment and we use a contractor. We send the LA the report and keep a copy. We have three months to upload the reports but we try to put them up as soon as possible.

Question from ST: How do you know John Pennells has done the checks needed? How does John know what is due?

Andrew Clark stated it is recorded on sheets. John looks on the system or in the folder to see what is due; some are due weekly such as fire safety and alarm checks.

Question from ST: How do you know John has done it?

Andrew Clark stated that he looks in the book, checks records with John and he or the Headteacher can hear the fire alarm. Periodically he goes around with John and he is here when John is walking round.

Question from ST: Do you check fire exits?

Andrew Clark said he does not check the fire doors after John. The only way to check fire doors are closed is to sound the alarm so we check when we do evacuations.

Question from MD: Did you previously check what the site manager did with regard to fire alarms?

Andrew Clark said no, other than seeing the signature in the book. Now he goes round with John and insists he does checks when people are here.

Question from BS: Do you have a fire contractor who maintains the fire system? Do we ask for the alarms log?

Andrew Clark stated the LA are the contractor and he will request the log. John has to ring the alarm company with a PIN to test it.

Our fire alarm keeps a log of tests which is cleared every three months by the fire alarm contractor; Andrew Clark will ask to see that record on screen. He had been told the log cannot be downloaded but BS stated this was possible; Andrew Clark will discuss with Kevin Cardy.

Question from BS: Do you flush infrequently-used taps to prevent legionella?

Andrew Clark reported that there are records of taps being switched on in which building after holidays in particular, all recorded in signed records.

Question from ST: Why have you not put something in place to protect you and the school?

Andrew Clark said he would ask the federation what they do. The Headteacher requested asking BS as an expert on health and safety instead.

BS stated that we should ask for evidence of checks for our due diligence, eg: a check every quarter on 10% of alarms tested. BS also recommended being more challenging to the LA on their late reports. If we have an SLA the LA should produce an annual report for us on statutory compliance.

Question from MD: Have you chased the three overdue items?

Andrew Clark replied that he has chased twice to get the reds removed but cannot remove them himself. He uploads results to an email address.

Question from AP: Can you update the system to show the date a report was sent?

Andrew Clark said no, the system is read-only but there is an email trail.

Question from NW: Are other people copied into the emails?

Andrew Clark said no, but he could copy others in. He does keep the emails.

The Business Manager should phone contactors four weeks before a check's due date so they do not attend on the final date possible; this will avoid overdue items appearing.

(Andrew Clark left the meeting.)

5) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes from 30 October 2018 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

6) Matters Arising – Including Action Points

All actions from 30 October are complete except those listed below.

Action A: Email an ideal computing spending wishlist to ST. ST to visit to see the impact of Chromebooks.

Action B: Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance. Next assembly 11 December, 2.45pm.

Action C: Write the termly newsletter paragraph.

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

Action E: Chase Andrew Clark about separating the online H+S diary into H+S and fire and moving emails into separate file.

Action F: Attend one visit between meetings plus events emailed from BB.

Action G: Complete another self-evaluation of governance

Action H: Repeat the parent and pupil safeguarding questionnaire. Y3 = PC, Y4 = ST, Y5 = MD, Y6 = NW, parents = BS and AP.

Kay
Howard/ST
All govs

NW
BS
BB/MD

All govs
All govs
See left

7) OFSTED Framework: Overall Effectiveness

Overall effectiveness includes the four key judgements. SMSC development includes showing willingness but not being passive. Pupils need moral development to know right and wrong and social development such as showing kindness and social skills.

Question from MD: How do we measure that, is it recorded?

The Headteacher reported it is measured through pupil interviews and how amenable they are to doing jobs. It is recorded in our grab file. Y3 complete a settling-in survey.

Also important are British values, cultural development and knowledge of the parliamentary system. We borrow voting equipment for the pupil elections. Pupils should show willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, musical, sporting and cultural opportunities, exploring and showing respect for cultural diversity.

Question from MD: Do you measure that by interviewing?

The Headteacher said yes, or in lesson observations, by PSHE outcomes and in behaviour in class and on learning walks.

Grade descriptors show that an Outstanding school must have Outstanding teaching. If any area is Requires Improvement the overall judgement will probably be RI.

Governors are invited to an OFSTED webinar in school on 11 December 1-2pm.

8) Governor Visits

31 October, Safeguarding/SCR

NW completed her usual check of the single central record. There is a long out of date list of volunteers who have registered to help at FJS; the Business Manager was going to ask class teachers for updates (JPD reports this email has not yet been sent).

Action I: Study the list of volunteers and email staff to remove outdated entries.

Andrew C

The SCR needs to record the relationship of the child to volunteer. Names could stay on the list until the child leaves the school (unless a younger sibling is coming in).

Question from ST: Why is that list on there?

The Headteacher explained that all parents on trips have had an enhanced DBS check or a barred list check.

Action J: Consider how to update the volunteer list.

PH/BB

Question from AP: Could we give an expiry date for volunteers on the SCR?

The Headteacher noted that OFSTED ask us not to use expiry dates.

7 November, English Procedures

AP looked at recording systems to assess progress and ensure no children are slipping through the net; they are satisfactory.

Question from AP: Pupil progress meeting are termly, should they be more frequent?

The Headteacher explained they used to be half-termly but there was not enough time. If we think a child might slip through the net we talk to those children and look at their books in lesson observations every half-term.

The Deputy Head noted there is a mid-term review if they are concerned about a child.

Question from AP: Could we consider a governors' award for the most improved writer?

The Deputy Head said that staff were not in favour as other awards are available and children receive enough for writing. It can be hard to find a star and difficult to assess.

AP: In the results, performance in writing was lower than in other subjects?

The Headteacher noted that at the top of KS1 in 2017 and 2018 the infant school results were quite different to previous results so it has been hard to show progress KS1 to KS2 in writing. In Y3 this year no children came up at GD but three or four years ago they were coming up at 40% GD. We have done a complete comparative judgement writing set for Y3 with no children doing worse than at the end of KS1.

Question from AP: Do you check the five-minute home reading is happening?

The Headteacher said most pupils complete this but a few do not. Every teacher checks every child's planner every day.

JPD reported that if a child has no planner or it has not been signed by a parent the child stays in class for five minutes to read.

16 November, Sport Premium

AP met Simon Woods to review the draft sport premium report which shows we have £300 more than last year. Sainsbury's have stopped their Active Kids programme so we will use the revenue budget and sport premium for resources.

Previously we ran a breakfast club subsidised by Greggs but this was cancelled. From January we will start weekly runs in school grounds for 15 minutes and the money assigned to breakfast club has been moved to this.

Last year extra-curricular participation was 97% and this year it will be about 95%. Competitive events are being organised with other schools. Staff are training to provide active lunchtimes. AP suggested approaching sport retailers for funding or equipment.

Question from AP: Achievement in swimming is lower than other sports, could we ask Oaklands for a discount out of hours?

The Headteacher reported that Oaklands costs £4k for 13 sessions with no coach hire.

Question from MD: Why not use Red Lodge?

The Headteacher stated it would cost £3.5k just to travel there, plus costs for swimming teachers and a lifeguard.

Question from AP: Could we get a discount at Oaklands in the holidays?

The Chair stated that in the summer it costs £18 per month to swim as many times as you want.

9) Health and Safety Report

BS will share the health and safety governor role with MD and write the report.

AGENDA

10) Safeguarding

A report covers 31 October to 19 November (21 days), showing 55 incidents.

Question from MD: Are incidents increasing? Are staff over-reporting?

The Headteacher said incidents are increasing. Domestic violence is at an all-time high and he has had about five police protection notices in that period. Over-reporting is possible but information could be part of the jigsaw puzzle that tells us it needs escalating. One British child committed suicide recently with parents angry at the school; SLT met and told staff any self-harm concerns must be passed onto us.

Question from MD: How much time have you spent on safeguarding in 21 days?

The Headteacher reported many meetings and lots of time talking to parents.

11) LA Safeguarding Self-Evaluation

The completed self-evaluation has been sent to Alison Philpott and we are fully compliant with evidence listed. One item is yellow because staff on maternity leave have not yet read Keeping Children Safe in Education; BS has also not yet read it.

12) Policies

The following policies were all approved: accessibility, charging and remissions, equality statement and objectives, freedom of information (up-to-date LA policy), recruitment and selection (no major changes).

Question from MD: Are there charges for the use of debit/credit cards?

The Headteacher said there are charges but we are not allowed to pass them on to parents. If parents pay online the LA pick up charges for cards but would not for an EFTPOS machine.

Question from AP: As the music room is now a classroom, where is music?

The Headteacher explained that music takes place in the old staffroom.

The sex and relationships policy was also approved. This is not part of the national curriculum and parents can withdraw their children.

Question from MD: Do any parents withdraw children?

The Headteacher reported that he always has conversations with parents, often of vulnerable children. He tells them why deny a child the right to know as much as possible. Only one or two withdraw.

13) AOB

13.1 Governors will attend a data training session on 28 November at 3.30pm.

13.2 John Pennells has been promoted to senior site manager and an applicant appointed to assistant site manager from 1 January.

13.3 Governors are invited to attend observations all day tomorrow and Thursday.

13.4 An Echo article celebrated FJS. We were invited to King's Cross and won Southampton school of the year.

13.5 The Headteacher has spoken to two potential parent governors and asked for nominations by Friday.

13.6 The Headteacher met Tina Dyer-Slade about the planning notice at Oaklands school site. There are plans for 103 rented council dwellings. A public consultation runs to 3 December. The Headteacher objected to the planned access on Fairisle Road. Another site on Andromeda Road and Lordshill Centre will also be affordable housing. The LA have calculated the number of school children from the development and building will start imminently.

Question from PC: What parking will there be?

The Headteacher said there will be two parking spaces per house, one per flat and 12 visitor spaces.

13.7 Governors were invited to comment on the draft admission policy but had no comment.

(JPD left the meeting.)

13.8 Governors are invited to Christmas lunch on 20 December.

13.9 Y3 completed the settling-in questionnaire yesterday with 96% saying they were happy and felt safe, 98% liking their teacher and 84% saying pupils behaved well.

13.10 The next governor assembly is on 11 December at 2.45pm.

14) Time and Date of Next Meeting

The next whole governing body meeting is on Tuesday 11 December 2018 at 3.00pm.

The meeting closed at 5.50pm.

ACTION POINTS FROM 20 November 2018			
	Action to be completed	By whom	By when
A	Email an ideal computing spending wishlist to ST. ST to visit to see the impact of Chromebooks.	Kay Howard/ST	11 Dec
B	Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance. Next assembly 11 December, 2.45pm.	All govts	Penultimate week each term
C	Write the termly newsletter paragraph.	NW	End spring term
D	Write a health and safety report once a term following the H+S audit.	BS	End of term
E	Chase Andrew Clark about separating the online H+S diary into H+S and fire and moving emails into separate file.	BB/MD	11 Dec
F	Attend one visit between meetings plus events emailed from BB.	All govts	Ongoing
G	Complete another self-evaluation of governance	All govts	Spring 2019
H	Repeat the parent and pupil safeguarding questionnaire	All govts	11 Dec
I	Study the list of volunteers and email staff to remove outdated entries.	Andrew C	11 Dec
J	Consider how to update the volunteer list.	PH/BB	11 Dec
Agenda Items for Future Meetings			Date
	First health and safety report	BS	11 Dec
	Discussion of OFSTED framework areas	All govts	11 Dec
	Agree newsletter updates on the budget, decisions made and governor roles	All govts	Once a term
	Updates on the extension	Paul Atkins	Ongoing
	Safeguarding (standing item, to include CPOMS reports and safeguarding meeting summaries)	PH	Ongoing