

Minutes of the Teaching, Learning and Outcomes Committee, Thursday 13th January 2020

Present: Angel Gurria (Chair), Neil Perry, Katie Hehir, John Parkin, Tony Davies.

Present for Agenda items 1-3: Melissa Hatcher, Fiona Norman

Clerk: Lis Silver

1. Apologies for absence

There were apologies for absence from Rosa Mottershead.

2. Declaration of direct or indirect pecuniary interests relevant to agenda items

There were no additional direct or indirect pecuniary interests declared.

3. Report on Progress of Science Curriculum Development Team

The Head reminded the meeting that currently staff teams with one teacher from each year are working on development of curriculum subjects in staff meetings to ensure there is a full review and joined up thinking across the school which will be written up as a detailed curriculum document for future use and to ensure continuity. He advised that all subjects will be looked at whilst recognising that some areas are going to be significant pieces of work and noted that staff are enjoying the review process. One of the big topics is the Science curriculum but the team has worked effectively and efficiently.

Melissa and Fiona outlined the work their group has undertaken on the Science curriculum. Key points are:

- Ensuring all national objectives are met across the year groups with minimal overlap
- Ensuring progression of skills and different experiences in every year group
- Development of varied and interesting investigations where children can learn to work and think scientifically – one per half term for every year group e.g. Bean growing to look at plants or experiments involving magnets or circuits. Whilst there is set work there is also opportunity for high achieving children to develop the experiment e.g. to see if out of date beans still grow
- Maintenance of physical resources needed; moving to a model where classes/year groups hold their own resources rather than returning to Science cupboard
- Provision of information about topics and resources online to help teachers deliver less familiar topics.

Plan B has been identified as a useful website to help plan investigations with direct links to the National curriculum objectives for new topics e.g. Year 3 have bought an off the shelf package on magnets (£12-14 for 6-week block) to give confidence. The package includes PowerPoint presentations, differentiated work, traditional lessons ideas plus options for creative activities. Plan B is not a subscription website, but you can just buy what is needed. Stock taking of current resources will be done, alongside mapping of required resources and the information given to the Head to enable a suitable budget to be considered. It was noted that much of the investment in equipment will be a one-off cost although there will be annual costs e.g. for plants each year.

In answer to questions the team confirmed that most children love Science and teachers enjoy teaching and see the importance of raising the profile of Science across the school. The school run a STEM week tied in with the University Science week and including Maths and ICT. The next one is in March and titled “Our diverse planet” and a letter is being sent to parents this week. The school also

holds a database of science resources; people who can come in and speak on a variety of topics and also have invited Science Ambassadors in from a local pharmaceutical company. One of the governors advised that next year the University is merging their Science Festival and their Festival of Ideas (Humanities) so it is possible the timings may change, and the events offered. Details are still to be confirmed. The team confirmed that they are planning a Book look for the summer term and will be purchasing necessary resources for the new curriculum once the new budget is on place.

Melissa Hatcher and Fiona Norman left the meeting

TD advised that the Curriculum Development Team system works so that there are three teams working at any time; in addition to Science there have been teams looking at RE and Art. Every Local authority is required to supply an RE curriculum and on initial investigation the team felt that the review would be quick but on further reflection they have identified that the RE Curriculum for Cambridgeshire is based on open questions so the lesson can go in a variety of directions and can be very challenging for teachers. This requires teachers to spend more time in preparation and carry out a high level of independent research to confidently deliver the lesson. A typical question is "Should we look after our world?". The team are now thinking that it may be better to plan at regular intervals each half term or term. The Art team have also met and have identified that the current curriculum includes a series of nice activities but that it is difficult to show the required progression of skills whilst keeping the work aligned to current topics in other subjects e.g. making a Roman mask in clay may not show the required level of development of 3D modelling skills. Governors asked about what support is available and were advised that whilst there used to be subject specialists this role is no longer in place. The importance of having forums to share information and good resources was highlighted. The head advised that in some subjects there are schemes of teaching that can help teachers in subjects where they are less confident, but this is less the case with the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus for RE. In the meantime, the proposal is that time is given for planning by this team at a Staff meeting probably once a term.

The school has successfully used a scheme, Charanga, for Music and there the curriculum review in this area was short, focusing on ensuring that the curriculum is being robustly delivered and that there are performance opportunities for children built in e.g. assemblies.

The school has also very recently purchased an ICT learning platform called Purple Mash with appropriate lesson plans and software. Significant progress has been made in the delivery of ICT with the purchase of this scheme together with the recent decision to move to Google based on price and leasing of 83 new Chrome books (stored on 3 trolleys one on each floor). The decision was made to lease the laptops since there was little difference in cost and there will be support if not functioning unless damaged. The plan is to convert current laptops to Chromebooks for classroom use; to be distributed 3 per classroom with priority given to the ground floor classes who have half the number of computers on their trolley (so will be sharing each laptop between 2 children for classroom lessons). In answer to a question from a governor the Head confirmed that the school internet is adequate to support 90 laptops. A new server is being installed at half term and all laptops need to be handed in which will enable an audit of the condition of these machines. The order for the Chrome books will be made this week for delivery in 2-3 weeks and a teacher training day on using G:suite and Purple Mash is planned for the last day of term. TD advised that the ICT Lead David Trent is very knowledgeable and has been very helpful in researching these choices.

4. Agree Revised Terms of reference for the Teaching, Learning and Outcomes Committee

The Head advised the meeting that this document has been updated in line with discussions at the last TLOC and to ensure consistency with the Resource Committee terms. It was noted that all governors can technically attend both Committees.

The Committee unanimously approved the Terms of Reference for the Teaching, Learning and Outcomes Committee

5. Minutes of meeting held on 28th November 2019

Governors reviewed the minutes from last meeting and agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting.

6. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that are not covered by agenda items

7. Report from Character Education Link Governor Visit

NP reported that the Link Governor visit had taken place and a report would follow. He had talked through the latest version of the Action Plan with the Head and was happy with the progress. They had agreed that NP should visit again in September and have an opportunity to talk with children about events that had taken place and what they had learnt. NP advised that he had spoken to one of the Assistant Heads about visiting teaching for his previous visit but she had made the excellent point that unless Governors knew what they were looking for and understood what the teacher was trying to achieve that it was unlikely to be worthwhile. The Head noted that Ofsted talk about the 3I's of teaching:

Intention – curriculum statement

Implementation: What is actually done in the lesson

Impact – is the work have the expected effect

8. Discussion re Curriculum Section of Peer Review Visit Report and School Development Rubric

The last TLOC meeting had taken place on the day of the Peer Review visit and the finished report has now been received and circulated. Prior to the visit the staff team completed a self-assessment exercise on the Rubric statements. The visit is over 2 days with 5 people including an independent NAHT representative and Heads from local primary schools. The team carries out Learning Walks around the school and 20-minute lesson visits to test out hypothesis. They also carried out interviews with 2 pupil focus groups and groups representing class teachers and Curriculum leaders to check all the messages correlate.

The Chair noted how positive the report is and congratulated the Head and staff. Under most rubric statements the school achieves 'Established' or 'Leading' and there is a statement that no vulnerabilities were identified. The Head confirmed that it had been a useful process and it had been valuable to have external confirmation of how the school is doing. The NAHT rep provides independent challenge and had looked in detail at how Values are taught in the school in the absence of more obvious methods such as Mission statements but had found it more difficult to understand the approach at St Matthews.

The school is looking at the suggested strategies for development including use of some of NAHT produced resources. The following areas are being considered

- i) Development on Curriculum Leadership with TLR leaders who would cascade the information to Curriculum Leaders.

If further work is planned within our cluster of schools then there is a small amount of available funding for training, but any further work done at St Matthews alone would need to be funded by the school.

A questionnaire is being sent to the other schools in the cluster to see what area they think would be of value to their school.

- ii) Learning Development teams – groups of staff that meet regularly to talk about challenges with a particular child or group of children so that they can share good practice and techniques they have found useful in similar situations
- iii) Developing 'Deep Dive' material – technique used at Ofsted inspections e.g. for a subject to look at the 3I's. This is similar to work that St Matthews is already developing

The Head confirmed that the SLT have seen the report and he is intending to send the report to all the teaching staff and to the FGB. NAHT also organise 1-day reviews on a particular aspect of the curriculum and this might be useful for future development.

9. Planning Link Governor Visits

A question was asked by AG as to whether a new governor had been appointed to take over the Literacy Link Visits. It was agreed that Richard Warwick would be asked. It was also noted that John Parkin is the Link Governor for ICT.

- AG to carry out next Literacy & SEND visits in March. Reports from previous visits are outstanding
- NP to carryout Pupil Premium visit – timing to be midway between annual data review by FGB.
- NP has just done Character Education and will visit again in September to talk to a small group of children.
- JP is visiting Early Years after half term and is awaiting a reply to book an ICT visit
- RM planning Maths visit in next few weeks

It was suggested that with all the changes in ICT it would be valuable if the ICT Lead could present at the next TLOC in June

Action: Head to arrange for ICT Lead to attend June TLOC

10. Future Meetings – dates and agreed agenda items

FGB – 11 March at 6.15pm

FGB – 6 May at 6.15pm

FGB – 8 July at 6.15pm

TLOC – Thursday 25 June at 5.30pm

10. A.O.B

There was no other business.

Approvals

The Committee unanimously approved the Terms of Reference for the Teaching, Learning and Outcomes Committee

Actions

- **Head to arrange for ICT Curriculum Lead to attend June TLOC**