

Minutes of the Teaching, Learning and Outcomes Committee (TLOC) held Online

Wednesday 17 October 2021

Present: John Parkin (JP, Chair), Rosa Mottershead (RM), Neil Perry (NP), Christina Bates (CB), Ricardo Herbane (RH), Katie Hehir (KH), Tony Davies (TD), Chris Jagger (CJ), Linda Jones (LJ), Kate Spencer-Allen (KSA).

Clerk: N/A

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Paul Waldman and Richard Warwick. Mark Tinkler was not present at the meeting.

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

Christina Bates is H & S rep for the National Education Union (NEU). There were no additional direct or indirect pecuniary interests declared.

3. Presentation on the Reception Baseline Assessment for Key Stage 1 and changes to the Early years Framework

Kate Spencer-Allen provided a detailed overview of the RBA and the changes to the Early Years Framework. Details of this are set out below.

A. Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

(i) Why introduce the RBA?

The aim is to assess the starting point for children, which can be compared against measures at Year 6, to provide improved progress measures that can help parents' understand and compare how much progress a school is delivering. Parents will be able to compare progress levels nationally and these will incorporate all KS1, as currently progress is measured only from the end of KS1.

(ii) What does it look like?

- It is an Interactive assessment of literacy, comprehension and maths. The assessment takes 20 minutes per pupil
- It is a one-to-one assessment, carried out within the first 6 weeks of a child starting reception.
- There is a formula and a strict script to follow, for consistency.
- The results are uploaded onto the RBA website and will stay until Year 6.
- The School does not get the scores of any individual child, only a narrative summary.

(iii) How will St Matthews implement this and how will it affect transition from nursery into reception?

- The key is to keep the first experience of reception positive, for parents and children
- There is a training day in September, with a timetable for the assessments

- Experience shows that it takes a long time to get children comfortable with being able to do our baseline (ie 6 weeks)
- As this is supposed to be a 'true' baseline, it was completed in the first two weeks of reception, when classes were small.
- The reception teachers' verdict is that the assessment is very dry and therefore difficult – language meant questions were unclear/odd, the maths was outdated, so teachers did not expect children would do well, and the school doesn't get the scores to see if this is correct or not.
- It was a distraction from settling in the children
- As teachers cannot deviate from the script, it felt like exam conditions and was a missed teaching opportunity.

The School therefore use the RBA and their judgment and existing approach, to triangulate the data for target tracker.

The external monitor who observed the RBA was extremely positive as to how St Matthew's has implemented this requirement.

LJ question: this feels 'anti Teaching and Learning'

When you set this up there are lots of unintended consequences ie if children do well, the school may show lower progress at year 6. Is there potential for gaming this system and will this have an impact?

Answer: yes, there is the potential to game the RBA, though this would not be our practice. The rationale for the test and the explanation for parents is that this is about choice (i.e. parents can compare progress across schools and choose accordingly), but practically parents don't have that much choice when choosing a school for their child.

RM: can parents 'opt out'? No

NP: Can parents get the data? No – they can get a narrative summary but it is not useful.

NP: Are they changing Year 6 assessments, to 'understand' the distance travelled , or is it still SATS?

It is still SATS in Year 6. But this year will be the last year of Year 2 SATS.

KH: With the 7-year gap between the RBA and year 6 SATs, children move schools. How is this managed?

If a child joins in reception, we will do the test then. If a school has a transient population, it reduces the numbers for comparison

JP: Is the narrative summary for the whole school?

No, just for the individual child, so teachers keep their own log of what has been happening, to get useful data for the school from the assessment

RM: When do we get data and what will it look like?

TD: expect we will get a 'value added' score at the end of Year Six. We will not have access to RBA scores.

KSA: the assessment was 10 hours of teacher time

NP: is it the same assessment for every child, regardless of other factors, such as English as an additional language?

KSA: we can adapt slightly, e.g. to make the text larger. For EAL, the child must be assessed purely in English.

B Early Years Framework (EYF)

Kate Spencer-Allen described the key changes to the EYF which came into force in September 2021.

- These tie into the RBA, so we have implemented both together
- Lots of the EYF is the same, which is positive. Strong emphasis on the 7 principles/Education programmes e.g. characteristics of integrated learning
- The new framework is a curriculum framework to build upon, so it is not prescriptive. Schools can build on it according to children's needs
- Play is central and essential, which is a St Matthews priority
- The biggest change is that early language is at the heart of the framework, with separate sections for birth – 3 years; 3 -4 years; and reception
- There should be access to a 'broad and balanced' curriculum and early language. This fits into the oracy focus of the whole school
- The hope is that early language narrows the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children
- The Government looking to reduce teacher workload, i.e. with more teacher time spent interacting with kids, and less time apart from children. So there is less emphasis on unnecessary paperwork
- There is no need to make any big change to the current EY curriculum at St Matthew's. The new framework can be integrated without major changes to current practice
- A key area is checking the 'unnecessary paperwork' aspect, so we are moving to a more electronic version of learning journeys. Balance is key and this is a focus for the EY teaching at St Matthew's. Overall, there has been a positive response to the new EYF
- One change is that the assessment bands have changed to only 'emerging' or 'expected' ie there is no longer an 'exceeding' band in EY. There is also no Local Authority moderation of assessment, just internal or cluster moderation.

CJ: St Matthew's reception is always outstanding. It is good to revisit but hard to find improvements, given how good it is. How about utilising parents more?

KSA: this is difficult at the moment, but always good to engage the community. Early language and oracy can be partnered with parents. To raise profile - learning to talk and learning 'through' talk. Additional adults in nursery is great – bar Covid. It is good to model learning, but it is a difficult skill.

TD: well done reception and nursery team. We are ahead of the game with an oracy focus. Tribute to KSA and the team and Liz Steel.

JD: There have been lots of changes for EY. New assessments, curriculum, Covid etc.

KSA: Yes, the team are exhausted. Now focusing on workload.

There was a discussion about workload in early years, especially in respect of the information shared with parents. CB noted that the reception is using Tapestry (an online platform for information sharing) and parents really like this, but it creates an expectation of regular information, which perhaps pressures staff and isn't needed by parents. RM noted that there can be too much information provided from schools sometimes. KSA said that nursery is using Instagram and FB for updates, but not for photos (given data security issues). It was noted that a key priority for EY teachers is to make the children feel secure, not the parents, so it isn't necessary to spend lots of time sharing information with parents.

4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

John Parkin was nominated as Chair, and was unanimously elected.

Neil Perry was nominated as Vice Chair, and was unanimously elected.

5. Agree Terms of Reference for the Teaching, Learning and Outcomes Committee

The Terms of Reference were approved by unanimous vote

6. Minutes of the TLOC Meeting held on 8th July 2021

The minutes of the previous TLOC meeting were approved by the committee.

7. Matters arising and agreed actions update

The actions from the previous minutes were reviewed and agreed.

It was noted that the PTA are buying more Chrome Books for the school, which will be available for Key Stage 1. The Governors thanked the PTA.

8. Data Analysis and Target Setting for 2020 to 2021

TD presented the most recent data on attainment, and provided some background to the figures, and highlighted certain trends.

- Attainment was not as high as previous years, though the school has done well for Age Related Expectations in comparison to the data from the Juniper Report (which compares our outcomes with other schools who use Target Tracker at a local and national level).
- The data for 2021 was compared with 2019 (as 2020 is not a useful comparator, given covid-19 impacts). Again, there are many positives, with lots of "green" areas (i.e. exceeding 2019 attainment levels), but also quite a lot of "red" (i.e. below 2019 attainment levels).
- Overall, the data is positive, but there are significant challenges.

RM: the early years attainment levels are down in comparison to 2019, as would be expected. Are there any unexpected "red" data sets?

TD: not really. For example, year 1 results are higher than 2019. It needs to be remembered that this is a different cohort as well as the impact of covid-19, so divergence might not be covid-19 related. Also, the lower years have got longer in St Matthew's to catch up. We are confident that by year 6, the children will have "caught up" (i.e. any impact from covid-19 interruptions would have been mitigated)

JP: is there a focus on pupil premium children in early years?

TD: For in year progress, the figures are high. 76-79% of children are making expected in year progress. Even during lock-down. For pupil premium, there are only 80 children in this group. There is not a massive difference in attainment to all children, but there is still a difference. The numbers of children with SEN support is also lower. These are the children where the impact of lock-down is felt most keenly. To show 7 steps of progress is still high, despite missing school. This is more than expected progress. It is clear though that pupil premium and SEN support children have lower numbers, and these children have fallen a little further behind since pre-covid.

Children who have made expected progress over the last 2 years (i.e. the whole of the pandemic), are at 72%, 74% and 70%. These children have not fallen behind. For the other 30%, we can manage this.

The conclusions from the data are that there has been rapid progress in the year 5 writing score. This data supports our covid catch-up focus on writing and maths.

LJ: is there any overlap between SEN support, pupil premium and EHCP?

TD: SEN support and pupil premium tend to overlap, but we don't get useful data for EHCP (the numbers are so small and the needs are very specific). The data we have for pupil premium without additional needs is very good. We were doing very well here pre-pandemic.

JP: this is a testament to the hard work of teachers and teaching assistants. The data shows great improvements, for example the year 5 writing scores.

Targets for 2022:

TD explained that year 6 SATs will go ahead in 2022, but that the data won't be published and there won't be league tables. The data will be available to the school.

In terms of the targets for year 2, and for pupil premium and SEN support require more than expected progress for these children. It is more difficult to make predictions about outcomes than previous years as we are in very uncharted waters – we have never had children who have missed school in the way that we have seen in the last two year, so we have no past experience to use to judge how the medium term impact of this and how they will respond to teaching and targeted support.

[NP left the meeting at 19:05]

9. St Matthew's Catch-up Premium Plan

The pupil premium plan for the School will be presented at the December Full Governing Body meeting. This will add financial analysis and incorporate an outline of spending for some of the covid-19 grants. TD summarised the different covid-19 grants available to the school:

There are three different grants.

1. last year we received £48,000. The initial plan was to spend this on tutoring, but then the school went back into lockdown, so it remains unspent. We have the NELI programme in the early years, and we are now using this grant to achieve rapid progress in writing. This means paying for the additional release time of teachers in years 1 – 6. It is for all classes, but the focus is on pupil premium and SEND children, as these will be the ones most needing help.

2. We also have a fund of £12,000 for the tutoring programme. There is a complicated formula to get the number of hours of tutoring at £18 per hour. The government then pays for 75% of this total amount. The funding must be spent on tutoring, and spending is audited. If it is not spent on tutoring, it must be returned. We have recruited a teacher, where part of their work is to focus on mathematics for years 2 and 3. Groups of 3 children get half an hour of maths tutoring during their normal maths lessons, for a six week block. This is small, focused tuition, to close gaps in learning, so the children can then engage in their full class maths lessons, better able to understand and progress. We will wait to see how effective this is. We have no choice about how to apply the funding, so this is the approach we have to follow. The remaining 25% of the tutoring costs comes out of the following grant.
3. We have a further grant of approximately £10,000, which must be spent on covid-19 catch up, but is more flexible in how we apply this money. We are using it to fund an extra year 6 class set (i.e. an extra group for the most vulnerable), for a one hour lesson each day. We are pausing the NELI programme, and have recruited an extra teaching assistant for year 1. Each year 1 class has a full time TA. This replicates the reception structure, as year 1 needs to catch up. This is funded until Christmas. Then we will need to see if we can pay for this out of existing reserves.

A big issue is consistency of staffing. Our “tutor” now has a full-time position from January, and it is difficult to find a replacement. It is difficult to get TAs or supply teachers at the moment, so we are not sure how this will work.

JP: this seems a structured and well-thought out plan. What about reading?

TD: we are confident that we can manage reading through our existing structures. If we can follow our existing curriculum and teaching structures, the children will make the necessary progress in reading.

10. Planning Link Governor Visits

Maths visit planned for spring term

11. Dates of future meetings and agreed agenda items

The next TLOC meeting will be on Wednesday 9 March 5.30 pm

12. A.O.B

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at [19.30]