

Minutes of the Teaching, Learning and Outcomes Committee, Thursday 7th March 2019

Present: Carole Mills, Angel Gurria, Rosa Mottershead, Neil Perry, Katie Hehir, John Parkin, Mark Tinkler, Tony Davies.

Clerk: Lis Silver

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence and all members attended the meeting.

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

There were no additional direct or indirect pecuniary interests declared.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 22nd November 2018.

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

4. Matters Arising

- List of Link Governors reviewed and updated at last FGB
- Rosa Mottershead has arranged link visit to review Maths including progress on Action plan for the week after STEM week.
- Debora Lucarelli's report from Science visit still to be shared with governors. Agreed that this should be presented by DL at the next FGB

Action: DL to present Science Link visit report to next FGB

5. Curriculum Leadership Developments

Governors reviewed the list of roles of TLR2.2 Leaders and looks at a new subject Self Evaluation form (for history). It was explained to the Board that TLR2.1/2.2 refers to posts with Teaching Learning Responsibility points. The scale is longer than this, but primary schools generally only use the first 2 points. TLR2.1 post holders join the Head and Assistant Heads to make up the Senior Leadership team for the school. TLR2.1 posts include Inclusion, SENCO, Maths and English (although this last post is held by an Assistant Head and this level is paid on the Leadership spine). TLR2.2 posts are the next level down and they are responsible for leading and supporting a small group of curriculum leaders. All teachers in the school have responsibility for some area of the curriculum. This is a development from the previous structure where there were area leaders but in reality, they led on a subject area rather than leading a team and there was variability in the success seen. The revised Curriculum and Leadership paper outlines the focus of work and Key processes/responsibilities more clearly and the expectations of TLR2.2s to support and challenge a particular group of curriculum leaders. To date much of the work done on this area has been in the form of training at Staff meetings e.g. looking at data analysis (which in future will be done in the Autumn term) and monitoring, planning and assessment. The next stage is looking at book checks – systematic review in each subject of what is happening throughout the school in that curriculum areas so that all subjects are up to date. In answer to a question governors were advised that teachers can do this work in Funtrition (Food education programme) when they get one hour's cover for half a term. TD made it clear that this process is not intended to increase teacher's workload and it is important to maintain a good work life balance for teachers. KH, a staff governor advised the governors that she is not a TLR but has responsibility for the curriculum area Library/Book Fairs. She

thought the new process had been well received by staff since it looks like a comprehensive and well thought through system and does not appear to increase work load for individual teachers. Teachers believe it will lead to increased confidence in knowing what is happening in each of the subject areas and will be valuable in ensuring that a broad and balanced curriculum is taught in the school. It has already raised questions about where available resources are and whether they are appropriate and highlighted things that are no longer happening. She advised that History and Geography are leading the way on the self- but that even for her less traditional subject area the format is effective evaluation. TD confirmed that he is already seeing quick improvements from staff following the process. He has met with the TLR2.1s who are happy with the new process although they are aware that the process will continue to evolve. He advised the governors that the 3 column headings to rate development had been selected from the Peer Review terminology rather than using the Ofsted definitions

The sample SEF report was reviewed, and it was noted that this is a working document for the area leader so contains quick bullet points and is not intended to reference sources but to act as a prompt on ongoing and outstanding actions. However, for an Ofsted audit and Link Governor visits it should be a very valuable reference document. It was noted that in the key areas of Literacy and Maths there are already detailed analysis in the school SEF and so the SEF for these areas is not intended to duplicate this work but to compliment it – the Maths one has already been drafted.

Governors confirmed that the new process looked very useful and was likely to be very helpful for governors to understand what was happening in curriculum areas.

Mark Tinkler joined the meeting at 18.00

6. Marking and Feedback Framework – page 9 revisions

TD reported that when the changes to the marking policy, to introduce no marking in Maths had been presented to the staff there had been an overall positive reception. If the trial goes well the staff will consider whether this can be extended to other subjects, but Maths is the obvious subject to start with since staff have felt that other methods of feedback are more effective than writing comments in this subject. He advised that there is at least one primary school that in Cambridgeshire that has a no marking policy for all subjects. He had attended a conference where the concept of a “No Marking “ policy had been presented. At the initial presentation to St Matthew’s staff there had been staff who had been very pleased and others who were nervous. As a team they had analysed the reasons for marking books to ensure the new methodology takes these things into account:

- Identify misconceptions
- Guidance to child to change – in Maths verbal feedback considered generally more effective
- Some children find the feedback very encouraging
- Evidence that the teacher is doing their job and reviewing the work

After 2 months of implementation there is unanimously positive feedback. There will still be a small amount of marking found in books e.g. peer marking or self-marking in Year 6. The policy is not a no review policy, so teachers are still carefully checking all the work in books, but feedback is given by alternative methods. For example, in Maths there may be 2 or 3 different misconceptions so books can be sorted into piles and verbal feedback provided to a group.

Governors asked if marking is currently assessed in teacher's appraisals. TD advised that, the assessment is about whether children are making the appropriate level of progress. Marking and feedback are just one aspect of the work of a teacher to ensure the children make progress. They also asked if there was a standard method that teachers were using and TD advised that there are a variety of individual methods; some teachers have set up a log of feedback based on their checks whereas others use a system such as recording in the next day's plan or using Post it notes – each teacher has developed a system that they find helpful. Review of books for a class will be looking for progress by a child – if a mistake is continually repeated then it will become clear that either checking or effective feedback is not taking place. Governors also asked whether the children had been motivated by the previous comments on their work but were advised that the children know their work is still being checked and they are receiving verbal feedback and no drop off in standard or volume of work has been seen. Parents have been made aware of the changes in the policy available on the website, but no specific letter has been sent and there was no negative feedback at the recent parents' consultations. It will be raised at the Meet the Head meeting in 2 weeks' time which is focussing on maths.

Governors asked about how this might be extended to other subjects like Literacy. TD reported that there is a Year 6 teacher who has trialled looking at extended writing pieces as they are being written in the class and providing feedback immediately. If she has not been able to look at all the books in the class, she gets the remaining children to hand their books in to be checked. This methodology provides a potential route forward for other subjects that could be developed. The staff governor advised that on Twitter there is a Hashtag for No marking and she has been following the comments on this, but they are mostly from secondary school teachers. Governors were pleased that St Matthew's is trail blazing this new approach. It was noted that verbal feedback must be effective for younger children since they are not able to read in Nursery/Reception. The revised document is a framework rather than a policy, so approval is not required but governors confirmed that they are very happy with the new approach.

7. Current Assessment and Progress to Targets in Statutory Assessments 2019

TD reminded the governors that Target tracker has now been in place for 2 years and following an initial steep learning curve with small adjustments to the way it was used it has now settled into a stable process. Target tracker is effectively a number crunching methodology to advise staff on progress and whether the class is on track for Statutory assessments. The school is only routinely using 4 of the 6 possible levels; the school have found it more definitive to have broader targets so 4B+ and 4W+ are not used to measure progress. In a year a child would be expected to achieve 6 steps of progress. The examples for year 4 were given:

4B – beginning (child on track in Autumn term to achieve age related expectation (ARE))

4W – working towards ARE - child on track in Spring term to achieve age related expectation

4S – secure at ARE- child on track in Summer term to achieve age related expectation

4S+ - working at greater depth than ARE

The staff governor confirmed that she found using the 4 broader bands better having previously worked in a school that used all 6 categories. She also noted the advantages of working in a 3-form entry school since it is possible to do mini moderation exercises across the classes in a year or between different years. JP

The report summary indicated that most groups are on track and identifies a small number of areas of concern which were reviewed at the meeting. Year 1 writing is an area of concern and in

particular one class, who now have a new teacher, is under review since there is not sufficient evidence to support assessing the children at 1B. There is also concern about the phonics target of 84% being particularly challenging and work is being done on how the story time phonics is used to better target areas of concern. Governors noted that on the charts there is a comment that says Missing data – it was explained that this is because of new children arriving during the year. It was noted that where the school identifies that a child is not making the expected progress then the context that the child is learning in will be looked at and where necessary a plan put in place with the family. For pupil premium children, “Barriers to Learning “ Sheets have been developed to analyse issues that individual children face, such as issues at home so that the school can put appropriate support in place.

The Committee members thanked KH for the insight that she had been able to bring to discussions as a class teacher.

Neil Perry left the meeting at 18.35

8. Planning Link Governor Visits and Reports from visits

The meeting noted that the Science visit had taken place and the report would be coming to the FGB. The Maths, English and SEND visits are all scheduled for the next few weeks and can be reported on at the next TLOC meeting. It was noted that the Early Years visit had been postponed for personal reasons and would be rescheduled. The Link Visit for Character Education still needs to be scheduled.

9. Future Meetings – dates and agreed agenda items

FGB - Thursday 14th March at 18.15

TLOC – Thursday 13 June at 17.30.

10. A.O.B

TD advised that

- Val Palmer (LA Advisor) had visited and done a learning walk to Year 6, 2 and Nursery. The visit had been very positive.
- governors were probably aware that the local Academy including the secondary school that the majority of children go on to had recently announced that it was joining United Learning, a large and diverse academy group made up of both primary and secondary schools. MT advised that he is currently doing some work with this Academy partnership in London. The move is likely to be linked to the retirement of the CEO of the group of schools and financial requirements.
- Budget information had very recently been received and it was not looking good. At the cut-off date of 5 October there had been 16 vacancies (because lots of local pupils leave in the summer because of short term contracts). The frustrating part is that the school had families wanting to join but slow processing of applications by the local authority meant this was not done in time for the cut-off. These spaces result in a reduction of £62K. This reduction in funding will have significant implications for the school. It was noted that the school is now full with only 1 vacancy.

TD advised that there are 2 children with significant emotional behaviour needs for whom plans drawn up in conjunction with the Local Authority Specialist Teaching Team involve full time one-to-one support. The school is being very clear with the local authority that it does not have the capacity in its current budget to fund this support.