



Curriculum & Outcomes Committee

20 May 2021, 4 pm [by Zoom]

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were noted from Matthew Burns, Emma Morgan and Lucy Rossiter.

2. Curriculum update

School Improvement Partner Sarah Somers has conducted the first of her planned deep dives to test compliance with the new Ofsted inspection framework, and reported very favourably on the documentation, website, and interview with the subject coordinator. There is a need for some further work on 'cultural capital' (a new focus which recognises children's local and global citizenship). Sarah was also very satisfied with her examination of 'big books' to ensure that learning and knowledge objectives are progressively more difficult and well-coordinated, and with the monitoring system; small tweaks on supporting the lowest 20% (i.e. those who are not meeting age-expected targets) will improve these further. Lesson observation was not possible (not least because the subject chosen had been an easier one to maintain during lockdown and was therefore not such a significant focus following the full return to school), but interviews with staff about what was being taught and why went well.

Sarah also took a sample of the 'pupil voice' and noted that while there is book-based evidence of good teaching and learning, there was less evidence that children will remember things which they have been taught, and more evidence will need to be gathered that children understand and remember the key concepts of foundation subjects. Lesson observations at Kimbolton have shown that a good approach is to build previous knowledge into the introduction of new themes. Sarah cautioned against diluting subjects by referring in passing to previous knowledge of a different subject. This was illustrated by an example of teaching about the Himalaya which builds on and expands existing geographical knowledge and provides an opportunity to return to the Himalaya (not literally) to discuss history and citizenship, including the impact of colonialism and human rights.

With regard to the music curriculum, a further meeting about music between Sallie, Camilla and Nicola had been postponed, but governors noted the successes in delivering the music curriculum, noted Martin's excellent work in this area, and thanked Nicola for leading a staff meeting about music. Additional resources could include the husband of a new Kimbolton teacher who is an experienced military band leader. The school will also participate in *Young Voices*.

Governors appreciated that the foundation curriculum paperwork is strong and were satisfied that remaining gaps can be addressed as part of the catch-up programme over the next four terms. A review with headteachers of other subjects (e.g. PE, History, IT and D&T) will take place in September. Subject dashboards on the school's website (including feedback) will also be valuable. Governors agreed that expertise as a subject lead is more important than subject-specific expertise, as the latter can be more easily learned and this provides appropriate flexibility. Observations for subject leads will take place in the Autumn term.

Adam is working on the School Development Plan for the coming academic year, which will include key questions and observation points for children and staff and embed a two-year rolling programme for each subject. The statements for curriculum intent and implementation will include a separate curriculum for EYFS to ensure that early learning goals are not a checklist and include foundation subject targets.

3. Outcomes update

Class teachers have been asked to rank children according to ability, noting those who are working towards, expected, and greater depth, and this will then be compared with Reception and KS1 data to identify gaps; the main finding appears to be that some children who were at the lower end of 'expected' have slipped towards 'working towards' during lockdown, and governors were satisfied that there are robust plans in place to close this gap, including intervention by a member of staff (and former deputy headteacher) who is helping out in Class 1 until the end of the year to ensure that this gap is closed.

Governors acknowledged that more gaps continued to be exposed as teaching and other intervention continue, and that current outcomes will improve as the catch-up programme continues through the next academic year. This is expected to be reflected in end-of-year assessments.

Governors queried the provision for Year 6, and noted that the current approach is not dissimilar from high schools' approach with Year 11, who have also missed a lot of schooling in a crucial transitional year. The Year 6 children are being pushed as much as possible to catch up before half term (with additional support and intervention), so that they can focus on some of the 'softer' elements of education before their transition to high school. This approach, supported by the Year 6 teacher, is expected to ensure that students will have met their target at final assessment, and initial indications are very positive. The focus will then shift to supporting Year 5 children in closing the gap as they prepare for Year 6. Governors appreciated the proactive and individual engagement by high schools as Year 6 children prepare for transition.

4. Safeguarding

Governors reiterated their huge appreciation of the work that Libby has done with individual children and families to ensure that Orleton has not seen the increased safeguarding concerns seen at other schools after lockdown, which will now be replicated in part by the LA on a short-term basis, but expressed their frustration that similar interventions have generally been insufficient and unsustainable and are therefore likely to be ineffective.

Governors questioned the impact of returning to in-person lessons and noted the increased focus on ensuring that quieter children (especially girls who are well-behaved in school but are not making expected academic progress) have the opportunity to speak up, e.g. through Jigsaw, the school's new PSHE programme.

5. Wellbeing

Governors endorsed the school's approach to balancing a focus on academic work while being mindful of the needs of children as they readjust to school, admired the children's resilience, and appreciated the support which Libby has provided. This balance and the catch-up programme over four terms should help to ensure the children's well-being.

6. Christian distinctiveness

Sallie, Liz and Matthew have met with Adam to discuss the school's vision and how that and a half-termly value will be embedded into the curriculum, behaviour policy, assemblies, teaching (e.g. "where have we seen 'courage' in this lesson?"), and the well-being of all stakeholders. The approach will include Bible stories which illustrate each value and examples of how these values are reflected in stories from other faith traditions. Sallie's brief Foundation Governors' report for local churches' forthcoming Annual Parochial Church Meetings, which has been well-received.

7. Chair of Governors' briefing update on EYFS

Among other topics discussed at the Chairs' briefing on 19 May was the statutory change in EYFS baseline assessments from September 2021, which is part of a new Early Years assessment framework in which children have 'prime' and 'specific' areas of assessment from birth to aged 5 and is part of assessing children from Reception to Year 6 without requiring additional assessment at the end of KS1. Presentation slides with the details of these change will be circulated with the minutes.

8. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 11 February 2021 were unanimously approved.

9. Matters arising

None.

10. Any other business

None.

11. Date of next meeting

The dates for the next academic year will be confirmed at the Full Governing Body meeting scheduled for 4:30pm on 1 July 2021.