



Directors' Note for Portfolio Groups

Portfolio title: Pilton Bluecoat Ethos Group and Local Governing Body

Date of meeting: 1st October 2021, 1.30pm

Attended by: Caroline Tucker, Marion Sanders, Dan Polak, Zoe Charlton (attending virtually, until 2.54pm), Verity Goss (clerk), Claire Gregory (until 2.08pm)

Brief overview of discussion

Welcome

CT welcomed all to the meeting.

Opening with Prayer

MS led the opening prayer.

ETHOS

Meeting with the new Ethos Ambassadors and the lead members of staff

DP informed local governors that unfortunately the Ethos ambassadors were taking part in Friday sports, and so were not available for this meeting. CG had joined the meeting to explain her role in the school as a pupil parent support worker, and talk about leading the ethos ambassadors.

Going forward the role of the ethos ambassadors would be changing slightly, to reflect the whole ethos of the school, rather than limited to worship and beliefs. The yurt had been set up with the purpose of providing a quiet reflection area for children. Books in the yurt included reflective books and books about emotions as well as story books and colouring books. At the moment the space was being used by children when they felt that being on the playground was overwhelming, and needed the space for quiet time. During lesson time the space was used for children who needed additional support – certain children needed a weekly check in, but there were also times when children had one off issues and wanted help with these.

Was this similar to a Thrive room? DP explained the idea was that children had the experience of 'being' – gaining contentment with where they are. It was a space to reflect, and to stop and be. There were some similarities to Thrive ideas, but the space was customised to the needs at Pilton.

Was there space to lie down if needed? CG confirmed there was space for children to lie down if they felt they needed to, and some did spend some time asleep.

CG reported that children in Y3 and Y4 were finding the space helpful as they got used to being part of the whole school environment, which they had not previously been due to Covid. Children were encouraged to also spend time outside, but the supportive inside space was available if needed.

Were children who found outside overwhelming taught coping mechanisms? CG stated that children were taught coping techniques inside the yurt, and how they could

transition to using these outside as well.

Who provided the adult supervision? Adult supervision was either CG, Hayley Bowles (also pupil parent support worker), or Kate Taylor (SENCO).

Learning Champions Programme

Some of the learning champion activities had been able to start again, but due to restrictions Pathfield Buddies and Pilton House had not been able to start again yet. A new boxing learning champions group had started – CG explained the benefits from this included learning resilience, self control, self confidence and coping with frustrations. The cooking group taught life skills, and also work around healthy eating, trying new things and learning behaviours. Children also wrote the method they'd used and evaluated with results, and had to plan for the next week's session. This was a small group, which was working better than when there had been larger cooking groups in the past. Outdoor provision worked on children building relationships and working with others, as well as getting used to different adults within the school environment. A walking group was being set up, who would go for walks in the local area to find out information and what could be experienced in the local environment.

Were parents involved in this process? CG explained that there was normally a telephone call to the parents, explaining the benefits their child would get from joining that particular group. There had not been any negativity from parents around this. Sometimes parents would voice specific concerns about their child's needs, and staff discussed how their needs would be met as part of the group. CG explained how they were careful not to take a child out of lessons that the particularly thrived on to be part of the groups.

How is the outcome for children evaluated and evidenced? CG explained they were currently working on how it was evidenced, as there were not always measurable outcomes. Children would also naturally have good and bad days, so the impact needed to be looked at over a longer term. Seeing outcomes was down to really knowing the children, so staff could see the impact the activities had on individual children. DP explained the difference that the programs could have on different children. CG explained that things did not always go as expected, giving an example of a child who had been placed in the farm group but who had not responded as well as expected, but the child had been moved to the walking group and was doing really well.

Local governors thanked CG for her report, and were interested in hearing from her again at the end of the year to see the longer impact of the programs.

CG left 2.08pm.

Overview of RE leadership and daily worship

DP informed local governors that daily worship had restarted in school, including a weekly singing assembly and the Church leading Tuesday morning worship. DP felt that it was important to have a variety of people leading worship sessions. It had been decided that it was better for lunchtime prayers to happen in the classroom before children were dismissed to lunch, as they were then more focussed.

Church events

MS stated that the new advertisement for the new minister had gone out – deadline for applications was the 27th, it was hoped an appointment could be made by the 11th. The church was doing well – there was a consistent congregation, although larger families had not yet returned as it was difficult to accommodate the numbers with the current restrictions. Plans for Christmas services and events were discussed.

Parent group initiatives

DP stated that fundraising Christmas cards were planned. Some new parents had joined the parent group, and had added to the ideas for fundraising.

MAIN BUSINESS MEETING

Apologies

Apologies received and accepted from Louisa Burbidge and Caroline Preston.

Register of Business Interests

No interests declared.

Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising from the minutes

VG to request list of acronyms are placed on Bluesky.

Return visit of CT and CP – to book date with DP.

Correspondence

None received. CT had written an article for school newsletter.

Reports

Head of School report

All had received. Questions invited.

DP explained that 17 rotary club members had volunteered to come in to read with children, most of whom were ex educationalists.

DP explained curriculum leads and how these fitted with the vision for learning across TEAM. Curriculum leads knew the schools very well. DP explained the Ofsted inspection at Witheridge had gone, and that it was felt to be a very fair inspection.

DP explained the current government approach to growing MATs – TEAM was being encouraged to grow to avoid being made to join a bigger trust. Schools were beginning to make enquiries about joining TEAM – DP explained that the common vision was that schools coming in would need to share TEAM's ethos and values.

Management Partnership with Pilton Infants – DP explained that the service level agreement had not yet been signed, but this was not seen as an impediment to working together. The school was joining in with some TEAM activities such as sports events, and were also part of the school improvement cycle. Pilton Infants were due an Ofsted inspection. DP explained the changes to the Ofsted Framework were significant since the last time Pilton Infants, Witheridge and High Bickington were inspected – it was very rare to get outstanding, and good was also difficult to get.

CT had watched a presentation on Ofsted Inspections for governors by David Bisset, and would share this with the Local Governing Body.

What was the teacher training program DP was involved with? DP explained that TEAM had taken on a teaching training course when the previous provider had stated they would not be able to do it. Some external providers were being used, but TEAM was also using this as an opportunity to develop staff within the trust. The decision had not yet been made on whether TEAM would continue to facilitate this the next year. Local governors discussed the benefit of training teachers to a good quality for future needs of the schools. DP confirmed that the schools were reimbursed for cover costs when their teachers were involved in the training.

When was Pilton Bluecoat next due and Ofsted inspection? DP stated that it would be due in January, but schools had been informed that there was a six term extension to the Ofsted timeline – it would likely be a year or two.

DP was working on the MPQH qualification – for headteachers through the Church of England, specifically related to church schools.

ZC left 2.54pm.

How was the school looking after staff wellbeing? DP stated that the new feedback policy was a strength, and greatly benefitted the workload of staff. DP explained the importance of leadership and setting the example of not staying at school for hours. DP reported that in the staff survey 100% had stated they were happy working in the school. Local governors felt that staff wellbeing would be a good focus for a governor visit.

Current Covid situation

DP reported that there were currently two members of staff off with Covid, and 13 cases in total across the school since the beginning of the school year. The school had not

met the criteria to be considered an outbreak. Cases were spread across the school, not in clusters so further actions were not triggered at this point.

Recovery fund update

DP explained the use of this funding. Staff were being employed to support specific groups of children, including those who had been affected by the lack of socialisation over lockdown and changes to school. Funds were also being used for additional books for the library.

Attendance

Current whole school attendance 95.2% so far – DP explained that a number of children were suffering from colds. Covid absences with 'X' codes did not count towards absent figures. Two families had persistent absenteeism - DP explained how the school was supporting these families in trying to improve attendance, including support from the Educational Welfare Officer.

Monitoring and Accountability

Safeguarding

DP explained the support that had been put in place to work with families where this was needed. *How effective was MASH?* DP explained the different levels of support and agency involvement. The threshold for referrals to MASH where parental consent was not required was very high. There was no access to educational psychologist support this half term – there was very limited numbers of educational psychologists in Devon.

KCSiE Policy review

Local governors were reminded of the need to read this policy and confirm using the online form.

School Self-Evaluation

Local governors agreed it would be useful to have a session where they could practise the type of questions Ofsted were likely to ask, which would link to the type of questions they should be asking at meetings.

Governor visits autumn term - focus on monitoring

CT felt it would be useful to come back into school to monitor the progress since her last visit. It had been interesting to see children's responses to the visualiser, and would be good to see how this had progressed. Visits to subject leaders would also be beneficial. DP stated towards the end of term would be most useful. Historically governors had monitored the core subjects, and would now need to be mindful that all subjects were considered. Dates to be booked – Spring term subject leads.

Health and Safety Visit report

Received – no major issues to report.

Strategic

Pilton Infants Management Partnership

Covered earlier in the meeting.

Governor Training / Bluesky

CT had attended virtual training with Simon Bisset, with another session the next week. MS was also attending this training.

Bluesky – all local governors had completed their self evaluations, but CT felt that people were underestimating themselves. CT would distribute a guide to the questions being asked, which would give local governors more perspective on what was meant by each question and how these could be applied to transferable skills.

Additional governors

CT stated that the article had gone out in the newsletter, but nobody had been in contact.

Matters brought forward by the Chair

Dates of next meetings: To be confirmed.