



Directors' Note for Portfolio Groups

Portfolio title: Pilton Bluecoat Ethos Group and Local Governing Body

Date of meeting: 27th January 2021

Attended by: Dan Polak, Louisa Burbidge, Caroline Preston, Caroline Tucker, Zoe Charlton, Marion Sanders, Verity Goss (clerk),

Brief overview of discussion

ETHOS

Apologies

No absences. CT welcomed all to the meeting and outlined the purpose.

CT introduced MS, who was covering the incumbent position vacated by Nigel Dilkes. DP thanked governors for giving up their time for the meeting.

All had received minutes from the previous meeting.

Collective Worship / Celebrations / Community based work

DP stated that a lot of what had been planned had to be put on hold. MS currently was filming a collective worship each week, which was viewed by both children in school and those at home.

Governors were aware the current time was socially isolating for children. Idea of celebration collective worship for each class discussed. DP explained how staff tried to create an element of calm in what they did. A governor asked whether there was anything the church was doing that they found positive that the school may also find useful – MS gave an example of the coffee morning chatter sessions. DP confirmed that this was an idea the school was looking at. MS suggested creating a trail round the churchyard for children to look at when going for walks. The parish had also bought a copy of a book on using prayer for the school.

MS reminded governors it was part of her role to talk to parents if they wanted to outside of school, and also governors and staff. Governors thanked MS for this offer.

MAIN BUSINESS MEETING

Welcome and apologies

Meeting moved on to main business.

Register of Business Interests

None declared.

Minutes of previous meeting

Agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising from the minutes

Follow up – DP to share School Development Plan.

Child not returned to school – had now withdrawn from school roll.

Correspondence

None received.

Governor changes

CT informed local governors that Michelle Potter had stepped down from her role. MS confirmed as a new member of the Local Governing Body. The process was in place to also appoint MS to the board of trustees, as a replacement for the ex officio role vacated by Nigel Dilkes. TEAM's Articles of Association specified that the chair of the LGB would be a trustee. MS did not feel confident to chair the meeting currently – CT to continue as temporary chair.

Covid-19 Related Issues

Head of School report on arrangements, virtual learning, attendance

All had received head of school report. Questions invited.

Were SATS definitely cancelled? IT confirmed that all primary assessments were cancelled except for the Y4 times tables test, which was voluntary. All would be teacher assessments, which did raise some difficulties. The school would be working to remove as much bias as possible. Would assessments be on where the child was at the time, or where they would have been if they had been at school full time? DP explained that children's progress was rarely linear, so it was not possible to completely accurately predict the level children would have reached under different circumstances. Teacher assessments would be based on where the children were as close to the end of the school year as possible. DP informed local governors that secondary schools generally asked for teacher assessments as well as for SATS results – staff were able to give more details such as particular areas a child found difficult.

Would the school be introducing and live videos? DP explained what feedback there had been from parents – there had been some requests for videos from teachers. Live lessons tended to be more difficult to be successful than pre-recorded. DP agreed that it was sometimes easier for a child to understand a concept if it was described by a teacher they were familiar with. The school was using technology which allowed the recording of voice notes for feedback on children's work. Consistency of feedback across the school was being worked on.

Did feedback need to be individually typed for each child, or was it possible to have a selection of ready written responses to customise, which would help teacher workload? DP stated he had been asking staff how manageable giving feedback on each piece of work was – it was possible to group some tasks together for feedback. Parental feedback had indicated that those at home were finding it hard to motivate their children, which was why the school was working on making feedback as personalised as possible.

A scavenger hunt had been mentioned in the report – were teachers setting other tasks like this? DP explained that a balance was needed – the government required that most of the offer had to be recorded teaching sessions, either recorded by the teacher or sourced elsewhere. DP was conscious that children did need to be able to step away, and that time away from devices was important.

DP confirmed that the home learning offer from the school had been published online to meet the national requirement. CT explained that if a parent complained to Ofsted about what was being offered by the school, Ofsted would first look at the school website.

How were staff doing? DP reported that generally all staff were positive and were working well, but were finding it tiring. It was harder work than being in a normal class. Some staff were vulnerable and were working from home.

Availability of devices for families – DP explained how the school was trying to make sure that all had access to devices. Some families had not realised that if they had only one device, they were able to borrow additional devices to ensure each child had access at the same time – DP would try and make this clear to parents.

Approximately 20% of children were in school. Was the school taking a register of which children were taking part in virtual lessons? DP stated there needed to be a balance, ensuring that there was not too much pressure on children. Staff did monitor which children attended and which were engaging in the online learning. Staff did phone to keep in touch with children where needed. Tact was needed – staff did need to present as being supportive of parents, rather than parents feeling like they are being called because they were failing at home learning. There was no guidance that schools should register virtual attendance – this was a school level decision.

How was the provision and feedback being evidenced? DP explained that as the school was using Google Classroom everything was saved, including the audio recordings of the staff feedback.

Local governors requested that DP pass on their thanks to staff for all their efforts.

Monitoring and Accountability

Assessment and feedback policy

Feedback discussed in previous item.

Curriculum development plan

Head of School report had indicated that the introduction of Curriculum Maestro had been received in a disjointed way – DP stated that there were some lessons on it that were really good, but that others had not had such good resources. DP explained that there had been some loss of cross year planning. Currently staff were working on reorganising the curriculum so that cross year planning could be maintained. DP confirmed that Curriculum Maestro could be tweaked so that it was more suitable for what staff wanted to get from it. An advantage of Curriculum Maestro was how it provided coherence around a specific topic, rather than being limited to staff members' pre-existing knowledge of the subject.

Safeguarding

DP stated that safeguarding issues had increased, which was the case in many schools. There had been a number of children with MASH referrals, and there were a greater number of children who now had a social worker. DP explained what happened in cases where the school did not hear from a vulnerable family.

Strategic

Governor Training

CT had attended the Babcock governance spring update. There were lots of resources available – for example the Q cards which had been distributed. The cards were available for a variety of subjects. Questions were not intended to be critical – they were a guide to finding out how the board could help improve what was going on in the school.

CT explained the setup of Bluesky for training, and how this would benefit the LGB. Local governors consented to their e-mail addresses being used to enable their accounts to be set up.

CP had attended safeguarding training. MS had attended a Diocese course on what parishes could do to support schools.

Parent Group

The group had organised a successful raffle. It was harder for the group to organise fundraising at the moment, as their normal events were not able to happen. LB explained how parents were able to join. CT to ask Helen to place a reminder in the newsletter.

Any Other business

None

Date of next meeting – Wednesday 17th Wednesday March, 7.30pm

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