

Minutes

LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD OF THE LINK PRIMARY SCHOOL

12 March 2019 at 6.00 pm at The Link Primary School

Attendees:

Stephen Lawes	Chair/ OHCAT Trustee
Lesley Nicolas	Vice Chair
Sandy Turner	Principal
Jan Loughborough	Governor
Lily Nwosu	Parent Governor
John Reilly	Governor

Also present:

Nic Andrews	Assistant Headteacher
Sue Denman	Deputy Headteacher
Norman MacDonald	OHCAT Management Accountant
Susanne Wicks	OHCAT Governance Manager
Dilma de Araujo	Observer

Absent:

Anita Clay
Laura Roberts
Rachael Watson

	Item	Action
1	DEMONSTRATION OF ASSESSMENT SYSTEM	
	<p>SD delivered a presentation on the school's assessment system and distributed copies of documents for the governors' reference. The presentation covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment systems in use at the school; • The national picture for assessment; • How the Link Primary School fits in with national procedures. <p>SD highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment is specially tailored towards the cohort in the school. • By having three methods of assessment, staff develop a very clear picture of each child. • All staff are mindful of the need to have next steps in place for every child's progress, even where it can be challenging to identify next steps. • The Link Priorities have been recently reviewed in order to dovetail with PSHE programme. There has been a focus recently on generalising as 	

	<p>well as developing new skills, with increased community visits, during which children can put their newly learned skills into action;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The challenge in submitting data to the DfE given the size of the school and the nature of the cohort. <p>In response to questions from governors, SD explained in detail how she uses the data to calculate progress made over the year. She confirmed that she can use the data to identify trends and monitor specific groups of the cohort, such as girls and boys, Pupil Premium (PP) and non-PP pupils, and groups with specific need.</p> <p>SD detailed the frequency of data collection and advised that targets are set termly. In addition, at the start of the academic year, she collates a list of children who are not making expected levels of progress and identifies interventions to support them in doing so.</p> <p>SD advised that most pupils are expected to make around 50% progress through a level in a year, but those with SLD / ASD are expected to make lower levels of progress, the reasons for which can be clearly evidenced. ST added that the assessment methods in place assist staff in setting appropriate targets, including more challenging ones for more able pupils. She also noted that the school now holds three years' of data which helps them build a very accurate picture of each child. She emphasised the child-centred approach to assessment to ensure that each child makes progress.</p> <p>When asked by governors about national testing, SD advised that Phonics screening takes place where appropriate, but no children in the current cohort will be screened, and that the school is always open to pupils undertaking KS1 and 2 testing where appropriate.</p> <p>As the Portfolio Governor for Teaching and Learning, LN advised SD that she looked forward to discussing assessment methods in further detail at her next visit.</p> <p>The Chair thanked SD for her detailed and informative presentation.</p>	
2	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS	
	All present introduced themselves.	
3	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	<p>Apologies for absence were received from Laura Roberts and Anita Clay. The Governors consented to their absence.</p> <p>Rachael Watson was not present.</p>	
4	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	There were no declarations made.	

5	CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS	
	Governors noted that there is still a vacancy for a Chair on the Local Governing Body.	
6	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
	The minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2018 were agreed to be an accurate record and signed by the Chair.	
7	MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA	
	ST advised that she had resent skills audit and declaration of interest forms to those governors who had not completed them this academic year. The clerk circulated hard copies to the appropriate governors.	
8a	PRINCIPAL'S REPORT	
	<p>ST presented her report which was circulated prior to the meeting and the Chair invited comments and questions from Governors.</p> <p>ST reminded the LGB that the school will be in the Ofsted “window” for inspection next term, and that if the inspection did not take place before the end of the academic year, the school would be inspected in accordance with the revised framework, consultation on which was currently underway.</p> <p>The following matters were discussed:</p> <p>At the request of the governors, ST updated them on the three children who had been exhibiting challenging behaviour and advised that one had left but two remained in school. ST reassured governors that any negative impact on other children had been mitigated, and the two pupils were settling down and learning, and the school hoped that they would be able to remain in school.</p> <p>ST outlined plans to alter some of the internal structure of the upper floor, through converting the staff toilet, and to add an outside classroom to better accommodate and support one or two children with PDA. She also updated governors on the progress of discussions with LB Sutton and Surrey County Council on the possible creation of a unit for children with PDA, noting that the need is evident, and both authorities are supportive but unable to commit at this stage due to their financial situation and until the ongoing SEND review has been completed. Governors noted that the new unit would create space for fifteen children with the PDA profile, 10 of whom are already on the waiting list for the school. ST described the challenge in supporting children with this profile whilst ensuring the safety of staff and children, and that the rest of the school population is not affected by some of the behaviour displayed. She commended the work of staff, and the support given by SLT.</p> <p>Governors noted that this could be an opportunity for this to become a flagship school for this group of children, supporting them and their families and also other schools in all sectors that have this intake. At their request, ST gave further details of the impact PDA has on a child's learning and behaviour and highlighted the positive impact of learning through play and a curriculum based around individual children's motivations and interests.</p>	

Turning to staffing, governors asked ST to describe the impact of long-term teacher absence. ST confirmed that there has been some negative impact and outlined the plans in place to enable the two teachers' return to work. She confirmed that children are still making progress, but not as much as they may have done, which should improve as both teachers return to work on a full-time basis.

ST updated governors on staff recruitment. In response to governors' questions she advised that there are some agency staff working in the school, the quality of most of whom is excellent. When asked if there was any trend in the reasons for staff leaving the school, ST explained there were a variety of reasons, none giving any cause for concern.

A governor asked about the effect on staff morale of injury by children, and ST reassured governors that the risk assessment system in place is very robust, with each child having a behaviour management plan in place where appropriate. She pointed out that to have 13 injuries as a result of 113 high level incidents is quite low level, which is due to the efficacy of behaviour management plans.

ST outlined the work being done by NA as the Behaviour Co-ordinator, particularly the behaviour clinics for staff which has increased their confidence in managing behaviour in the classroom. She also outlined the range of support given to staff, particularly when they have been injured, and described the 'Team Teach' method of training which has been recently introduced and will include a rolling programme for on-site staff training. NA noted that the Team Teach approach focusses on avoiding the need for intervention. ST also advised that she has engaged a Behaviour Consultant for assistance with the most challenging children and outlined the work he will be doing.

ST updated governors on progress towards targets in the School Development Plan (SDP) and pointed out that the document showed which portfolio governor related to each area of the SDP and suggested that governors discuss those areas at their portfolio meetings. She encouraged governors to read the evidence in the "Accountability Files" stored in her office to help triangulate information gathered through other visits and portfolio activities.

Governors received the Principal's report.

8b DASHBOARD

ST advised that the attendance data presented an inaccurate picture, due to the inclusion of some children on a reduced timetable. She advised that with those children omitted, attendance is 95%.

In response to a governor question, ST confirmed that the rates of sickness absence are cumulative.

Governors received the dashboard.

8c	OFSTED QUESTIONS ACTIVITY	
	<p>ST led an activity for governors to assist them in preparation for an interview with Ofsted in the event of an inspection. Five questions were asked, relating to different areas of the framework, and governors answered the questions, using their knowledge of the school obtained through visits and meetings. ST also noted that David Scott will carry out a health check on 4 and 5 June and will speak to governors, by phone if a meeting is not convenient. The questions and answers are detailed below.</p> <p>Q1: Vision and Values – How does the school cater for the range of needs of its pupils and promote equal opportunities?</p> <p><i>Assessment methods, Link Priorities, EHCP; Children managed appropriately so they don't endanger others and can learn safely Children are not in class based on ages, but on ability and learning need. Sandwich model of review. Relatively little teaching from the front, with a focus on teaching in small groups to meet varying needs in each class. Adapt teaching and support where necessary to meet needs, e.g. PDA children. Adjust to fit the new arrivals. Develop staff expertise and engage specific support as and when needed, e.g. Behaviour Consultant. Provide each child with the environment to suit them best.</i></p> <p>Q2: How is the PP being spent and how effective is this?</p> <p><i>Information given in Principal's report about PP pupils' progress. Statutory PP report on the school website. Each class has a provision map and those children in receipt of PP are on there, with details of the intervention in place and who is leading on it. This assists in monitoring the impact of the PP funding. Allocate some staffing costs to PP for specific interventions. Evaluate the impact of the funding annually with the aim that PP children out-perform those who are non-PP. Note the gap is small due to very low roll.</i></p> <p>Q3: How good is the quality of teaching and how do you know this?</p> <p><i>Staff assessed routinely, most have reached Level 2A with the target for all of them to reach 1C. Use of Teacher Evaluation Schedule (TES) shows that all teaching is rated Good or Outstanding.</i></p> <p>Q4: How well are pupils prepared for life in a diverse and modern Britain?</p> <p><i>Ties in with Prevent Strategy and children at risk of radicalisation. Relationship and Health education addresses a lot of issues. How do we as a school help children to develop positive relationships?</i></p>	

	<p><i>The Link Priorities focus on personal and social aspects of a child's development.</i></p> <p><i>School Council is active and minutes are available on the school website.</i></p> <p>Action: Governor to attend a School Council meeting.</p> <p>Q5: How does the school keep a record of its use of restraint of pupils? How do the governors monitor this?</p> <p><i>Risk assessments and behaviour management plans.</i></p> <p><i>All behaviours are recorded and data given in dashboard presented to meetings.</i></p> <p><i>NA produces a report every term and analyses the data.</i></p> <p><i>Reports are written about any physical interventions.</i></p>	
9	GOVERNOR VISITS, DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING	
	<p>Portfolio Reports</p> <p>Governors received the portfolio reports.</p>	
	<p>Other visit reports</p> <p>No other visit reports were submitted.</p>	
10	GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	
	No matters were discussed.	
11	FINANCE AND FUNDING	
	<p>NM presented the management accounts report and advised that the current forecast is for a break even position at year-end if all continues as expected. The school has an operating surplus of £1000, with a forecast £3000 surplus and projected reserves of just under £1M.</p> <p>NM reported that income has increased due to additional pupil numbers, although so has expenditure on staffing in order to meet their needs. At the request of the governors, NM explained how the school is funded and gave further detail about the queries submitted by local authorities about the Place Plus funding of £10,000 for nine children, as mentioned in the Finance portfolio report. He warned that if the money is not forthcoming, the school may end the year in deficit but this is not as serious as it could be, due to the level of reserves.</p> <p>Governors asked if the plans to adapt the school premises had been budgeted for and ST explained that there was sufficient monies left in the School Fund held by the school in its former iteration to cover the works, subject to approval from the OHCAT Budget Panel.</p> <p>Governors received the management accounts report.</p>	

12	OHC&AT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	
	<p>Governors noted the updates made to OHC&AT policies and procedures since their last meeting.</p> <p>Noting the minor amendment, governors approved the updated Admissions procedure.</p> <p>Governors approved the Staff Code of Conduct and Family and Visitors Code of Conduct procedures.</p>	
13	OHC&AT GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTATION	
	The clerk outlined the small amendment to the Scheme of Delegation and the Schedule of Responsibilities, which governors noted.	
14	CONSULTATION ON REVISED OFSTED INSPECTION FRAMEWORK	
	Governors noted that the Deputy CEO of OHCAT will respond to the Ofsted consultation on the revised framework.	
15	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	No matters were raised.	
16	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS	
	The next meeting will take place on 13 June 2019 at 6 pm.	
17	CONFIDENTIALITY	
	No items were deemed confidential.	

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm

Signed by me.....Chair on this 13 June 2019