

Minutes of the Meeting of Saltaire Primary School
Curriculum & Standards Committee
Held on Friday 21st January 2022
(virtual meeting)

The meeting convened at 9.00am and commenced at 9.10am.

Present: Oliver Bentley (OB), Emma Collingwood (EC - Chair), Christopher Evans (CE – Deputy Headteacher), Nancy Grady (NG), Jody Harris (JH), Marie Lamont (ML – Vice-Chair), Simon McDonagh (SM), Vijay Patel (VP), Anna Watson (AW), Robert Whitehead (RW – Headteacher).

In Attendance: Celine Moriarty (Clerk).

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all.

Action

C&S 15/21 Apologies for Absence and their acceptance
CE had informed of his late arrival.

C&S 16/21 Notice of Any other business & requests for agenda order variations

- Items 20/21 and 21/21 to be done later in the meeting, for CE to lead.

C&S 17/21 Declarations of interest for items on this agenda
None.

C&S 18/21 Minutes of the C&S Committee meeting held on 1st October, *previously circulated*
The minutes of the previous meeting of 1st October were approved by governors as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

C&S 19/21 Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda
There were none.

C&S 22/21 Bradford Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (RE)
Paper previously circulated: Believing and belonging, The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education
Every 4 years the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) reviews the RE syllabus. The school is currently adapting the intent document to reflect the reviewed syllabus.
Assemblies and RE lessons discuss many religious celebration events in the Christian calendar and may draw on similar events in other religions. If Key Stage 1 (KS1) does focus on Christianity in the first syllabus, KS2 offers a wider range of religions and their celebrations.
NG pointed out that in Reception class the pupils are exposed to other religions and their celebrations.

Signed: Date:

OB joined the meeting at 9.20am.

Q: Do you feel the school schedules an hour a week for RE?

RW replied that teachers are expected to plan over a half-term rather than a regular time slot for RE every week, so sometimes a particular aspect may be covered in a few weeks in greater depth rather than with one hour each week.

Q: How do you feel about the need for updating parents?

RW replied that the school can draw parents' attention to RE via the information available on the website.

C&S 23/21 Inclusive Worship Update

In early 2020 the school led a consultation with parents around inclusive worship. All maintained schools are considered to be of a broadly Christian ethos and the school community for many years is representative of more than just the Christian community. Prior to 2020, the school had a determination by the local SACRE to provide opportunities for the pupils to worship different faiths, where every Thursday parents could choose which faith assembly their children would attend: Muslim, Christian or owl (for no particular faith). As the determination was coming up for renewal it felt it was the opportunity to change the worship format to bring the different communities together in an inclusive assembly rather than divide the pupils into different faith assemblies. However, with the lockdowns and government restrictions it has not been possible to offer these assemblies. The inter-faith service is keen to start working with the school again and to set a programme within the next few weeks.

Governors agreed with the new approach of togetherness in worship assemblies.

RW explained that covid restrictions led to smaller groups rather than whole school assemblies, which had the consequence of older pupils feeling they should not do the same activities as younger pupils and changing the feeling of school community. RW is keen to bring the community back together through shared experiences such as inclusive worship.

C&S 24/21 Policy Review

a) Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy, previously circulated

The EYFS policy is statutory and was reviewed by NG and the EYFS Leader of Learning. The final updated version of the policy will be circulated for the FGB meeting.

NG explained that they have created a policy that reflects SPS's Early Years, practice and principles, taking into account the environment used.

A governor commented that they could not see much content on intent, implementation and impact in the policy circulated.

NG replied that the updated version will have a large section on the curriculum with intent, implementation and impact.

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Q: What about the recent controversy in the news about the teaching of phonics?

NG replied that there are two approaches to learning to read: phonics versus reading for pleasure. SPS is balanced in its approach, with much time spent enjoying books together. SPS offers a balance of phonics teaching and library books, with a story time scheduled every day.

RW added that SPS has always reflected on the best approach for the pupils and chose a scheme with the help of the Assistant Headteacher (AHT)'s expertise in this field. The school had to move away from Letters and Sounds due to a change in the Department for Education (DfE)'s approach but has selected a programme (Little Wandle Letters and Sounds) which is closely aligned to the principles of Letters and Sounds.

b) Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy, previously circulated

The consultation with parents on the RSE policy was led during the first lockdown and RW had discussions with parents on this policy which has limited coverage of sex education. A few parents approached RW with some concerns over the LGBTQ+ part of the curriculum. This can be an emotive subject with strong feelings and the pupils need to be given an insight into this aspect.

No changes were made to the policy this year.

A governor commented on how important conversations on LGBTQ+ can be for the older pupils ahead of moving on to secondary school. These discussions are about being a kind, compassionate and caring individual and about recognising differences.

Q: Should this policy include mental health?

RW replied that mental health is covered in the Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy and the Supporting children who cannot attend school due to a medical condition policy. However, mental health aspects could be cross-referenced in this policy and it could be added that there is a strong link between good positive relationships and mental health.

A governor commented that the notion of emotional wellbeing in a relationship would need to be strengthened, as older pupils are exploring gender issues, identity and their needs. Another aspect to strengthen is consent.

Governors agreed that the policy could be approved as it was, with a review within a year focusing on the aspects discussed above.

Q: Is this taught in Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE), which must encompass mental health? Should we do a deeper dive in the PSHE curriculum? Are you doing enough on mental health?

RW replied that RSE is one small section of the large PSHE curriculum. Governors could get involved in the review of the PSHE curriculum to provide their viewpoint and to report to the governing body.

Signed: Date:

CE joined the meeting at 10am.

Action

c) Educational Visits Policy, previously circulated

CE reported that no changes were made to this policy, which has a successful process in place. The staff have an initial discussion and approval of their plans before an educational visit. Residential visits are returning and planned from March.

A governor praised the organisation of the recent visit she had helped on and the good behaviour of the children.

Governors approved the policies listed above, with the EYFS policy to be brought forward to the FGB meeting in February.

C&S 20/21 Curriculum Update

CE screen-shared the Curriculum Update.

- Oracy

The school has been working on becoming an oracy school in partnership with Voice 21 and over the last year has been developing classroom practice with the teachers. 4 oracy champions work in each phase and help develop the skills required in teaching oracy. Phase 1 is becoming an oracy school, which is embedding classroom practice, was completed in December and the school has now started phase 2, which is curriculum and culture, which a focus on whole school culture.

The 4 champions received CPD and then returned to school to work alongside teachers on oracy. They did learning walks and all the staff and children completed a benchmark survey at the beginning of phase 1.

There are 5 oracy benchmarks with the key one for the next year being encouraging oracy for the most vulnerable learners (and ensuring that the most articulate and confident pupils do not dominate class discussions).

- Maths

Evaluation and monitoring was delivered in maths recently, with the maths lead being supported by a KS2 teacher who is part of the White Rose research group and networks with other schools and does some research.

NG reported that they are part of the White Rose Jigsaw trial and that the Jigsaw training upskilled the knowledge of the teachers who can implement their learning in the classroom.

The approach is that every child can do maths, with three key maths areas promoted: fluency, reasoning and problem solving. The national curriculum forms the basis of the maths approach, enhanced by White Rose resources.

Maths review key findings: the document provided a summary of the current position in maths and the teachers' subject knowledge and consistency. The monitoring identified that reasoning and problem solving is a strength across the school and that there is an increasing confidence in fluency as the pupils move up through KS2.

Signed: Date:

The baseline assessment data from the autumn term compares favourably, although the impact of the lockdowns and covid restrictions can be seen in gaps in learning which have been identified.

Pupil voice revealed that the pupils love maths and enjoy the way it links to other subjects. The pupils are aware of when they are doing well and how to make progress. The PiXL assessment system is proving effective in identifying strengths and gaps in learning.

The maths scheme is providing open-ended challenges and promoting deep thinking.

C&S 21/21 Outcomes for Pupils

- Data:

The Year 6 data is encouraging, with the pupils having already reached the end of year target of 74% Age Related Expectations (ARE), leading to a review of the target. The outcomes of the other year groups are encouraging and the school set ambitious targets.

- PiXL:

PiXL offers a data benchmarking service with the schools subscribing to their system. In maths in Year 6, the data for paper 1 (arithmetic) and paper 2 (reasoning) compare well with the national PiXL data.

The key priorities of the development plan:

1. Fluency session across KS1.
2. Teaching: further development of concrete resources, supported by "Walk Thrus" and oracy CPD.
3. Attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

- CPD, monitoring and evaluation:

CPD strategy: Overall the school delivered CPD opportunities and the teachers arranged peer observations within themselves. Teachers were also asked to record themselves teaching for professional development and the school is now working on positive relationships and expectations.

The Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) also take part in the CPD programme this year. (CE displayed the CPD timetable for this term).

- PiXL assessment

PiXL is proving to be an effective assessment tool and the Year 6 cohort has started using PiXL, led by CE as Raising Standards Leader (RSL). All the assessments for each year group are scheduled and PiXL provides a diagnostic report for each pupil, and a report for the cohort. PiXL provides the average score of the cohort and breaks it down into areas of the curriculum, informing planning and interventions.

The school appointed an academic mentor, 95% of the costs being paid for by a government grant, to work with pupils across school in groups of three. This mentor works on maths for the moment but will also work on reading.

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Assessment summary – Autumn term:

CE displayed a table with reading, writing and maths data for Years 1 to 6, and another table comparing the school's data with PiXL schools' data.

RW added that PiXL assessments are preparing the pupils well for the end of year assessments. The outcomes for the Year 6 cohort are strong.

**Q: Could you give more details around the areas the school did not do well in?
Can you elaborate?**

CE replied that there are few areas in which the school is not doing well. In maths early fluency is an issue (the pupils' grasp of numbers), so daily fluency sessions will be introduced. National data is currently limited (due to Covid) and it can be difficult to obtain a comparative national picture, making PiXL's benchmarking the best data available this year. However, teachers know their class, the context and the areas already taught, so they often link areas with other objectives. By looking at the books it can be seen whether the pupils are making progress or not. Data is limiting and should be used with caution as part of a wider monitoring strategy.

Reading as a whole is strong, but writing is a key area to develop, which is the case for many schools as writing is the most difficult subject to teach remotely.

Overall, writing and early fluency are the two curriculum areas to work on the most.

Data is used wisely, each pupil is considered individually and resources allocated accordingly. The school also works with a PiXL associate consultant who works with leaders on school improvement.

Academic mentor:

Until the end of the autumn term the school had a national tuition partner for a year who was working with the same pupils. The tutor's contract came to an end, using up the majority of the funding available. Overall, there are three funding streams for tuition, the one for the academic mentor being 95% subsidised. The third scheme, the school-led tutoring, has not yet been used but represents a smaller sum and will be put to use later in the spring term.

English update:

- Reading and writing are the core focuses.
- The outcomes of the Phonics screening check, completed with Year 2 in the autumn term was at 98% (of the pupils met the expected standard).
- The major focus for reading currently is developing reading for pleasure. Two staff sessions were held on developing language and discussion, including upskilling teachers' knowledge in contemporary children's fiction. Currently the outcomes in reading are very good.
- Writing: the school is working with a programme of teaching and learning of writing from Jane Considine. Strong writing outcomes are already being seen with this programme, with the pupils developing confidence to challenge their use of language.

Signed: Date:

C&S 25/21 Any Other Business from item 16/21 above

Action: RW to circulate the governor visit dates and governors to confirm their availability.

C&S 26/21 Next meeting date: Friday 1st July 2022 at 9am

Action

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The meeting closed at 10.55am.

Signed: Date: