

Minutes of the Meeting of Saltaire Primary School
Curriculum & Standards Committee
Held on Friday 1st October 2021
(virtual meeting)

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

Present: Christopher Evans (CE – Deputy Headteacher), Nancy Grady (NG), Jody Harris (JH), Marie Lamont (ML), Vijay Patel (VP), Anna Watson (AW), Robert Whitehead (RW – Headteacher).

In Attendance: Celine Moriarty (Clerk), Helen Noble (Head of English and Later Phase leader of Learning) (to item 09/21).

The clerk opened the meeting and welcomed all.

Action

C&S 1/21 Apologies for Absence and their acceptance

Apologies were received and accepted for Oliver Bentley (OB), Emma Collingwood (EC) and Simon McDonagh (SM).

C&S 2/21 Election of the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair for 2021/22

Emma Collingwood was nominated and elected Chair for 2021/22, depending on acceptance.

Marie Lamont was nominated and elected Vice-Chair.

ML took the chair for this meeting.

C&S 3/21 Notice of Any other business & requests for agenda order variations

None.

C&S 4/21 Declarations of interest for items on this agenda

None.

C&S 5/21 Minutes of the C&S Committee meeting held on 9th July, *previously circulated*

The minutes of the previous meeting of 9th July were approved by governors as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

C&S 6/21 Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda

Governors asked for the presentation on curriculum impact by CE to be sent to the new committee members.

CE

C&S 7/21 Pixl Update

Pixl is a national not for profit organisation for school improvement which the school is now subscribing to. It is focused on school leaders' needs and provides great value for the cost of the subscription. The school started using Pixl with the Year 6 assessments the previous week. The staff will upload the results to Pixl, which will process the results and provide an analysis and a comparison with the national average (Pixl has around

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£2,000 subscriber schools nationally). CE was appointed as Raising Standards Lead, as per Pixl's advice. A Pixl associate was allocated, to meet with the school on 18th October. CE explained that Pixl will help identify the gaps in learning and the pupils needing interventions, in order to address them efficiently.

HN explained that teachers have to learn vast amounts of information at this stage. The resources provided are rigorous and they have an effective approach to the teaching of GPS, maths and other subjects.

Q: Is the data anonymised?

RW replied that Pixl follows data protection guidance, but the school shares the names and the dates of birth with Pixl. HN added that each pupil has a unique number for Pixl.

Q: From the previous meeting, it seems that the outcomes for the assessments were linked to a matrix for the levels and the outcomes showed some level of irregularity. How does Pixl assessments differ? Will you benefit from a richer set of data?

CE replied that all of the assessment done are for working towards Age Related Expectations (ARE), and within those bands there is a range, with a scale score provided at the end of the key stage. The scales are far more useful. The data is similar to Pixl assessments but Pixl provides an in-depth analysis.

Q: Do you have a similar matrix with more frequent data?

RW replied that Pixl will do the time-consuming work of assessing whether each pupil gave the correct answer. This will help the school results improve in the years to come.

Q: Will the teaching staff have the time to analyse the data?

RW replied that the format is accessible and that one of the drivers of the Pixl approach is the personalised learning checklist. The next step is to make better progress.

Q: Is there scope within the package for parents to access their child's performance?

RW replied that this information will be shared by the teachers in the school-agreed format.

A governor pointed out that within the maths curriculum, parents receive feedback in either below, meet or exceed expectations, but have no details on the elements the pupil understands or is struggling with.

RW replied that the school will know the current focus for their child, but for the moment the staff is finding its way through the new system.

Q: Is there some information of those resources that parents could use at home?

RW replied that there is a whole range of resources, some are more for homework, and eventually some will be shared.

A governor pointed out that homework in primary school has little evidence of its value.

RW replied that the school has a light touch approach with homework and did not assign homework during the pandemic.

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C&S 8/21 Oracy

The school has a partnership with Voice 21 schools. Currently all teachers are working towards the oracy benchmark and will have CPD sessions to assess themselves against the benchmarks. By the end of this term the ambition is to have oracy embedded and to develop classroom practice. The aim is to move onto stage 2 in January, which is more strategic, with the whole school embedding it as a culture. This includes strategic oracy, so pupils have purposeful and high quality talk in assembly, improving their critical thinking skills.

Teachers are currently practicing Talk Fred, with a strict protocol. Some of the classes have developed with oracy and the pupils' abilities are noticeable in the classroom. There is much evidence proving the link of the benefits between spoken language, oracy and disadvantaged pupils. All pupils completed an oracy benchmark survey and the evaluation will be completed in November.

Q: At the last meeting it was said that governors could see Voice 21 in action. Does the schedule of governor visits provided include this?

RW replied that it would be beneficial for governors to see oracy embedded in maths for instance, how is oracy being used to promote learning and develop the spoken language. Oracy would be a good focus for a governor visit.

C&S 9/21 Reading for pleasure – Helen Noble

Reading for Pleasure is led by the Open university, and its fundamental difference is that this is not necessarily about instructional reading. It is about how the culture of the school reflects reading for pleasure, led by the Early Reading Hub. Schools have to raise and drive up standards, led by an ambassador for children. This is a year-long project to change the culture of a school. It started with a whole school training, including TAs, and is a two-pronged approach, which looks in detail at the teachers and the pupils. The staff had to fill a questionnaire on their knowledge of authors and have to keep up with their knowledge of new children's books. This is also about where and how people read, and what level of book talks goes on.

Over the next week or two, the staff will focus on the pupils and their enjoyment of reading. Do they perceive themselves as readers? What kind of reading do they do? How often do they read in a day? From then a mentor will help the school make a school plan, which will lead to changing the aspects which need to improve. At the end the school will write up their findings, which will be included in a university research. At least 20 different local schools are taking part in this project, which is a national project. Each teacher will select three pupils in their class to focus on whether they changed their reading habits and the activities they enjoy doing.

Q: Can you sum up what your hopes are and what it will achieve for this school?

HN replied that every teacher in school is to gain a deep knowledge of children's literature. The aim is for no children in school to think they do not enjoy reading and for every child to identify themselves as a reader.

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RW added that the project will ensure the school has a wealth of quality books for the children. Every child should be able to enjoy reading.

Action

Q: Are you looking to have every child in a position where they absolutely love reading? What is the end goal?

HN replied that it is about enjoyment. Every child should have some aspect that they enjoy reading. It is about helping the children to see that reading can lead to passion.

A governor pointed out that reading is interpreting and understanding knowledge.

RW replied that it is also around culture. By developing a culture where everyone enjoys reading, whether fiction or non-fiction, to take the children to the point where they will naturally take a text.

HN added that the one aspect which has a large positive impact on attainment is reading. It improves language, vocabulary and comprehension.

Q: Do all children have access to reading material?

HN replied that initially the project focuses on the resources in school, then on library access, on teaching material, to choose reading for pleasure at the library.

RW added that he intends to have a quality lending library at school.

Q: Is there an opportunity outside to access books?

HN added that the school welcomes book donations but ultimately wants to have a wide breadth of quality reading books.

A governor pointed out that Shipley has a good library and that it would be useful to build a link with the local library. Maybe the school could organise a school visit to the library. Many authors say how it was their access to the local library that inspired them to become the authors they are. Additionally, libraries are under threat if they are not used.

Q: Do you genuinely have the reading material that is going to captivate the vast array of children, such as comics?

HN replied that their library is low on graphic novels and that they are aware that this is an area to work on.

HN left the meeting at 10.05am.

C&S 10/21 Professional development

CE reported that professional development this year plans to be ambitious and strategic, linked to the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The plan is flexible and will evolve and adapt to needs. This year so far teachers had CPD sessions on the world through books, to be used as a vehicle for teaching strategies. The process is around positive relationships, behaviour, etc... much progress was made in the last 4 weeks, which have been more challenging than previous years. The staff value the opportunity to talk of their experiences and to decide on particular strategies across the school. They agreed on a

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hand clapping signal to obtain the children's attention, to be applied across the school consistently.

The next "Walk Thru" will be focused on the strategy of cold calling, so the pupils keep focusing in case they are called next.

Voice 21 is another key part of CPD and will continue through the year. There will be subject specific sessions throughout the year, one of which will be computing as the pupils will have missed a substantial part of the computing curriculum.

Part of the CPD programme this year is to include the TAs, to provide them with the same opportunities as the teachers.

The session on behaviour routine gave the staff time to practice. For a pupil not responding to reminders, the staff member takes the pupil aside and talks straight to the point and moves on, setting expectations.

Every teaching staff needs to be on board with the strategies to benefit across the school. The next step with CPD is to start on measuring whether the sessions are as valuable as they should be.

Governors approved of the strategy of CPD being inclusive of the TAs, for every teaching staff member to be valued, involved and have the same approach.

C&S 11/21 Teaching & Learning Policy

Papers previously circulated:

- *Curriculum Intent, Implementation and Impact*
- *Teaching & Learning policy*

RW explained that the teaching and learning policy is not statutory and is presented to governors for their information. The main purpose of the document is to provide teachers a guide of the expectations at Saltaire Primary in terms of teaching and learning, including information on marking and feedback.

CE added that the policy is built on all the aspects already in place, including the Saltaire 7. It was revisited and will evolve.

Governors commented that this policy acts as a clear guide for new teachers in particular, similar to a staff handbook.

A governor asked how the targets will be monitored and could the policy and the SIP be joined in one document.

RW explained that they have to keep a SIP and a SEF separate, the SEF being the evaluation of the SIP. RW has been reducing the number of SIP priorities in the last few years, but the current SIP will need to be streamlined and to ensure it reflects the non-negotiable priorities of the school. The disruptions of the last two years need to be considered while setting the priorities.

Q: What are governors to look for on their visits to classrooms? Should these policy documents be driving classroom routines?

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RW replied that the SIP needs to be clear for governors to understand and that there is more work to do around the clarity of the documentation. The first few weeks in school have been challenging due to external factors rather than from a lack of expectations.

A governor explained that he can see three avenues: the objectives the school is trying to achieve, the long term objectives, business as usual and the short term objectives. There is the pandemic, but there will always be a need for short term objectives. Can you give clarity on how and when you are looking to achieve these objectives? The first step in achieving objectives is having clarity and linkage between objectives, to ensure you are not doing everything.

RW replied that they always presented a broad SIP. The level of details governors are presented with needs to be thought out, as for how much of the short term objectives you need to know of. Governors are presented with the RAG-rating and with the progress of the SIP. Not all the actions and objectives are actually shared with governors, but this could be streamlined further. There is in particular another document which is not shared with governors, but with the School Improvement Partner only. The next step of development will inform future plans.

C&S 12/21 Calendar of visits to school

Curriculum and Standards Committee - Visits to School Schedule, previously circulated.
Governors discussed the schedule of visits.

Q: What are the most useful factors to get out of these visits?

RW replied that the governor visits policy will be reviewed at the next FGB meeting. The policy addresses the format and the purpose of the visits. The visits will provide a connection with the leaders of learning, who will be able to share the process of their phase with governors and governors will see the process and the learning first hand, developing an understanding of a pupil at Saltaire Primary and of how the school meets the pupils' needs. Governors could also have the opportunity to have structured conversations with a group of pupils.

C&S 13/21 Any Other Business from item 4/21 above

Friday afternoons:

Q: Some parents still have reservations and concerns regarding the new weekly structure and Friday afternoons. How are you finding it within school and its impact and benefit?

CE replied that he spoke to 100 pupils who gave overwhelmingly positive feedback. Friday afternoons provide enrichment opportunities for the pupils who look forward to Fridays. Teachers appreciate that their colleagues are all available on Friday afternoons. There is a hive of activity and they feel productive.

RW added that teachers feel energised by the new structure, the quality of provision is excellent.

The next step will be to slightly amend the set up for KS1. Turnout is excellent, with only 10 pupils going home on Friday afternoons. The model is really strong and positive.

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A governor commented that Friday afternoons could be compulsory, and that this could be discussed at the evaluation. Pupils learn new skills and benefit from the enrichment activities offered.

C&S 14/21 Next meeting date: Friday 21st January 2022 at 9am

The meeting closed at 11h00.

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