

Long Marston V A C of E Primary School

Meeting of the Governing Body on Tuesday 4th February 2020 at 12:49pm (Governor Day)

Minutes

'Rooted in God's love, we rejoice to learn & respond to challenge'

<u>Present:</u>	Mrs C South	(CS)	(Head)	Mrs L Annett	(LA)
	Rev J Banister	(JB)	(Chair)	Mr N Anderson	(NA)
	Mrs J Finlan	(JF)		Mrs K Jaquet	(KJ)
	Mrs L Bancroft	(LB)		Mr S Dawkins	(SD)
	Mr J Lauder	(JL)			

In Attendance: Mrs S Moore **(SM)** (Clerk to the Governors)

NO.	Item	Action
1	To receive apologies and approve absences Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Absent with apologies Eileen Springford (ES) and Stephen Pitchers (SP) Absences approved.	
2	Declaration of Interest Governors were reminded that they must declare any conflict of interest, both pecuniary and other, that refers to an item on the Agenda. Governors should make known at this point any items that they intend to raise under 'Any other business' so that all Declarations of Interest are based on all matters to be discussed. No declarations were made regarding the Agenda or Any other business.	
3	To approve the Minutes of 10.12.2019 meeting The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.	
4	To consider any matters arising from the Minutes of 10.12.2019 No matters arising	
5	Governor Day Feedback <u>Health and Safety walk</u> JL Conducted a Health and Safety walk. He reports that the grounds are fine. There are a few gaps in the hedge. The fence to the pond is a bit brittle in places. He feels that it will be cheaper to plant in the gaps, something that is fast growing. Q – Does the pond belong to the school? A – Yes, however it is unsafe to use at the moment. There are also Newts in there, which are protected. JL reports that the lighting is all fine. There was an issue with the light outside of Class 5 having no timer. It now has both a sensor and a timer. The floor of the log cabin outside Class 1 is rotten. He discussed the possibility of a floating floor. CS confirms that she is awaiting a quote for the work.	CS

Class 1

JF observed Class 1. She comments that everything is always great, she feels that the class is split up beautifully and so well staffed. The only negative for her is she's surprised at no toys being out in the classroom. This she informed was due to destruction in the class and toys being constantly broken which is a real shame. She feels that the progression between groups is very quick and finds that the children are all reading quite fluently.

JB observed maths in Class 1. She too found it interesting that things have had to be put away in the classroom. There has been a big overhaul to the structure of the classroom, even to the cloakroom procedure. She finds it amazing how much time is being taken up through the day for toileting.

Q – Does that negatively affect the children that are not being destructive? A – No, there aren't so many of those children in the class. Although the toys are away, the class is far more structured with different activities around the room. The children have to complete a task and then have it signed off on a sheet. It has been very positive, with the children then talking about what activity they have done.

JB comments that **IB** has completed lots of research about keeping children calm in the class environment which seems to be working.

Class 2

KJ observed Class 2 Literacy lesson. She comments that the focus is usually on the children. However, this year the focus is on how quickly things are picked up on. The teacher needs lots of eyes. She then spent some time observing a lesson in the extension. She felt that the girls were all very enthusiastic with the boys only occasionally putting their hands up. They tended to wait until they were 100% sure of an answer. The boys tended to wait until they were actually asked to answer. The children were all sat thinking and looking at what the teacher was doing.

Q – How do you stop the really enthusiastic ones constantly answering without dampening their enthusiasm? A – You might say 'tell your partner' or we would say that we will come to them next to give another child the opportunity to answer. **CS** comments that lolly sticks are often used throughout the school so that everyone gets a turn.

LB observed RE in Class 2. She found it really nice to observe. She noticed a pair of boys, that for whatever reason were quite nervous to read and a boy next to them asked if he could help them, which was really lovely. She feels that **LA** is very good at cross-curricular teaching for example she used Venn diagrams in RE. The children do not necessarily know, but it makes the teaching much more interesting.

NA also observed RE. He thought it was brilliant. He was not sure what to expect as things have changed massively to when he was last in a school 35yrs ago. The lesson was about Hinduism, taught alongside what children are exposed to in their lives and their own experiences. They used Venn diagrams. The model making was brilliant fun. He was really impressed by how much the children help each other. If one was short of clay then they would help them by making an extra pair of arms for example.

Q – How do talk partners work? A – The children sit with a partner for a week. This changes every week. If someone is away then they just make a group of three. It helps give the children confidence. This is something that is done throughout the school. It is a good system. It is not always about the more able children being sat together. Quite often, they may be sat with a less able child, which works really well.

Class 3

SD observed Literacy in Class 3. He found it very confusing. The children were learning about letter writing. He felt it was very early for children to learn. **LS** explained to him that the task covers grammar and can also fit into a story. He was shocked with the gap between higher ability and the lower ability, being that it is so far apart and did not think that it could be possible. There were children leaving the class during lessons for extra input and he wonders if that is more disruptive?

Q – Would those children have a different Literacy target to others? A – Yes, and it is part of Read Write Inc Phonics lessons which are done every day. We have really rolled it out this year.

CS comments this is why it is especially important in KS2 that a child is placed in the class that is right for them.

SD also observed a Maths lesson. They were completing a Sudoku and he felt it was an even playing field. He noticed that there were many different pens and pencils of different sizes being used in the class. He asked was this usual? A – Pens and pencils are standard throughout the school Children should be using triangular pens and pencils. KS1 use slightly thicker pens to help with their grip. Some children find it easier with an additional foam grip or children with hypermobility might have different needs. There has been a big push on pencil grip. Especially in Year 5.

Class 4

JF observed Maths in Class 4. She was surprised at how many children were eager for Math's which she thinks is fabulous. There was a real eagerness for them to learn. She found this very inspiring. She spoke with lots of children who were all very positive. The children were doing problem solving and reasoning. They were looking to identify a pattern, which she found difficult to comprehend the pattern. However, **KW** had done a previous lesson with the class that led into today's lesson. For some children there was no pattern, but this did not mean that they had done it wrong.

JL felt that the children were all happy to talk in front of their peers, they were very confident and supportive which is nice to see. He saw some interesting devices in the classroom. Like bands on chairs. **CS** explains that these are resistance bands for children who struggle to sit still. The band is placed around the legs of the bottom of the chair. There is one particular child who puts their feet on the table, so that band has really made a difference. There are other devices such as bumpy cushions, which stops them fidgeting or weighted snakes full of beads. These lie across their knees or across their shoulders and it, helps make them feel more settled.

JF saw a lovely Forest School display in the class. The pictures show them working as a team. They appear so eager, their faces lit up. You can tell that they really love it.

Q – If Forest School covers a whole half day, how do you fit the class teaching in? A – We are saying that this is their topic for one-half term. There are also huge benefits to teaching two smaller classes one day a week for half a term. With the same lesson being taught in both the morning and the afternoon for both groups.

Class 5

NA observed maths. He feels that the levels of engagement are outstanding. When a question was asked practically every hand in the room went up. The children are all very keen to get up and write their answer on the board. This level of engagement is great and was quite unexpected. There was quite a lot of time for the children to complete their work. They were confident talking to him about what they were doing. They all admitted that they are particularly worried about long division. He asked them how they would use maths in the real world. They gave some great answers, with one child using the example of buying bricks, the cost of the building and ensuring they would have money left for any broken bricks.

Q – How is it managed when you have a child falling behind? If children are not keeping up how do you manage that? A – Firstly they are encouraged to have a go. If they still struggle then they come back to you. We might do some one to one work or a small group may do some work with the TA. This can also be picked up with the marking system. Two ticks mean they have got it, One tick means not so much or a star means they do not understand. We look out for there being lots of stars in their self-assessment.

CS explains that if children are really struggling then they will get extra support groups. The idea is to teach at the same level and to keep trying to pull those children back up, but it is really hard. Part of their next steps could be to sit and go through it together.

Q – How do you keep the higher attainers interested? A – The maths scheme is great for that. They might work as a group on something, go and do something on their own or again go and work with a TA.

KJ observed Literacy in Class 5. Again, she found the class to be engaged and enthusiastic. She was surprised when children were asked for examples they were giving a deep level of answers relating to the real world. The lesson was on the erosion of Snowdon. **KJ** noted that some children were writing just words relating to the subject in their books, Where others were writing far more in-depth information relating to the subject. They had all been given the same instruction of what to do and were quite capable of it. **CS** comments that it all depends on the individual child, some might just not get it, whereas some could just be being lazy.

Q – When their books are being marked, would this be picked up on? A – Yes, those children might be given a next step or it might be re visited the next day.

KJ continues that she can see the seating plan in class has been very well planned. She asks is this something decided by the teacher or is it something that would be discussed outside of the classroom? A – It has been discussed outside the classroom. It has been very different without **AS**. It is very interesting. When they were in Class 4, they could not cope with sitting at tables. There was a line of tables around the room. This was tried in Class 5, but the children could not cope. It was too noisy and too distracting. It has been much better since they have been placed in rows.

Pupil Voice

LB and **JB** met with a group of Year 4/5 children and then with a group of Year 1/2/3. The little ones were super keen. The older ones not so much. They talked about what their topics were. The children from Class 1 are enjoying their space topic and talked about Tim Peake. The general feeling amongst them was that they prefer History to Geography. They were asked about the new homework system. They explained that the teachers do a weekly check to make sure children are completing homework. Anyone that is not has to go to homework club. They get the opportunity to look at other children's work, which gives them ideas. **LB** asked them all about the marking scheme, which they all seemed to understand.

13.57 **LB** leaves the meeting

6 Resources

Minutes circulated for all prior to the meeting (See item 6 attached). **KJ** reports that we have not had an influx of money. That we are still in a challenging situation regarding the budget. There is one main contributing factor, staffing is quite high compared with other schools. The new bench-marking tool has been helpful. Although the majority of the money goes on staffing it is felt that this is money well spent.

CS recently attended a sustainable schools workshop, which looks at IT, staffing and really helps you look at the bigger picture.

14.00 **LB** re-enters the meeting

CS is looking at future moneymaking projects. One idea is to let out the school hall for social activities. The next thing being looked at is replacing doors for the main entrance, Class 5, Class 2 and the hall. We are looking at roughly £26 thousand to replace these doors. Some will need all of the surround replacing. We find out in March if we are successful in receiving any money towards this.

SFVS

Belinda has done a lot of work surrounding this. It is updated every year but an audit is possible. We have got lots of policies ticked off.

7 Curriculum

Minutes circulated for all prior to the meeting (see item 7 attached). Curriculum met last week. **JF** asks people to read the SDP as it really fills you in on things. Lots of work has been done and embedded. A large focus of OFSTED is long-term memory, which everyone knows about. In the recent HIP visit, gaps were found in children's long term memory about previous RE topics.

CS comments that she is not sure that the children were asked in the right way. They were asked what order they had learned about different faiths as opposed to what they could actually remember about Judaism or in maths, or what skill they had learnt.

Our school has been selected by HFL to take part in a problem solving pilot scheme for maths. **KW** is feeling positive about this.

Attendance was discussed and consideration given to the use of fixed penalty notices for unauthorised absence or in cases where parents are being dishonest. **CS** feels that it is the way to go for those families who take regular holidays or more than one holiday. This would be dealt by way of first sending a letter to the parents, almost as a warning. Then **CS** would meet with the parents. She has written to four families today and has a further two that she is already dealing with. The fine goes to every responsible adult for that child. **CS** will talk to the head at Bishopwood who is already fining parents and has noticed a positive difference.

8

Equal Ops

CS and **KJ** met. They talked about absenteeism and the possibility of bringing in fixed penalties. They discussed the use of fidgeting tools and how that is working for individual children. They concluded that we have to be more reactive rather than proactive regarding Equal Opportunities due to tight budgets.

9

PPG

CS and **KJ** met. They have looked at data in relation to pupils receiving PPG. It is noted that overall their progress is not generally as good as their peers. They have looked at the interventions that those children receive. The school receives £1320 for each PPG child but it is the heads discretion how this money is spent. Many parents have a misconception on how the money is spent and feel that it is purely to be spent on their child.

In the Autumn term, they will be creating a pupil premium document about what PP is. This will be a gentle nudge to those who qualify. There have been a few issues surrounding PP that have not come to anything yet. **CS** is meeting with one parent this week around this issue.

Q – What is the trigger for PPG? A – If a child is eligible for free school meals or has been over the past six years. It could be that they were eligible for a one month period,, but they would still qualify. When we receive the money is dependent on the census. We currently have two children who are eligible, but we are yet to receive the funding for them as they were not with us at the time of the census.

10

AOB

Nothing raised

Meeting closed at 14.30 pm

Date of next

Meeting: Tuesday 17th March 2019 19.15

