

Standards & Improvement Committee Meeting

Monday 18th November 2024, 5.30 pm

Queen Emma School

MINUTES

Governors present:

Sarah Jarman (EHT)
Sean Lang (Acting Chair)
Ambili Nair
Sulochana Subramaniam

Others present:

Hayley Brooker
Judith Garley (RE Lead, QED)
Rachel Holman
Nicki Simmons
Cath Stubbs
Zoe Vassiliou (Clerk)

	Item	Supporting Paperwork	Notes	Actions
1	Apologies for Absence		Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Joanna MacKenzie and Steve Rothwell.	
2	Election of Chair		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfortunately Siobhan Dickens has stepped down from the governing body. No governor present wished to take up the role of Chair of the Standards and Improvement Committee. Sean Lang to chair this evening's meeting. Sean Lang to discuss the role of Chair with Phil Kirkman. 	<u>SFL to approach PK</u>
3	Declaration of interest		None declared	
4	Agree Minutes of the last meeting	Minutes 23.09.2024	Amendments raised and agreed.	<u>Clerk to amend</u>
5	Matters Arising		EHT confirmed that the CoG reported the change in PAN to the adjudicator.	
6	RSE Update (CS/JG)		<p>Judith Garley, RE Lead at Queen Edith School joined the meeting to up-date governors.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Floor books were introduced in Y2 last year and were very successful and have therefore been introduced to other year groups this school year. Floor books were brought to the meeting for governors to observe. Our RE curriculum has been updated in line with national changes with an increased emphasis on inclusivity and World views. World Views has been broadened to include non-religious views which better represents the fact that at the last Census over 50% of households declared they were non-religious and in those aged 18-24 this figure was over 60%. 	

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Our curriculum has been reviewed with an emphasis on fostering understanding of others. For example in Y2 they learn why Christians call Jesus their saviour and reflect on how the term 'saviour' can be used in life e.g. fireman, doctor, nurse, or in a broader sense of saviour with pupils seeing Greta Thunberg as a saviour of the planet. 4. A new unit of work has been introduced in Y1 focussing on people in the world around us to help them learn about the many diverse world views and encourage empathy, understanding and appreciation of diversity. There has been very positive feedback to these lessons which is evidenced in the Y1 floor book evidence. 5. The priority is thematic learning with pupils considering religious and non-religious beliefs and sharing their own beliefs. Knowledge is being assessed against progress targets which have been shared with teaching staff. 6. Governor challenge: Is there flexibility to integrate RE into other subjects? Pupils are able to discuss a broader range of topics and link them to other subjects; they have the opportunity to handle artefacts and take place in craft activities and to have individual pieces of writing included in the floor book. 7. The school is building up a bank of resources for use in the class room and during assemblies including for World Humanism day and Earth Day. 8. Syllabus encourages trips and visits to religious sites with classes visiting the local Mosque and St James's church. We are looking to broaden our links in local community. St Barnabus Church have visited more regularly and these visits have run really successfully across whole school. 9. Feedback from a staff questionnaire shows that teachers would like to develop trips to support RE learning and have visitors in from different faiths. RE Lead is looking into this. 10. Governor challenge: Do Queen Edith and Queen Emma work together to develop the curriculum? Unfortunately there is no RE Lead at Queen Emma currently so working across the Federation has not been possible, however the curriculums are similar but not exactly the same and floor books have not yet been introduced at Queen Emma. 11. Monitoring of RE lessons has taken place and we are seeing great improvement of teaching with interesting discussions and practical activities taking place, with the floor books reflecting the hard work taking place. 12. Governor challenge: Religions deal with deep questions. How well are children able to deal with deep questions about life and death? It is so interesting to hear the questions that children ask; they are deep thinkers. For example one child asked if Jesus is a Christian why was he also a Jew? They make links and are confident to ask questions. Older pupils think about why don't the countries of the world put down their weapons and use words? 13. Governor challenge: Does a focus on ceremony and ritual help children engage with RE? Yes, 	
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			<p>we look at Baptism and equivalent celebrations of birth in Y1, which makes the topic exciting and tangible for children.</p> <p>14. Governor challenge: RE learning is a sensitive area and some families do not like their children to take part. What feedback have you had? There has been no feedback around the new syllabus. There are families who requested to withdraw their children from RE as it was too Christian centric. However, now there is a much greater focus on religious and non-religious practice and an emphasis on World views so we hope this will allay parent's concerns.</p> <p>15. Governor challenge: Do you discuss atheism? The humanism unit covers agnostic beliefs but we would always talk about atheism if it comes up in a discussion.</p> <p>16. Atheism is not covered but is discussed that some people do not believe in God.</p> <p>17. Governor challenge: Are you happy with the new curriculum? We are very happy with floor books and how they evidence the learning journey of the children and these are available for parents to see at the open afternoons or during parents evening. This is a new curriculum and is developing but is very positive.</p> <p>18. Governors thanked Judith Garley for attending the meeting and were very impressed by the evidence of learning available to them through the floor books and to see how well the new curriculum is embedded across the two schools.</p>	
7	Progress towards the school development plan (SJ)	School Development Plan - Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support is being applied across both schools to enable the lowest 20% of children, particularly in KS2 and pupils with SEND so that they can reach age related expectations in reading. 2. Teachers encourage reading, but for some children there is a lack of support at home. We are utilising volunteers including through links with Hills' Road Sixth Form College and the Perse. At Queen Emma a request has gone out for parent volunteers. 3. SLT are consulting with staff at Queen Emma around barriers to high quality writing with lessons being pared back and more focused so children are not overwhelmed and can engage and learn. 4. Planning is collaborative and support is in place for staff planning spine materials. 5. In Y4 Maths teaching there is a focus on times tables. Staff have introduced incentives i.e. challenges in phase assemblies. The planned maths staff meeting next week will focus on gap analysis to ensure teaching is adapted to close gaps in knowledge and improve outcomes. 6. There has been a focus on the geography curriculum which is being reviewed by SLT. 7. The EYFS stage has been very successful in some subject areas but work continues to produce documents that further support learning. 8. SLT have set an ambitious plan and it has been suggested that we review this in light of our financial concerns. However we feel it is important to remain ambitious for our pupils whilst also having to acknowledge that we may be unable to meet these ambitious targets due to our 	

			<p>lowered resources.</p> <p>9. At Queen Edith we continue to develop or forest school provision with funding being provided by the PSFA. However, play equipment is rotting in the playgrounds which is also a priority for the PSFA. This year we bought into EYFS silver membership offer and they will provide advice and training to our EYFS leaders.</p> <p>10. Leader in Me lightening squads have had a session with Sarah and she will work with DHs tomorrow.</p> <p>11. Behaviour curriculum is being covered with children and is on track.</p> <p>12. We continue to engage in the FIG process and are monitoring spending endlessly. Governors are involved in this too.</p> <p>13. Governor challenge: What are you most pleased about? Specifically the LiM programme and behaviour curriculum have come a long way and generally the personal development, behaviour and welfare support we provide for our pupils is excellent.</p> <p>14. We have been advised at FIG that we need to make cuts but are not clear where these will fall. We don't want to cut down on children's outcomes and have explained that we are being encouraged to use our best endeavours to produce excellent outcomes, but the resources are diminishing and this makes those outcomes very difficult. TAs are now only working with children who have EHCPs and therefore can't run interventions with other children.</p> <p>15. The introduction of the behaviour curriculum has shown how invested staff are, working together as a team and all singing from the same hymn sheet. There are pockets of deterioration in behaviour on occasion but the new curriculum supports improvement more quickly. It would be useful to have a governor come and conduct a pupil voice visit on behaviour, so do let us know if you are interested in this.</p>	<p><u>Governor to volunteer</u></p>
8	Staff well-being strategy (SJ)		<p>1. Mental health support team have carried out an audit at Queen Emma. The audit showed that there is gap in provision for staff well-being and no policy is in place. As a result SLT have liaised with another school locally, who have done a lot of work on staff well-being and they have shared their policy with us. As well-being is everybody's responsibility all staff members have been invited to be part of a well-being steering group to work on plugging gaps in provision. The purpose of the steering group is that ideas are put forward, discussed and pooled together. SLT have discussed the make-up of the steering group and agreed that they will all be members and also suggest that it would be very beneficial to have two governance members. 4 members of staff have registered their interest in being members of the steering group.</p> <p>2. SL to draft an email this week to be sent out in advance of FGB.</p>	<p><u>SL to draft email to request governance members of steering group</u></p>

9	Attendance and Admissions – Autumn B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance and Admissions – Queen Edith Attendance and Admissions – Queen Emma 	<p>QEM</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent absence has increased at Queen Emma School with a small number of pupils, who have very low attendance really impacting our figures. For example there is one pupils with attendance of 30% and another with attendance of 55%. Attendance meetings are taking place with parents this week and we are hoping to put attendance contracts in place. The figure also includes some children who have left our school but have not yet been removed from the school roll. Governor challenge: Do these pupils have health concerns which impact attendance? No. We implemented our new attendance strategy in September; the process is to go one of 2 pathways – 1 to provide as much support as possible which requires a lot of input from family workers. A lot of documentation needs to be gathered together for evidence. If meetings with parents and school support does not support improved attendance we follow the notice to improve route through the Local Authority which is much more punitive. Governor challenge: Are there other concerns around pupils with low attendance? Some do have associated safeguarding documents which are gathered together for evidence and documented. This is one of the new Ofsted criteria. The Attendance policy will be shared with the FGB on 2nd December. <p>QED</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is an improving picture of attendance at Queen Edith and currently there are not extreme cases as at Queen Emma. We continue to have pupils being taken on family holidays during term time and these families continue to be sent penalty notices through the local authority. Attendance letters have been over-hauled and a lot of work has to go into the new process. During attendance webinars in the Summer there was an assumption that there is an “attendance team” – which just doesn’t exist in primary schools as there is not the money or resources to support this. Governor challenge: Does the difference between the schools reflect different intakes? No, attendance problems often fluctuate between the schools. There is a pupil with 0% attendance; this is because a child has moved counties and haven’t secured a school place yet so they remain on our roll and we have to wait for the LA to investigate and they then tell what date you can take the child off roll. Governor challenge: If 1 / 2 children in a class are having a lot of time off do other children think they can get away with it too, so encouraging more absence? No, actually the opposite as they get cross that their class will never be able to win Snowy, our attendance mascot. In certain year groups there is an apathy amongst parents around punctuality and attendance 	
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			and once a child is late beyond a certain point they are registered as absent. Attendance figures are discussed at parents' evening.	
10	Preview and ratify Pet Policy	Pet policy 2024	The pet policy applies to tortoise in Y1 at Queen Emma. Ratification: The Pet Policy was ratified by the standards and improvement committee.	
11	Safeguarding		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is being delivered to new staff and those existing staff whose training needs up-dating. • Lettings manager has tightened up procedures for visitors to the school as part of a letting. Lettees will be provided with fobs and have been well appraised of the changes that are coming. • Safeguarding governor visits will take place next term. 	
12	Correspondence Received / Circulated			
13	What is the impact of decisions made during this meeting upon the standards and improvement of the Federation?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDP – It is clear that the financial decisions that the Federation will have to make will hinder the high targets that we have set for our pupils. • RSE update was really informative. 	
14	Items to be reported to Parents		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following our consultation with parents about the change in PAN we have heard from one parent at Queen Emma. They have been invited in to talk with the EHT but have not yet made an appointment. • SFL will prepare a short item for the newsletter. • Once the Attendance policy is ratified we will need to let parents know that there is a new policy. • Parents in Year 1 will be advised about the tortoise. 	
15	Any other business		Add Online Safety to the next agenda.	
16	Date of next meeting		Monday 20th January 2025, 5.30pm	

Signature: S. F. Lang Date: 20th January 2025

(Sean Lang, interim Chair, Standards & Improvement Committee)