

Directors' Note for Portfolio Groups

Portfolio title: Brayford/Umberleigh LGB

Date of meeting: Tuesday 5th October, 6.00pm, Umberleigh Primary Academy

Attended by: Penny Wignall, Melanie Marcolini, Helen Cooke, Corrine Smith, Jenny Geen, Katie Locke (observer), Verity Goss (clerk).



Brief overview of discussion

Procedural items

Welcome and apologies

PW welcomed all to the meeting, and introduced KL as a potential local governor. JG confirmed as a local governor.

Declaration of business interests

None declared.

Sign off previous minutes

Minutes agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising brought forward by Chair

None not elsewhere on the agenda.

Correspondence

None received.

Monitoring and Accountability

Autumn update:

Covid update – CS reported that there were no Covid issues at the schools at the moment, but there were a lot of colds going around. Parents had been very good at getting their children tested if they were displaying Covid symptoms. Children had been very excited about playing together again, and planning trips. Staff were glad to be working normally again.

Curriculum – CS explained the new curriculum areas planned for this term. Brumblebees were currently learning about pets, and would also have a dragon topic. Reception at Umberleigh were working separately to Y1 and Y2 – they were exploring ‘me and my community’, while the infants were exploring the Victorian era in relation to the local area. The juniors were looking at ancient civilisations. The same topics were planned across both schools – this meant

staff were able to plan the curriculum together, and plan trips together. *In the past all schools across all ages in TEAM had the same overarching topic – why had this been changed?* CS explained that staff needed to be able to show the progression of each child's journey, and the schools were using Curriculum Maestro to help plan towards this. The planned curriculum was tailored so each child had a good progression route. *Were there any shared areas across the age groups?* CS stated there were, and these were tailored to the children within each school. *Were the big events able to happen this term?* CS stated that they would be able to, and staff were planning these – for example infants were looking to visit a Victorian classroom, and a trip to Rosemoor as part of science. Trips were being planned for children in the same age groups across the two schools, rather than a whole school trip.

Monitoring standards

Neil Swaite's report from Umberleigh visit – CS explained that the purpose of the visit was to help know the current status of the school. Neil Swaite was an independent advisor, whose visit had been paid for by TEAM. CS explained how the format of Ofsted inspections had changed, and what the inspectors would be looking at. Inspectors did not look at data now, but would definitely look at early reading and phonics, and would do deep dives in certain areas. They would look to see how much progress had been made since the last Ofsted inspection. The inspectors would talk to the head of school, observe lessons and talk to children. They would do a deep dive into a subject the school identified as being a strength, and would want to see how the subject was planned out across the school, and what opportunities children had for learning. CS explained that a big advantage of being part of TEAM was that there was support from across the trust in the curriculum teams, and that SLT was also be present for the inspection for support. Neil Swaite had identified computing as an area to improve, and had recommended that the staff in the junior classroom were trained in Read Write Inc, as children who were having difficulties would benefit from the same language around phonics being used throughout the school.

Did the visit feel like an Ofsted inspection? CS stated it had not quite felt like an inspection, and had been a very supportive visit. CS felt the discussion he had had with pupils had been a highlight, as what children reported matched up with how staff talked about the curriculum. CS stated that the next steps given were very useful, and would form part of the school improvement plan.

Would there be a similar visit to Brayford? CS stated that she was not sure how useful this would be, as the two schools worked so closely together.

Was there a medium/long term plan? CS explained how a four year rolling program for the curriculum was needed, as children spent four years in the junior class.

Would it be possible to offer some Read Write Inc sessions to parents? KL reported she had found what she had learnt about phonics during virtual learning had been useful when reading afterwards. CS agreed it would be useful to have some sessions now parents were able to come back into school.

Would children who did not pass the phonics screening check on the second attempt be tested again for staff awareness of children's levels? CS stated that not all children would be able to get a pass, as alien words were used. Staff could see the improvement in children. CS stated that a child who didn't pass the second time would be having other support.

CS stated that part of the improvement plan was giving children the chance to revisit and revise previous learning. This already happened a lot in English

and maths, but less so in history and geography. CS explained the knowledge organiser, and how staff would be using this in the future for children to revisit their previous knowledge. It also fitted in with the 'talk like an expert' plan, and was a good way to cement knowledge. CS felt that this had previously happened in the school, but previously had not been formalised.

Local governors agreed it was a really good report.

Discussion was had on which subjects would be chosen for a deep dive in each school. CS felt that music would be a good choice. *Why did CS consider music a strength?* CS stated that a specialist music teacher visited the schools each week for all age groups. There were also additional enrichment activities, children were encouraged to play a musical instrument, there was a choir and recorders club. RockSteady was also offered for children who wanted to play in a band. The music lead had very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm.

School specific SIP Updates:

- SIP and Progress at Umberleigh
- SIP and Progress at Brayford
- KS1 / KS2 Covid 19 catch up needs

CS reported that the SIP and SEF for each school were currently being worked on. The SEF document stated what the strengths of the school were, and the context of the school. The SIP gave areas of focus for the year, and linked to the SEF. This year the report from Neil Swaite would also feed into the SIP.

There had been a lot of discussion of Umberleigh following Neil Swaite's report – what was the situation at Brayford? CS stated that many things in the visit report could be mirrored across. Mrs Beattie was finishing her maternity leave at Easter, and Mrs Sheppard had just gone on maternity leave. *Was CS happy with how the maternity cover staff had settled in?* CS stated she was, and that Ian Thomas was also going to Brayford on Mondays for support. Some teachers from Pilton Bluecoat were also supporting the early careers teacher. It was difficult in a small school to learn from other staff, so it was very positive to be able to have support from other schools. *How was the support arranged for the Early Careers Teacher?* CS stated that the early careers teacher had time out of the classroom where they could also visit other schools for support. Watching other teachers was very beneficial, and being part of TEAM meant they could observe a range of teachers. CS stated that the cohort had had a very disrupted time in education due to Covid, but the Early Careers Teacher was doing a very good job. *Would children benefit from having some time spent on focussing on skills within the classroom, as it had been a long time since children had had a normal time in the classroom?* CS stated that there was a wellness/kindness day coming up, and there were elements of the school day that focussed on social skills.

Catch up needs – CS explained what the money was being used for, including buying into the PHSE Jigsaw resources. There was a big focus on speech and language. Some would also be used to update reading books, which was a constant process.

Safeguarding Report

CS stated that the big termly visit had not yet happened. One family at Brayford was on the child protection register. Staff and governors had read the new Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Covid 19 current challenges

Covered earlier in the meeting.

Health and safety report

Reports had been received.

Umberleigh car park ruts – to be discussed later in the meeting.

School warning lights – ones on bridge were not working. CS stated that these had been deemed too dangerous to fix, which was why there was another set from that direction. These had also been reported as not working – parish council were talking to highways about this again. Governors discussed possible ways that awareness could be raised of speed around the school entrance.

Brayford school signs – HC felt that sign up the hill was too far away from the school. The owner of the hedge obscuring the other sign had been contacted to be asked to cut their hedge.

Drain outside infants class at Brayford – CS was arranging anti slip paint.

Swimming/cycling – CS stated these would come back. Swimming had not been able to happen last year, but would happen again this year. Currently there was a football coach coming in to school, and gymnastics was being organised for later in the year so children could use the bigger apparatus. It was hoped to do rock climbing again.

Strategic

Umberleigh Park and Play - Parking

Equipment has been ordered. Ground work not yet done – the contractor organised to do it had not been able to do it at that time due to a medical emergency. Discussion on what could be done about this.

Parking – was it possible to have more spaces? Local governor felt that the angle of parking spaces was causing problems – CS stated that the wooden poles

could be removed. Local governors agreed it would be good if a small amount of the field could be claimed for additional parking spaces. Hopefully this could happen with the work at half term.

Review pupil numbers, projected numbers, staffing

Currently 37 on roll at Brayford, 50 at Umberleigh. 5 Brumblebees at Brayford, 20 at Umberleigh.

Brumblebees update, numbers, staffing accommodation

Foundations had been placed for the new Brumblebees building at Umberleigh, the building would come in a few weeks time. *How were staff coping without the additional space?* CS stated that they were not able to fully offer the hours that parents wanted, but hoped that all requests could be met when the new building was in place.

Brayford – ‘come and play’ sessions had been suggested in local village halls.

Staffing – Brayford staffing covered earlier in the meeting. CS reported that staffing was going well at Umberleigh – due to the increased numbers the classrooms had been organised differently and classes split, which was working really well. Children did come together at different times within the week, which was important.

Attendance including PP data

CS stated it was difficult to look at the attendance figures this early in the term, as a day’s absence had a big effect. Currently Umberleigh whole school attendance was 97.1%, Brayford 94%. There had been a number of children who had various illnesses. One child was consistently late – this was being worked on. Generally attendance was good. Pupil premium was in line with whole school attendance.

Update on Academy Trust

IT had suggested a local governor school walk around, including looking at children’s books. Agreed it was a good idea. Dates arranged so that all local governors were able to visit at least one school.

Pilton Infants School had entered a management partnership with TEAM this term, which would last a year. There were also a couple of other schools locally that had approached TEAM and were currently being considered. TEAM trustees and staff were looking for TEAM to remain a small trust – would only accept a school that would fit in, however they did not want to get in the situation where they were forced to join a bigger trust.

Discussion on increasing numbers at Brayford – breakfast club was in place. Currently no after school provision – CS would seek parent opinion on whether this was needed.

Cook at Brayford – Monday/Friday replacement had not yet been found.

Date of Next Meeting – Friday 26th November, 12.30pm, Brayford.