

Directors' Note for Portfolio Groups

Portfolio title: Brayford/Umberleigh LGB

Date of meeting: 19th November 2020, 2.00pm, Held Virtually

Attended by: Corrine Smith (head of school), Penny Wignall, Sue Davies, Charlotte Janisch, Melani Marcolini, Rachel Jakeman (from 2.30pm), Ian Thomas (CEO), Verity Goss (clerk).



MM and RJ confirmed as local governors.

Brief overview of discussion

Procedural items

Welcome and apologies

PW welcomed all to the meeting.

Sign off previous minutes

Minutes agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising brought forward by Chair

None not later in the agenda.

Correspondence

None.

Monitoring and Accountability

Autumn curriculum Update KS1/KS2

Monitoring Standards

School specific SIP Updates:

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

CS reported on the current topic being studied in the schools, saving the world, with KS1 focussing on woodland and KS2 focussing on mountains. Pre-school were also looking at similar topics. Staff were using Curriculum Maestro to help in planning some lessons – teachers

were being selective in what they used. Children were enjoying the topic, and their knowledge of the world was improving. Although the 'big event' trips had not been able to happen this term, staff had put a lot of effort into organising memorable experiences based from the school. CS explained some of the activities that had been organised on these days.

CS explained that staff were ensuring that children still had a broad curriculum. Curriculum Maestro was helping to map out what children were learning more clearly. 'Building Learning Power' had been introduced in all age groups, which was helping children be aware of their learning. Umberleigh had been linked with a school in India through a British Council project – there had been a delay in starting this project due to Covid, but the project had been extended due to this. Brayford was involved with a three year research project facilitated by Beaford Arts – 'a voice to tell a story'. This aimed to develop children's literacy through art, and included storytelling and a sketchbook project, which children were really engaging with.

CS gave an overview of the School Improvement Plan, which was in the final stages of editing. CS explained some of the targets in the SIP – ensuring a high quality curriculum on offer, ensuring assessment processes were effective in tracking progress, and ensuring high quality and teaching and learning. Greater depths maths was a similar target to the previous year. CS explained the calculation policy being used in both schools to ensure children did not have gaps in their learning. Staff were continuing to use the Shanghai maths project, and were also using some of the White Rose maths resources, which helped to develop high level thinking/problem solving skills. Discussion on developing greater depth skills, and the recording of verbal evidence of children's understanding – especially relevant in KS1.

A governor asked how the best use of the Covid catch up money had been assessed, and how best to implement this. CS explained the needs had been different in each school. In Umberleigh the biggest need had been identified in the Y1 group, who had missed a large amount of their reception year. An additional TA had been employed on a 14 weeks fixed term contract to support these children. At Brayford there had not been a year group that had stood out as needing more support. Staff had noticed slight anxiousness in the children returning, and so wanted to support this. Some of the catch up funding would be used to improve the school library, some additional maths resources to develop concepts, and to improve early years resources as the EYFS children had missed a lot of areas during lockdown.

Safeguarding Report

SD's report of all five TEAM schools had been distributed. SD stated that autumn end of term visits had been booked.

Brayford – no MASH referrals. One child on child protection register, who had attended Pilton during school closures and found it a positive experience. Three Pupil Premium.

Umberleigh – no MASH referrals. One referral had been made during the summer term by an unknown person regarding a pupil at the school – this pupil was now on a watching brief. Six Pupil Premium.

RJ joined the meeting 2.30pm.

Meetings in all schools had demonstrated that staff worked hard to maintain contact with pupils and ensure that work was set. Arrangements had been in place to ensure free school meal vouchers were distributed as needed.

SD had attended the training 'meeting mental health needs of the school community', and explained the five questions that should be considered in schools. This was ensuring the wellbeing of staff, schools were safe and welcoming, learner's voices were being heard, vulnerable learners supported and that parents engaged positively with the school. This fitted in well with TEAM's ethos.

Covid 19 current challenges

Staff were happy to be back in school – some pressure had been felt at the start of the new academic year. Staff had welcomed the wellbeing days, especially in the pressures of this term. CS felt that being able to take a wellbeing day had contributed to keeping up staff morale.

The biggest challenge was felt to be the current seating arrangements (children sitting in rows), especially in the infants classes, which did not help to facilitate best teaching. Each school had two bubbles – it had been noticed that children were really missing the children in the other bubble, as they were used to all playing together. Big event trips had not been able to happen, but staff had worked hard to make up for this. Teaching staff had been needed to cover more of lunchtimes, which they had found tiring – it was important to ensure all staff were able to take a break. Google classroom had been introduced, and was expected to help with contact during any future school closure.

CS updated local governors on the recent Ofsted visit – the inspectors had wanted to talk about the general context of the school, the impact that Covid had had on attendance, behaviour and safeguarding. It had been a fact finding visit, and a general letter about the visit had been published after the visit. CS had appreciated that her professional opinion had been listened to, without evidence being required for all areas.

Health and safety report/premises governor

Visits from Simon Wallis and Briony Parsons were continuing. It was noted that a new Health and Safety local governor was needed.

Strategic

Umberleigh Park and Play

Work had begun on the car park. There was a time limit on some of the grant money for equipment – views of Friends and Village Hall to be consulted on what equipment would be most used. There was a condition of the grant that the equipment was community use – needed to be suitable for all ages. There had been some delay due to the weather – not sure currently when the car park would be able to be used due to the rain.

Ceilings had been completed and were working well.

Review pupil numbers, projected numbers, staffing.

Brumblebees update, numbers, staffing, accommodation

Brayford currently 35 on roll, Umberleigh 45. Both schools had recently had new children join the school. Brumblebees – currently five at Brayford, expected 8 in January. Umberleigh currently had 14 registered, 17 expected in January and 20 by the summer. Space was becoming a concern in order to accommodate all sessions required. IT confirmed that this was being looked at. Brayford was fortunate to have a flexible space.

Staffing – no change except for the additional Covid catch up teaching assistant.

Attendance including PP data

Brayford – whole school 96.2%. PP 88.8% - when looking at this it could be seen that this was all explainable, eg recurring illness. CS confirmed she was not currently worried about PP absence.

Umberleigh – whole school 89.5%. Three children had not returned in September, one family had now decided to home educate, the other had now returned to school. CS explained how they had supported families experiencing anxiety about children returning to school. PP attendance 95%.

IT stated that the current average attendance in Devon was 89%, and in the Barnstaple learning community 85%. The good attendance of children showed how safe parents and children felt the school was.

Update on Academy Trust

IT gave an overview of issues schools were currently dealing with nationally – attendance, uncertainty around exams, and Covid cases in the school community. There had been an increase in the number of children being home educated, and 2/3 of these had been related to Covid – anxiety, medical and children unable to cope with current restrictions in school.

IT explained the Building Learning Drivers across TEAM, with an overview of the development plan. Safeguarding continued to be high on the agenda, with staff continuing to support children to feel safe in school. Google classroom had been introduced, which would be used to help deliver home learning in the event of further school closures.

Meeting ended 3.33pm.

Date of next meeting: mid January, TBC.