



St James' RC Academy Trust, Maybury Close, Petts Wood. BR5 1BL
Faith in Action, Working Together, Walking in the Footsteps of Christ

**Minutes of the Children and Learning Committee meeting
held on 19 May 2015**

The Governors agreed, in June 2009, that all papers submitted to and the minutes arising from, meetings of the Governing body and its sub-committees, should be fully prepared, and managed, in line with the regulations and the guidance, taking into account the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts. Minutes concerning confidential matters will not be published.

Present	Mary Hutchinson – Chair of Governors Anna Boshier – Head Teacher Kevin Moon – Vice Chair of the Children & Learning Committee Bruno Cotta Elizabeth Atkinson Dominique Wells – Clerk to the Governing Body
1. Opening Prayer	The Vice Chair of the Committee opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. Apologies for Absence	Jo Gibson - Chair of the Children & Learning Committee Lisa Weeks – Deputy Head Teacher Austin Barradell
3. Declaration of Interest	None
4. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising	<u>Minutes</u> All minutes were agreed as correct. <u>Matters arising</u> None.

<p>5. Reports</p>	<p>All relevant documents were circulated by email to the Committee prior to the meeting.</p> <p>5.1 Michelle Wilson: Exceeding, Gifted and Talented Mrs Wilson reported on the NACE (National Association for Able Children in Education) award which the school was aiming to apply for.</p> <p>She stated that a register was kept of the Gifted and Talented, and this is updated every year. The children on the list are identified through observations of them at school, interviews with them about what they do outside of school and referrals from outside agencies and their eligibility to go on the list is discussed at staff meetings. All teachers at staff meetings will contribute towards identifying and tracking the children's development.</p> <p>Another register is kept of the Exceeding the children are tracked for progress every year. Mrs Wilson monitors them and if the progress is not as expected, interventions are put in place to enable them to achieve.</p> <p>Mrs Wilson said that NACE is a charitable organisation of high reputation, and only 341 schools in England and Wales have gained the NACE Award. The award is Ofsted-recognised and very hard to obtain. It offers a framework and self-evaluation tool to look not only at the able, but indeed every child.</p> <p>In order to get the award, the school will be assessed on 10 elements (recently changed to 8). A representative had visited the school to carry out a Pre-Assessment in order to ascertain whether the school was ready to apply for the award. This had been passed and the Assessment will take place on 25th June. A representative will come to the school for a whole day and carry out the assessment through interviews of staff, children and parents, observation of 5 lessons, scrutiny of books, etc. The school will know the result on the same day.</p> <p>The Pre-Assessment report made some recommendations, eg. amend the policy, mention EGT in the prospectus, involve parents. With regard to the latter, Mrs Wilson would be sending out a letter to all parents asking them about their children's extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>Questions asked by Governors: <i>Q: What percentage of children are on the lists?</i> <i>A: The Exceeding percentage throughout the school is 20%. However, our Gifted and Talented is 10%. The national average for both is 5-10%. We are currently looking at our identification procedures at present so this figure may change.</i></p> <p>It was clarified that 'Gifted' children were identified on academic ability, 'Talented' on Arts/Drama/Sport ability and 'Exceeding'</p>	
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on ability in each subject.

In terms of providing for these children, the block term plans show what the teachers want for them, secondary schools are invited to the school (eg. a girl from Newstead Wood would be taking an enrichment class one afternoon), children are taken to secondary schools to see different departments, outside agencies are brought in (eg. diving, tennis coaches). The Exceeding children can also act as role models for other children, and share their skills by taking part of a lesson. More confident children may be paired with less confident children, which can be mutually beneficial.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: How long is the award held for?

A: 3-4 years.

Q: Have children who have been 'spotted' progressed more because of the intervention than they would have done had they not been 'spotted'?

A: Yes.

5.2 Joanne Richards: Cooking, Maths

Cooking

Mrs Richards reported that cooking was going extremely well. There is more emphasis on cooking in the new curriculum and therefore a slightly different approach was being taken. Where cooking is already a regular part of the children's education, thanks to parental input, the lessons are now more structured (with more emphasis on teaching the children good life skills) and are integrated with other areas of the curriculum.

KS1 classes each have five recipes to cook, each group within the classes cooking the same thing. KS2 have one recipe to cook each term. The (healthy) recipes are chosen according to:

- vegetables/fruit being grown in the school gardening plots (link to growing)
- seasonal availability in shops
- different countries (link to geography/humanities topics).

The process of following recipes help link in reading and maths.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: How can progress and achievement in this area be measured?

A: This would be done primarily through teacher observation of the motor skills and how well or in what way a child follows a recipe.

Mrs Richards confirmed that Risk Assessments are carried out and any physical or behavioural concerns are addressed by ensuring special equipment is available (eg. safety scissors, holders). KS2 cooking is led by the teachers but parents are still involved from a Health and Safety point of view. KS1

parents have continued to organise a weekly rota for helping out.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: What is the usual adult-pupil ratio?

A: In KS1, 1 adult to 6 children. In KS2, 4 adults per class.

Maths

Mrs Richards reported that Maths continues to be a strength of the school. Classroom Monitor is found to be good for assessment and it was intended now to be used more for planning also.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: What are the advantages of Classroom Monitor over Target Tracker?

A: Classroom Monitor is more specific about a clear target and how to assess. The grades are generated automatically from the teacher's responses. Target tracker is more general. Classroom Monitor can also list children in order of attainment and produce a gap analysis to identify where efforts need to be directed.

A discussion regarding the difference between 'Exceeding' and 'Mastery' ensued. It was noted that the definition of 'Exceeding' needed to be refined and that it doesn't only mean that the child can do something, but rather that there is a depth to their learning and understanding of that concept. There is more emphasis on reasoning and problem-solving, and the realisation that there is often not only one answer but many possible answers. 'Mastery' means that a child is exceeding across the board within their year group, and is ready to move up to the next year group.

The children are also being encouraged to use the apparatus available to them in order to solve problems. Mental maths is still important but the use of apparatus was considered very valuable to help children's understanding of finding different ways to solve a problem.

It was noted that, in the transition to the new curriculum, gaps had needed to be filled from old curriculum, but the teachers had been preparing for this for some time prior to the new curriculum coming in. Therefore the transition had been well-managed, not only because the school is well above the national average but also because it has excellent teachers.

Mathletics still continues to be part of the homework, but needs to be written into the homework policy. Not all children are always able to complete the tasks set as homework due to lack of access at home, but lunch clubs are taking place to give them the opportunity to do these in school if they have not managed to do them at home.

5.3 Holding the School to Account

With reference to the questions prepared by the Chair for the Head Teacher, based on David Gosling's suggestions, the Head Teacher reported as follows:

Achievement:

1. Strengths/Weaknesses of new tracking system

See 5.2 above. The end of year reports will show the children within bands of Developing, Secure and Exceeding.

2. Internal/External reviews

RAISE online has been outstanding for 5 years. The new curriculum has provided new challenges, but interventions are put in place to help those children who need it. David Gosling has confirmed the school is outstanding.

Internally, book scrutinies are regularly undertaken and show that the children are proud of their work and achievements, but also that they know where they need to improve.

Recently there was a visit from a representative from the local authority in order to moderate assessment in Early Years. They agreed with the school's assessment of the children. 91% of children are expected to achieve a Good Level of Development (60-70% is the national average).

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: Was the visit due to the school being an Academy?

A: No, the local authority is still responsible for standards in the borough (and providing support as required which academies can access)

Q: How often does the local authority visit the school?

A: It depends (By request if we purchase their resource.)

Usually for SATs - we are told what SATs will be moderated, and they are different year on year.

Q: Are we compared to other schools?

A: We are compared at a national level.

In order to prove progress, the school is using Classroom Monitor. For instance, 3 children have had regular interventions since reception and as a result have made a lot of progress. Some Pupil Premium children receive one-to-one resource. At the other end, a large proportion of the children are exceeding - 64% are already achieving a level 5 in literacy.

Teaching:

3. Review of teaching and CPD

100% of teaching is reported to be good and 63% outstanding. These findings are supported by those of David Gosling.

4. SEN, Pupil Premium, Children Looked After

All the support staff involved with these children are highly skilled.

With regard to the Year 6 SATs, the 3 SEN children had extra support for an hour each day after school and on the day everything was done to put the children at their ease. This was confirmed by the Chair who had invigilated the tests.

The Looked After children in Year 2 are expected to achieve a L2+.

A report on the other years will be presented at the Full Governing Body meeting.

5. Work Scrutinies

The children are responding to marking and as a result they improve – this is seen in the books and in their subsequent work. Teachers have taken on board David Gosling’s suggestion of correcting key vocabulary.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: Are there barriers to outstanding teaching?

A: No, there is a great capacity within the teaching staff and a willingness to take things further. There is a challenge in the Early Years, where it is harder to prove outstanding teaching as there are 17 Early Learning goals to be achieved and these must be evidenced to prove that progress has been made across all areas. However, this is not seen so much as a barrier as a challenge.

What could be seen as barrier is the small size of the room, but there are plans in motion to address this.

Q: Is there support in place for the Reception teacher?

A: Yes. The challenge is the change in assessment. She has been to see the Classroom Monitor at Crofton School and how that works for Early Years. An EY specialist is also coming in to help her to use the iPad as a resource for Classroom Monitor. The Power of Reading is helping too. There is a significant Early Years budget because of the need for extra resource, and it is understood that she would ask for anything that she might need.

Behaviour and Safety:

6. Behaviour in lessons

Behaviour is on the whole outstanding. Any issues are dealt with speedily through the Behaviour Policy.

The Ofsted criteria for Behaviour and Safety includes attitudes to learning, which are outstanding here. Attendance is 97%, which is outstanding. The Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out, and one Governor undertook a Health and Safety walk around the school.

7. Racism, homophobia, bullying

	<p>There have been no reported incidents.</p> <p><u>Leadership & Management:</u> <u>8. SDIP</u> This will be reported in the Head Teacher’s Report for the Full Governing Body Meeting.</p> <p>100% of teachers were formally observed in the Spring Term and the same will be the case by the end of the Summer Term. There is no concern with staff attendance. Subject leaders and the Head Teacher will also undertake work scrutinies.</p> <p><u>9. Parent/Pupil views</u> To be reported in the Full Governing Body Meeting.</p> <p>5.4 Data</p> <p><u>Year 6</u> – the national average is 27 points and all groups are above this. All children should have made more than 2 levels of progress.</p> <p><u>Year 2</u> – the national average is 15 points. This is lower because it is harder to develop the writing at this stage. The Children Looked After are making good progress.</p> <p><u>Year 1 phonics testing</u> – 90% of the children are expected to reach the required standard.</p> <p>Questions asked by Governors: <i>Q: Will Ofsted question the children on 4b?</i> <i>A: It is expected that children need to be a 4b to be considered average.</i></p> <p>5.5 Sports Premium This is being well-used. Credit was given to Mrs Connolly for promoting activity within the school.</p> <p>Tennis coaching had been given to every child and some had followed up the offer of a free trial lesson. Some children had been practising at lunchtime for a gymnastics competition and the improvement of the children’s skills was noticeable. Dance training had also taken place for staff with a pupil demonstration.</p>	
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<p>6. Staffing Updates</p>	<p>It was reported that Miss Spedding, a newly-qualified teacher, has been appointed as Year 1 teacher for the next academic year. She will come into the school for a handover with Mrs Esaias two weeks before the end of term. The Head Teacher is researching a suitable NQT package for her training.</p>	
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<p>7. Any Other Business</p>	<p>1. Section 48 The Head Teacher reported that an interim review had taken place. Multifaith teaching is being taught termly rather than in one block. The RE advisor was happy with the evidence produced and with the school as a whole in respect of its approach to RE.</p> <p>2. Training The Head Teacher reported that she had passed a 2-day assessment with Ofsted and will now do one inspection per term. The money will come to the school and she will bring up-to-date training to the school. The Deputy Head Teacher had been signed off on her NPQSL (Senior Leadership) training and has not only received up-to-date training but has visited other schools. She is also a local authority moderator for writing. Mrs Richards is a KS1 moderator and is also visiting other schools. The school is also supporting other schools. There is a working partnership within the Umbrella Trust.</p>	
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<p>8. Dates of next meetings</p>	<p>Governor Morning – 9th June 2015, 9.15am Full Governing Body – 18th June 2015, 5.00pm</p>	
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<p>9. Closing Prayer</p>	<p>The Vice Chair of the Committee closed the meeting with a prayer.</p>	
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The meeting closed at 1830.