

Thongsley Fields & St. Peter's Governing Body

## Curriculum & Standards Committee

**DRAFT** Minutes for the Curriculum and Standards Committee Meeting  
held on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020 at 9:45am

### Present:

Chris Jukes	Primary Executive Lead
James Singleterry	Trust Governor
Rachel Hurst	Trust Governor
Emily Davis	Trust Governor
Phil Cox	Trust Governor
Aleisha Matthews	Parent Representative
June Housego	Parent Representative
David Jones	Head Teacher
Lauren West	Deputy Head Teacher

Also in attendance: Kayleigh Cooke as Clerk

### 1. Apologies for absence received and accepted from

Mark Goodridge (Chair) Trust Governor  
James Singleterry agreed to chair the meeting.

### 2. Declaration of (changes in) interests

No interests declared.

### 3. Election of Chair of this committee

In the absence of the existing Chair, it was agreed to postpone this item. CJ and DJ to discuss next steps with MG.

### 4. Review committee membership structure and terms of reference

Rachel Hurst and Emily Davis (both Trust Governors) were welcomed to their first Curriculum & Standards committee meeting.

Governors agreed the existing terms of reference remain appropriate and will be kept under review.

## 5. Minutes of the last meeting 18/09/20 and matters arising.

Minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

Action Reference	Action Summary	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date
2020/2021 - 001	Nominate and agree C&S committee Chair for recommendation to LGB	All members	23/10/2020
2020/2021 - 002	MG to arrange governor visit focused on Read Write Inc	MG > LW/KC	23/10/2020
2020/2021 - 005	Invite SF to present to governors at December meeting re: SEND/Inclusion	KC/DJ > SF	23/10/2020

## 6. Actions carried forward from previous meetings

None.

## 7. Review and consider Y6 targets (and additional KPIs for 2020-2021)

For the benefit of those that had not be present at meetings last academic year, DJ recapped the context for presenting termly data, targets and comparisons with previous years. These were discussed at the appropriate meetings of this committee in Autumn 2019 and Spring 2020.

Governors discussed the validity of Fischer Family Trust (FFT) estimates and although not deemed appropriate to base targets on, they will continue to be used to inform the target setting process. FFT estimates for our current cohorts in years 4-6 are based on Y2 assessments which were not completed accurately enough under previous leadership and staffing arrangements.

**QU – ED – Why are children in KS1 assessed by teachers at the end of the year? Do they not take SAT tests at all?** DJ explained that there are no externally marked SAT tests for KS1. SAT materials are available and used to help inform Teacher Assessments for Y2 children. In contrast, Y6 children sit externally marked SATs. It is important that schools have robust processes in place to ensure effective moderation of teacher assessments – significant work has and continues to take place to ensure all year group assessments are as accurate as possible.

Governors were informed how targets are set, using ‘baseline’ assessments conducted in the first half of the Autumn term. DJ explained that the current baseline for Y6 is higher than in the previous two years. Writing assessments are significantly lower for this cohort and there is a wide gap between those that are on track and those that are not.

Governors requested that combined reading, writing and maths data is added when available. Governors agreed that the school’s targets are suitably ambitious but achievable, noting that the current data is more positive than expected.

**QU – RH – Does low Y6 data for writing not indicate a structural problem in the teaching those children have had?** DJ reiterated previous Local Governing Body discussions regarding the turbulent history of the school prior to academisation. Teaching has not always been good and the curriculum has not been sufficiently well planned, ambitious and progressive. The school's development plan and work that begun in September 2018 is deliberately focused on these core areas.

A higher than average number of pupils transfer to Thongsley Fields part way through the school year, arriving with a wide range of different school experiences and resulting gaps. Staff work hard to assess and target teaching accordingly.

**QU – RH – Do governors need to consider any further resources to support the school in improving outcomes?** DJ confirmed the current structure of classes and teaching support available. There is likely to be some further teaching support (TA hours) required for individual children and group needs. Half day closure on Wednesday afternoons has enabled additional teaching support to be targeted in Y1/2 this term where there is a high level of need.

**QU - RH – Is the standard of teaching now good enough and the curriculum now being developed?** DJ explained that as previously discussed, the curriculum has been and is under significant development and that that is a long process. An internal document aimed at supporting new staff and detailing the school's current curriculum position was shared with governors present.

DJ explained that staffing is now more settled and the quality of teaching is improving significantly, however, is not yet consistent across the school. Monitoring and mentoring work is being undertaken where appropriate.

**QU - JH – How has the 6-month lockdown period affected outcomes?** DJ confirmed that children's ability to sustain their concentration appears to have reduced and that gaps have widened between those previously on track and those not previously on track.

**QU - CJ – Are the EYFS assessments baseline on entry?** LW explained that baseline assessments were completed on entry for all children and the figures presented represent those. Communication, language and PSED are the weaker areas and some of this cohort have not been in any educational setting before or they started at a setting but were unable to continue due to the COVID-19 lockdown. There are a higher number of toileting issues or with English not being the primary language spoken at home.

**QU – ED – Is Read Write Inc a new style of teaching for the school?** DJ confirmed the scheme was introduced in November 2019 after significant evaluation of different options. All staff were involved in substantial training through September and October 2019 with teaching beginning in November 2019. Unfortunately, COVID meant that the school only saw a few months of teaching

before closures. Staff have received refresher training before the start of this school year to enable us to begin teaching again using the prescriptive resources available.

JH – From a parent's point of view during lockdown in Nursery, staff continued to send new letters and sounds tasks for the children e.g. to find objects around home or go on walks that start with that sound and getting the children to repeat that sound and sending it back into school. This was consistent all the way through lockdown.

LW – We have invested in more of the Ruth Miskin online resources this year. This has helped staff to deliver high quality distance phonic learning, through videos so pupils can access at home phonics teaching as if you were in the classroom with the teacher. These videos are currently being sent home to parents and carers via Tapestry and Class Dojo so they have access to them as revision style sessions. It has been a great way to engage and 'upskill' parents and carers and all resources are accessible through the school's website.

DJ – Training for staff focuses on the development of consistent teaching across the school – previously, several different schemes were in use and the quality of teaching was variable.

#### **8. Update on pupils' attendance and monitoring processes (up to Spring 2019-2020)**

Governors acknowledged the overall attendance figures made available before the meeting. Attendance has remained good (96%) and that the school is on track to meet its attendance targets for this academic year.

DJ advised that the school has had to close one group 'bubble' due to a positive Covid-19 test. This had a negative impact on attendance rates across the school, where siblings of the children in the closed bubble were unable to attend or stayed home where parents were concerned. To alleviate this, staff volunteered to provide a walking bus service to collect and return home siblings of those children in the closed bubble to reduce the impact of the bubble closure. This was received positively by those and other parents.

DJ also confirmed the school continues to apply a proactive approach by arranging meetings with parents where there are early concerns.

#### **9. Review progress of curriculum development and other priorities previously highlighted.**

DJ explained that most subject overviews are now complete highlighting what is to be taught across that subject in each year group. Year groups also have an overview which details what topics or themes will be taught across their year group that year. The school is working on a two-year cycle due to mixed age classes – staff have focused on developing this year's cycle first and are now developing the next part of the cycle ready for September 2021.

As a result of the half day closure on Wednesday, time has been released for subject leads to develop their role in curating, monitoring and improving their subject area. Staff have begun

working towards achieving recognised 'quality marks' which help to provide a framework for subject development.

**QU - RH – There are numerous primary schools in the Trust - if you collaborated would this not enable faster progress?** DJ confirmed that the school is and has been collaborating extensively with the other schools in the Trust since academisation. However, each of the schools are at a different stage of development and each have differing needs. Plans, resources and ideas are shared between the schools and joint curriculum development days have been held.

CJ advised that the Trust has now appointed a 'curriculum lead' to work across the seven Primary schools within the Trust. This role is a secondment specifically designed to support the work of each school and promote further collaboration.

DJ explained that this work is and will always be ongoing as the needs of the children change. The school aims to have all subject and year group overviews for its two-year cycle complete by the end of this year academic year. However, subject leads will continue to adapt and vary plans in order to ensure quality and effective progression or knowledge and skills.

#### **10. Review the priorities highlighted in the School Development Plan (SDP)**

DJ highlighted the four key priorities of the school's 3-year plan noting that last year, a significant proportion of identified actions were not possible due to COVID-19. Some of these actions have been carried forward to this year whilst some have been superseded by more appropriate actions based on a review of progress.

#### **11. Policy review**

- a. Accessibility Policy
- b. SEND Information Report
- c. Distance Learning Policy

As a result of a question from governors about the origin of policies, DJ confirmed that some policies e.g. the Accessibility Policy have been written based on collaboration with other Trust schools. The SEND Information Report and Distance Learning Policy are unique to our school although good practise from other schools, locally and nationally, as well as linked organisations e.g. the LA, other LAs, The Key, etc. have been used where appropriate.

Governors commented positively on the comprehensive Distance Learning Policy, noting it covers a range of potential scenarios. All policies were agreed as presented.

#### **12. Presentations to Governors**

Proposals for presentation to Governors at subsequent C&S meetings.

- a. SEND/Inclusion – Stella Frampton (agreed for 2/4/20)

Draft proposals for presentation to Governors at subsequent C&S meeting

b. Writing

Governors discussed and requested that this presentation be moved forward to February (from Easter) in light of the lower projected outcomes in Writing.

### 13. Governor Visits

Proposals for the Spring term: (Previously agreed on 18/9/2020)

a. SEND/Inclusion (planned for Spring 2021)

Governors were reminded that this was agreed at the previous meeting and that volunteers would be needed to complete this visit.

### 14. Any other business

None.

### 15. Next meeting dates

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 9.45am.

Meeting closed at 11.15am

### New actions from this meeting

Action Reference	Action Summary	Person(s) Responsible	Due Date
2020/2021 - 007	Invite staff to present to governors at February meeting re: writing	KC/DJ > TBC	12/02/2021
2020/2021 - 008	Governors to volunteer to complete SEND/Inclusion focus visit in Spring.	All members	12/02/2021