



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 17 May 2022**

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 Minutes concerning confidential matters will not be published.

All documents discussed were circulated prior to the meeting unless otherwise specified.

<b>Present</b>	Mary Hutchinson – Chair of Governors Lisa Weeks – Head Teacher Michelle Wilson – Deputy Head Teacher Margaret Connell Elizabeth Williamson  In attendance: Dominique Wells – Clerk
<b>1. Opening Prayer</b>	A prayer for Ukraine was said by the Committee.
<b>2. Apologies for Absence</b>	Cat Hardiman
<b>3. Declaration of Interest</b>	None.
<b>4. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising</b>	<b>Minutes</b> The minutes were agreed as correct and taken as a true record. <b>Matters arising</b> None.

**5. Literacy update – Literacy Tree & All Aboard Phonics**

**Literacy Tree**

Mrs Connolly presented the Literacy Tree to Governors.

Literacy Tree was bought into as a writing package and has been used for about 2 years. The School used to use the Power of Reading, but the Literacy Tree does more, encouraging writing skills through a text. The idea is that the children immerse themselves within a text through which they pick up styles of writing – children use authors as a model for their own writing.

It encourages love of reading and literature - there is a wide variety of text introduced throughout the year and in all school years, and styles are revisited. Traditional authors appear in different year groups and classics are used from lower years. Picture books used through all year groups and critical reading is encouraged (e.g. why has the writer written like this?). A mixture of quality non-fiction, fiction and poetry texts are used.

The extra benefit is that comprehension, guided reading and grammar can be taught within the text, e.g. it can be used for a grammar lesson and spelling rules can be used throughout that week. As SPAG is built in to the scheme, it's more practical than Power of Reading and teachers find that more grammar lessons are taught as a result and it is easier to cover the curriculum. One of the suggested schemes is a whole school curriculum which covers all objectives.

There may be themes (e.g. adventure texts) for one term, but all the texts are very different so that styles can be compared). It is also flexible – the books can be tailored to the class and books can be swapped in and out, not only for the year group but also between year groups. The emphasis is on how the texts are used, not necessarily on their difficulty level. It is a good way of exploring books especially for books that staff or children do not usually engage with.

Teachers find that the scheme is very well laid out and it is available on the website. 'Planning' is provided and can be tweaked for the class. There are lots of books to choose from and lots of flexibility. They are very pleased with the investment.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Has there been noticeable change in the children as a result?*

*A: The children are engaged with the texts both as readers and writers.*

*Q: Does spelling need to be topped up?*

*A: To get full coverage of the curriculum, the full year of spelling via Literacy Tree is mapped out and teachers make sure that any gaps are covered.*

*Q: Does each child have a book?*

*A: Books are shared between 2 or 4 children.*

	<p><b>All Aboard Phonics</b></p> <p>Mrs Richards presented All Aboard Phonics to Governors.</p> <p>The School was asked to use this scheme at the beginning of the year and give feedback on it as it is being continually updated. This is a validated DfE scheme with a teacher book provided for each phase, laying out weekly plans. This is what the School has been used to.</p> <p>The books are laid out well with words on one side and pictures on the other which encourage them to read the word. They are particularly good for the lower ability because they are simple. More books have been needed at the lower end.</p> <p><i>Questions asked by Governors:</i>  <i>Q: Are these used at home as well as in class?</i>  <i>A: Currently they are used in class. We have only one of each and they are dated according to the plan.</i></p> <p>The books are sold as big books or small books and in packs. It needs an online platform – Phonics Play is still used – but it is recognised that no scheme is perfect. The display work could also be improved. However, the children have learnt the same as with other schemes, indicating that progress in reading is more to do with their age rather than the scheme used.</p> <p>The Class 1 teacher will continue into the next phase with this cohort.</p> <p>Governors thanked both teachers for their time in presenting these reading schemes.</p>	
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<p><b>6. Policies</b></p>	<p><b>Remote Learning</b></p> <p><b>Assessment, Planning and Recording</b></p> <p><b>Literacy</b></p> <p><b>P.E.</b></p> <p><b>Anti-Bullying</b></p> <p>All the above policies were accepted.</p> <p><b>Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion</b>  It was found that this policy required further review. Brought forward to the Full Governing Body meeting.</p>	
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<p><b>7. Reports</b></p>	<p><b>7.1 SEND Report</b> This is on the website. It has been reviewed and the Governors are satisfied with it.</p> <p><b>7.2 Pupil Information including current data</b> This was based on data from March.</p> <p>Y6 data in Maths and Reading is taken from test results (not teacher assessment). A bit of movement will be needed in writing – 4 children are borderline expected/greater depth.</p> <p>Y2 is similar with 3 children on the borderline for expected and the same for exceeding. There are 3 weeks to go before SATs.</p> <p>Nationally, it is unknown what the figures will look like. The results will likely be reflective of the cohort in Y6, and of the effects of the pandemic in Y2.</p> <p><i>Questions asked by Governors:</i>  <i>Q: Have extra lessons helped Y2?</i>  <i>A: Yes. Interventions need to be thought about carefully for maximum impact. Y1 interventions are making a difference.</i>  <i>Q: Are Y1 maturing socially now?</i>  <i>A: Yes, but it is will take time. This is a national picture. Pupil Premium children are particularly vulnerable and need slightly more school support.</i></p> <p><b>7.3 Fire Drill</b> This took place at 4pm and all were out in under 2 minutes.</p> <p><b>7.4 Umbrella Trust</b> The Head Teachers met physically for the first time a couple of weeks ago. The UT remain strong. Subject leaders met virtually yesterday.</p> <p>Moderating for Y2 and Y6 is currently happening.</p> <p>The deadline for MATs is now 2030 rather than 2025, so there is no pressure on the UT to make hasty decisions. The working party will meet face-to-face next week to strengthen what is already a good system. The Diocese have meanwhile cancelled meetings and there seems to be no clear advantage for outstanding schools to be part of a MAT.</p>	
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<p><b>8. Holding the School to Account</b></p>	<p>1. A data drop is done termly specifically for RE. Mrs Wilson reviews the assessment sheets. The teachers will sign registers in the folder and Mrs Wilson will get in touch with them to discuss. Specific data drops are found to be more useful than discussion at the general data meeting.</p>	
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2. Each subject leader will set out their expectations of lessons, books and boards as a guide for teachers. Mrs Wilson will take photos of the displays as teaching aids and demonstration of the scope across the curriculum.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Is there a danger of displays being more commercial material rather than a demonstration of children's work?*

*A: Each display will show questions that the children had to think about and how they responded. It depends on the subject how the work is displayed. Maths in particular is always continually changing so a big display is difficult. The working wall is also continually changing.*

3. It has been difficult due to staff shortage and some catch-up is needed as there has not been the time for release that there should have been.

4. There are 2 members of staff available for Listening Ear. Children, parents and teachers can ask for the child to use the Listening Ear.

Anything emerging from the anti-bullying questionnaire has been followed up by the teacher or Head Teacher. The Governor table and annual questionnaire give opportunity for pupil voice, and the Breakfast and After School clubs will also be giving a questionnaire shortly.

There are opportunities for voting, debating and democracy in school. The School has a Student Council, RE Ambassadors, PE reps, Gardening Club and Eco Committee. The School actively listens and responds to pupils through these avenues.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Do children ask to be heard or does the teacher encourage them to speak out?*

*A: Both of these – both parents and teachers know the children and are aware of those who may go under the radar. OFSTED reported that children felt the School really does listen and they are not afraid to ask for the Listening Ear. Children feel comfortable talking to staff.*

5. The single central record is very detailed and impressive. Confidential item.

6. No incidents of racism, homophobia, bullying or peer on peer abuse.

7. The Head Teacher tracks all PP children – all are attending Clubs, some even 3 or 4. Parents are always invited to ask about financial assistance if needed. 25% of PP funding is set aside for clubs. Football on Thursday is free and drama and gymnastics offer one free place. There are lots of clubs and all are able to access them.

8. Conversations have started with secondary schools and Bromley have produced a template for the Y6 teacher to complete for each child. Safeguarding and SEND issues have

	<p>been requested and this information will be physically handed over in July. Each school has its own particular questions and these are usually answered by phone. Schools generally have a good transition package.</p> <p>Bromley Y and Kooth have workshops for Y6 children and a follow-up for vulnerable children. Y6 also have a 'You are Awesome' workshop after half term.</p> <p>9. There are staff support posters in the staff room available for all staff to see – some are 24-hour services. Staff know they can talk to someone any time for support and for Leaders, there are other support networks (e.g. from Unions).</p> <p>Within school there is a good support network, and staff try to find time to socialise together at the end of the day over a cup of tea. Subject leaders take the time off that they are entitled to.</p> <p>Governors are supportive and staff know that they are supported.</p>	
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<p><b>9. Subject Ambassador / Link Governor meetings with teachers</b></p>	<p>Governors were reminded to contact the Head Teacher to arrange meetings with their subject leader.</p>	
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<p><b>10. Staffing Update</b></p>	<p>A TA is leaving after 22 years for a promotion and full-time work. Unfortunately, the school could not offer this. Governors thanked her for her service.</p> <p>Confidential item.</p> <p>Staffing is otherwise stable with Mary Jones also returning to the office.</p>	
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<p><b>11. Any Other Business</b></p>	<p>None.</p>	
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<p><b>12. Dates of next meetings</b></p>	<p><b>Full Governing Body</b> Thursday 23 June at 5.00pm in School.</p>	
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	Governors were reminded of the meeting at 2pm on Wednesday with Sharon Doherty as part of the RE visit. It should last no longer than 30 minutes.	
<b>13. Closing Prayer</b>	The Chair of Governors closed the meeting with a prayer.	

The meeting closed at 1740.