

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE OF MONKSDOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD ON THURSDAY 29th SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 12. NOON AT THE SCHOOL

PRESENT

Martin Reynolds - Chair
Jacquie Price – Headteacher
Gill Stewart
Josh Cliff

Also Present

George Allen – Clerk
Chloe Grice
Katie Lawrence
Jane Moores
Lizzie Orr
Ann-Marie Ferrigan

22/R01 WELCOME

Action

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

22/R02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

22/R03 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

It was agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th June 2022 would be deferred to the next meeting of this Committee.

22/R04 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Copies of the School Improvement Plan had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The Headteacher introduced the Monksdown Primary School Improvement Plan for 2022/23.

The Headteacher stated that the Plan contains a programme of targets and priorities for the school. It is a working document containing achievable objectives.

Committee members agreed to take away the School Improvement Plan and respond to the Headteacher with any comments or suggestions.

All

22/R05 VOCABULARY

Assistant Headteacher, Chloe Grice, provided a report on current vocabulary activities. Arising:

- I. Monksdown Primary School is engaged in an innovative vocabulary programme that is making a strong impact within the curriculum. The school is delivering a planned range of learning in vocabulary that is improving standards and attainment. A key aim is to narrow the gap in vocabulary skills between disadvantaged pupils and other children. National targets are that 95% of children in school will achieve set vocabulary outcomes.
- II. A document was circulated to Committee members that described the flexible and innovative way in which the curriculum can be delivered. It included how a curriculum

can be constructively designed, timetabled and delivered. A key aspect of this is the approach to vocabulary in the curriculum. These methods are adopted at Monksdown.

- III. Part of the curriculum involves a three-tiered approach to vocabulary provision. Tier 1 concerns the use of key words (such as cat, dog). Tier 2 involves words with 'shades of meaning' (such as scales and parched, that can be used in differing contexts). Tier 3 includes words that are slightly more complex and will improve vocabulary (such as hieroglyphics). Each pupil is supported through each tier of this learning approach.
- IV. A document was circulated by Chloe Grice that included 'Vocabulary Ninjas' and 'Fledgling words of the day'. It highlighted how key words are creatively used and taught. It listed a range of words that are taught in various Year Groups and how this enhances reading and speaking. The aim is to improve speech and language in all learning Stages.

Whilst these activities are generating positive outcomes for pupils it was stated that many children do not read at home and that families are being supported to encourage greater home reading.

The Headteacher explained that WellComm resources and the use of 'Nursery Nelly' are being successfully delivered in supporting speech and language skills in Early Years.

- V. A document was circulated to Committee words and science. The subject of science was highlighted as an example of how vocabulary is embedded within all aspects of the curriculum. The document showed that words such as 'plants, seeds, water, light, soil and space' are used within the teaching of science and how this broadens vocabulary.
- VI. Vocabulary strategies are planned, targeted, and carefully designed to generate good outcomes and to improve reading, speech and language skills. The work within this key area is embedded within the curriculum and is delivering results.

Governor Challenge: *How does this work compare with other schools?*

Response: *Chloe Grice stated that the work compares well with most schools. She has attended training events with other schools which refer to proposed models of vocabulary development and that these models are already being delivered at Monksdown Primary School.*

The Headteacher stated that planned work in this area provides good evidence of the curriculum development that is taking place across the school. Learning in vocabulary is an important aspect within the School Improvement Plan and the work of staff in this area was very effective.

Committee members thanked Chloe Grice for her excellent report and for the strong progress being achieved in the subject of vocabulary within the school curriculum.

22/FG06 PUPIL VOICE

Ann-Marie Ferrigan provided a presentation relating to ongoing Pupil Voice activities. The presentation focused upon the range of Pupil Voice and related school activities. Arising:

The school aims to be a demonstrably child-led primary school that offers the meaningful involvement of pupils in its schooling and practices. Documents appertaining to a range of pupil voice activities were provided to the Committee. They included the following themes:

Reading, Progress Board Autumn Term, Child Led Monksdown and Child Subject Leader Handbook.

a) Reading.

Norris Green Library will host a Monksdown Primary School noticeboard. This will highlight and promote school activities and the work of pupils. Children from the school are visiting the library and are provided with library joining cards. This is aimed to ensure greater reading and participation of pupils in the annual Reading Challenge managed by the LCC Library Service.

A donor offers selective children's books to the school. They are for all primary school ages. As many as twelve books, produced prior to full publication, are periodically provided to the school to be reviewed by pupils. School pupils have enjoyed reviewing the books, offering their opinions on issues such as the contents and enjoyment of the books.

b) Progress Board Autumn Term

The Progress Board contains the names of projects, the pupils who are in charge and an update on each project. Initiatives include Pantry, School Fund Raising with Radio City and a Coffee Morning. The Board contained charts describing progress in each area and listed the work of the School Council and the level of involvement of pupils within the curriculum.

c) Child Led Monksdown

The Monksdown Learning Council has 3 House Captains, who are pro-active and pupil representatives. House Captains work with school staff in relation to ongoing learning and extra-curricular activities. Activities include Breakfast Clubs, School Prefects and Subject Ambassadors. The activities are planned with good liaison between pupils and staff.

Child Subject Leaders work with staff Subject Leaders to create a curriculum that reflects the children and their learning. Subject Ambassadors, with 2 from each Year Group, meet with Child Subject Leaders to discuss activities and areas of the curriculum. Feedback is provided to staff Subject Leaders.

d) Child Subject Leader Handbook

The role and the purposes of the Child Subject Leader was described in the Handbook. It also outlined areas such as Action Plans and 'Curriculum Intent'. The Handbook emphasised pupil involvement in day-day school activities. It includes the process for how Subject Leaders have a clear process for Conducting a Learning Walk, Conducting Pupil Interviews and Termly Reports to Governors. The Handbook contained a Child Subject Lead Monitoring Cycle.

Governor Challenge: *Is there anything specific you would request from governors?*

Response: *Ann Marie Ferrigan indicated that it would be helpful if House Captains were invited to attend for the start of the Committee meetings to meet governors.*

HT

Committee members were impressed by the standard and the variation of Pupil Voice and School Council activities. Gill Stewart stated that the work compares favourably with any other school within the country. The Chair believed it demonstrated excellent pupil achievements.

The Headteacher stated that the intention with the various forms of representation is to engage broad numbers of pupils in activities whereby their voice and input are effectively heard.

Committee members thanked Ann-Marie Ferrigan for her excellent presentation and work in overseeing this work and for being part of a staff team that supported a child-led approach in the school including curriculum development, Child Subject Leads and House Captains.

22/C06 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

I. Mike Rotherham

The Headteacher explained that Mike Rotherham provides coaching and training expertise. The work has been found to be effective in the support of teaching staff and helps to improve effectiveness, forward thinking and well-being. The aim is to roll out the approach across the school. Staff have appreciated the training and it would be of use to school governors.

All

Mike Rotherham will provide training for governors on Thursday 27th January 2023.

HT

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 12.55pm.