

Governor's Visit Summary

19th April 2018

Introduction

The governing body works with the Academy to arrange termly Governor Visit Mornings. The areas of focus are priorities in the Academy Improvement Plan and other key areas that governors want to look at in more depth.

These meetings give governors an opportunity to look in detail at these areas and to gather information from a range of staff members. This information adds to that which governors receive in governing body meetings and enables governors to develop a rich and in-depth picture of the Academy.

At the April 2018 visit morning governors met with members of staff who lead on the areas on which they were focusing. The timetable was:

9.00 – 9.40	More Able Kirsten Holland <i>Meera Chandarana/ Liz Willoughby</i>	Child Leadership Team Roshni Morjaria Head Girl and Boy <i>Naila Malik/ Ahmed Peerbhai</i>	Safeguarding Alex Curran/Jill Hurst <i>Cathy Brown</i>
9.50 - 10.20	Enquiry Group – Character Muscles Ben Burpitt <i>Naila Malik / Liz Willoughby</i>	Enquiry Group – Questioning Alex Curran <i>Meera Chandarana / Ahmed Peerbhai / Cathy Brown</i>	
10.30 – 11.00	Enquiry Group – Parental Engagement Verity Reid <i>Naila Malik / Meera Chandarana</i>	Enquiry Group – English as an additional language Sheena Adatia <i>Liz Willoughby / Cathy Brown / Ahmed Peerbhai</i>	
11.00 – 11.45	Governor Feedback <i>All governors</i>		

Summary of governor meetings

More Able (MA) Pupils

This is a priority in the 2017-18 Academy Improvement Plan: *the more able pupils will make progress towards attaining the highest standards and achieving as well as they should across the curriculum. The more able pupils will receive the support they need to reach their full potential.*

In the March 2018 Challenge Partners Review, one of the 'even better ifs' was around MA: *"pupils who are capable of attaining high standards were stretched and challenged more effectively."*

The performance data collected in April 2018 indicate that the majority of year groups are on track to meet the end of year targets for their MA children in reading, writing and maths. Where they are not it is because one or two MA children in that year group are not on track. These children have been

identified, their progress has been discussed in pupil progress meetings and targeted interventions are being put in place.

A tracking grid has been introduced for foundation subjects (i.e. other than reading, writing and maths) to support the identification of children who are MA in each subject. Much of the current enquiry group work will also support the development of MA children's skills, e.g. questioning, exercising character muscles.

Child Leadership Team (CLT)

This has been set up this academic year and has two representatives from each year group from year 2 to 6 with a Head Girl and Boy from amongst their number. This year the representatives have been selected by teachers but the intention is to introduce pupil elections in the future to enable pupils to participate in a democratic process. The CLT has met twice, once for an introductory session and once to share suggestions from members and their classmates. Suggestions include a Calming Club, an EAL Club and cups by the drinking fountains.

The Head Girl and Boy are very proud to be in these roles. They reported that the CLT is leading to a greater feeling of belonging at the Academy, a sense of responsibility, team spirit and control and pride in being able to help others. Governors commented on the passion of Miss Morjaria for the work of the CLT.

There are plans to make the CLT members more visible. Governors made a number of suggestions, including: a CLT constitution with agreed timescales for responses to CLT suggestions and clarity on who to take suggestions to; tracking of suggestions and responses; CLT budget; develop direct engagement of CLT with Y1 and FS.

Safeguarding

Governors are required to submit the Annual Safeguarding Report to the Local Authority by the end of the summer term. Those present reviewed last year's report and agreed changes. The conclusion was that the Academy has very robust systems for ensuring that the required safeguarding leads are in place, that all staff have up to date training appropriate for their role, that policies and procedures are reviewed annually and that required information is published on the Academy website.

It was noted that all except one governor attended the whole staff annual safeguarding training in February 2018, that two have attended Safeguarding for Governors training (with another booked on in June 2018), that two have Safer Recruitment training (though recommended to renew) and that Jill Hurst, Family Support Worker, gave a governors' update on safeguarding practice in Northfield House in September 2017. It was agreed that Jill will give an annual safeguarding briefing to governors and that in Autumn term 2018 this will focus on Prevent and updates to Part 2 (relevant to governors) of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The Academy is starting to use CPOMS (safeguarding and child protection software for schools) more widely and this should improve recording.

The annual Local Authority Safeguarding Healthcheck is booked for June 2018. The actions from the 2017 check have been completed: all staff training on Channel and FGM; revised whistleblowing policy; and, e-safety training for parents.

Enquiry Groups

These are groups of teaching staff who work on one area over the summer term. Their work includes audits of current practice, research into the views of relevant staff or pupils, research into practice elsewhere, trialling of ideas and evaluation of impact. The enquiry groups' work concludes with presentations to colleagues on the learning by the group and recommendations for development in practice at the Academy.

Enquiry Group – Character Muscles

The Academy has previously focused on the 6Rs and this year has adapted these as part of the Public Health England Route to Resilience project. This aims to support children's social and emotional well-being and, ultimately, better mental health by focusing on developing character muscles. It was initially introduced into Year 5 and has now been rolled out across the Academy.

The enquiry group is focusing on ensuring that character muscles are embedded in the life of the Academy and that parents are engaged with this work. Character muscles are referred to in lessons and the majority of Academy tweets, they were mentioned at parents' evening and they will be referred to in the pupil reports this term.

Governors discussed with Mr Burpitt how the Academy will measure the impact of this work and agreed that it will take time to observe in the children's language, behaviour and learning. Miss Chandarana noted that she is already seeing the impact in Nursery with children applying the character muscles across a range of activities.

Enquiry Group – Questioning

Observations of teaching have identified that this is a common area to develop. Members of this enquiry group have been conducting research and audits of what is happening in the Academy to establish where that development needs to be focused. They have found that teachers are asking a range of questions but that the children find it difficult to answer, particularly open questions. There are a number of reasons for this including language barriers, not having the basic knowledge to answer and not having the skills to frame an answer.

Members of the group have focused on strategies to build children's ability to answer questions and have identified the following priorities:

- focus on higher order questions
- pre-steps to questioning, based on making links with experiences, activating knowledge, using a stimulus etc
- teaching children to ask good quality questions
- improving staff questioning techniques.

Group members are now developing and trialling different strategies and techniques. This is currently small scale but some impact is already evident. For example, Mr Wharin's IRIS videos show visible

development over a few weeks in his pupils' ability to answer questions about inference from what they are reading. Miss Chandarana noted that she has modelled questioning with her nursery children and that they have started to ask each other questions.

Enquiry Group – Parental Engagement

This group is tracking engagement and developing plans to increase it. Parents' evening attendance is recorded and non-attenders are followed up. More opportunities are being offered to bring parents into the Academy and a crèche is offered at some. Recent successes include the maths workshop in the spring term, the art show and the Christmas Tree Festival. The group is planning better promotion of opportunities to come into school, reading book sessions where parents can read with their children and more home language reading books.

Governors suggested using parent governors and the PTA to encourage parent participation and an app to communicate with parents.

Enquiry Group – English as an additional language (EAL)

Mrs Adatia reported that there are currently 314 children at the Academy (out of a total of 419) who are classed as EAL. There have been 67 new starters since the start of this academic year and the majority of these are new to English (N2E). 37 different languages have been identified at the Academy.

The comprehensive induction process for all new arrivals with EAL at the Academy continues to be effective. Various staff members are involved to cover many of the languages. The Academy has invested in home language reading books to encourage home learning. Year 6 Racing to English is a group for N2E pupils led by an HLTA (higher level teaching assistant) and Mrs Adatia has observed significant improvement in the language skills of children in this group. A similar model would benefit N2E children in other year groups but there is not sufficient staffing for there to be TA-led groups in each year group.

The enquiry group is developing strategies to extend the Racing to English model beyond Year 6. They have talked to EAL children who have recently arrived at Northfield House and those who have been at the academy for a year. They have combined Racing to English and Leicester City Council's New Arrivals Programme to develop sessions for teachers to deliver in their own classes, three times each day, when the other children are engaged in activities such as reading and spellings. Trialling of these started at the beginning of the summer term in Years 1 and 3. The group has created an app featuring everyday objects with recordings of the words and sentences to enable N2E children to practise themselves. Year 6 pupils who have tried the app are keen to develop further examples themselves for children across the Academy.