

Academy Councillor Visit Morning Thursday 14th November 2019

Introduction

The academy councillors work with North Mead Primary Academy to arrange termly academy councillor visit mornings. These meetings give Councillors an opportunity to look in detail at specific areas to gather information from staff members. The information gathered during the visits enables councillor to develop a rich and in-depth picture of the school.

Area	Met with member of staff	Councillors
SEND	Rozina Mulla (RM)	Cathy, Karla, Naila
Geography	Verity Reid (VR) and Ben Burpitt (BB)	Meera, Julius, Mansoor
Pupil Leadership Team	Roshni Pattni (RP) and Ben Burpitt (BB)	Meera, Karla, Mansoor
Safeguarding	Jill Hurst (JH) and Alex Curran (AC)	Cathy, Mansoor, Naila
Attendance	Alex Curran (AC) and Sinead White (SW)	Mansoor, Julius, Naila
Behaviour & Learning Attitudes	James Wharin (JW) and Ben Burpitt (BB)	Cathy, Karla, Meera

SEND

The relevant priority on the School Improvement Plan is A7: We aim to ensure that we have the same ambitions for all learners, and that those with the highest levels of SEND access an ambitious curriculum which meets their needs.

RM has used the new City Council Inclusive Provision guidance as the basis for staff CPD, providing high quality teaching strategies for SEND provision. The progress of SEND children is reviewed at each of the 3 pupil progress meetings across the year and phase leaders' responsibility for teaching and learning encompasses SEND. RM is working on more detailed categorisation of SEND children and CPOMS alerts her when anything is added about a SEND child. Councillors discussed with RM the difficulty of high needs children accessing special school provision and the steps taken in North Mead to meet needs as far as possible, e.g. sensory room. RM values the Trust SENCO network.

Geography

The relevant priority on the School Improvement Plan is B1: we aim to ensure that all subject leaders are working effectively to monitor and evaluate the implementation of our curriculum intent and develop staff knowledge.

The geography curriculum is tailored to North Mead and our children. It is linked to books, trips and the local area. VR is developing strategies to ensure progression in skills. She is looking at the knowledge organisers and how to embed skills. One of her priorities is to develop what more able looks like in geography. She is going to meet with TMET secondaries to look at transition/progression into year 7 and with the geography leads in the TMET primaries to share practice.

Pupil Leadership Team (PLT)

The councillors met the PLT and found them very positive about the school, commenting in particular on the extensive enrichment and elements of the new curriculum such as DT. They discussed the diversity across the school and valued the inclusivity. They are currently working on the Tuck Shop, improving healthy eating, and encouraging greater participation in the breakfast club. The PLT is leading on the school challenge to recite a poem.

Safeguarding and Family Support

The relevant priority on the School Improvement Plan is D2: To ensure support is provided to the families of our most vulnerable learners in order to overcome barriers to their achievements at school.

There are robust systems in place for reporting concerns, making referrals and responding to these. The recent staff safeguarding training highlighted County Lines and Children Missing from Education as areas of focus. Councillors discussed with JH and AC the tenacious way they pursue getting confirmation of where a child is if they are not attending school. The training included information on apps that parents and the school should be aware of and the school continues to do a great deal around e-safety.

JH performs an essential role in providing extensive in-house early help to families, signposting them to external support and helping them with things such as school admissions. JH is keen to meet with others doing the same role in TMET schools to share knowledge and support.

Attendance

The relevant priority on the School Improvement Plan is D1: We aim to narrow the gap between our attendance / persistent absence figures and national benchmarks and improve punctuality.

The EWO has increased the frequency of meetings with the school to fortnightly and AC and SW consider him to be effective. There is a robust system to communicate with parents when attendance drops below thresholds and strategies to reduce persistent absenteeism continue, e.g. minibuss collections, phone calls to ensure child is out of bed, issuing alarm clocks, meetings with parents, Dojo points. The breakfast club is helping but the funding ends in March. There is now a focus on reducing lateness.

Behaviour & Learning Attitudes

There is a robust behaviour system which is very well thought through and linked to many other aspects such as communications with parents and using CPOMs to ensure staff have the bigger picture about a child exhibiting challenging behaviour. The 6Rs and character muscles are key and are embedded across the school. Councillors discussed with JW and BB the positive impact these have had over the last 5 years, especially in encouraging less passivity and for children to have a go at things.

The focus this year is on ensuring consistency of this approach through to outside lessons and on ensuring all staff know about strategies for SEND children. Lunchtimes have improved significantly due to training and empowering of lunchtime staff. There is shared leadership of behaviour across the SLT. ClassDojo has been extremely effective for communications with parents.