

East Ayton School Improvement Committee

06/12/19

Attendees

- Derek Johnson
- Samantha Hay (Chair)
- David Tomlinson
- Eileen Race

Apologies

- Greg Harper
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Agenda

- Local Authority visit
 - Analysis of data
 - End of term update
 - Teaching practice
 - Staff wellbeing
 - AOB
 - Governor Impact Statement
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Note

Prior to the meeting, DJ had forwarded his Headteacher's Report to the governors and stated this would be discussed at the FGB meeting on the 12th December, along with a record of the visit from Helen Davy (HD) and an end of term update.

Local Authority visit

A discussion of the report by HD after her last visit was held. It was a very positive report on the whole, with HD commenting on the pace and urgency of the work being undertaken by

the Senior Leadership Team. One of the few points raised was that the afternoon sessions do not seem as effective as they could be, being split into 2 x 1-hour sessions, and it was felt the children don't seem to 'get their teeth into' the subjects.

Question

Is this something that can be changed easily?

Answer

DJ reported that he was going to instruct the teachers to have a 1.5/2-hour session in the afternoon which will really hold the children's attention and encourage a greater depth of learning. A discussion was held on the benefits of this. A further conversation was held, regarding the benefits of a story time for all the children at the end of the school day.

Action

DJ will give instructions with staff to change the format of the afternoon lessons and to have a whole class story time at the end of the school day. All governors agreed that this was a suitable format.

Question

What have we found in the latest reading Scrutiny?

Answer

That our children genuinely love reading and we need to further encourage it.

Regarding the School Development Plan, DJ confirmed that usually this is written at the beginning of the school year and just updated as necessary. This year it has been completely re-written to consider the new Ofsted framework.

Analysis of data

Reading remains our strength and it is anticipated that this will continue, especially with the initiative listed above regarding story time.

Question

What about maths?

Answer

This remains our Achilles heel – JM is the subject lead and is really making progress with his understanding of the role. Previously we had identified that our children are competent at basic skills but lacked problem-solving abilities. Problem-solving is now embedded as part of the curriculum and we are seeing progress, especially with the lower years. However, JM has identified that there is another stage in between basic skills and problem-solving that our children don't seem to have grasped. This is 'reasoning' – working out how you get to

the problem-solving part. JM has a project/trial of this with his class whereby they are working backwards on a problem to teach/learn the reasoning part of the process.

Question

When will we know if this approach is working?

Answer

Looks to be positive so far but only part way through the trial.

Action

DJ to assess with JM and then report back to the committee when appropriate.

End of term update

DJ and LN have recently completed a review of all the subjects taught in school and have created a document of intent – a manifesto – for each subject.

Question

Why did you feel this was necessary?

Answer

It was felt that it would provide greater depth and understanding for the teachers when they were doing the long- and medium-term plans for the year.

Question

What do the manifestos comprise?

Answer

Each one looks at the following areas:

- Principles & Purpose
- Entitlement & Enrichment
- Breadth & Balance
- The teaching Narrative
- Resources
- Review & Evaluate

This will inform each teacher when they do their long-term plan for teaching over the year. This leads to the medium-term plans for each school term.

Action

This year's plans will be revisited and reviewed over the next couple of weeks.

Teaching practice

DJ reported that the standard of teaching is in line with what we expected, given the fact that we have several NQTs and RQTs.

Question

Are you seeing improvements?

Answer

Yes – most teaching is good with some having aspects that require improvement. All staff are being receptive to constructive criticism and are acting on advice given.

Action

The monitoring process is completed for this term and we are now in an implementation phase – monitoring will be picked back up next year.

Staff wellbeing

Question

Have the decisions we have made regarding the pace of progress had an impact on progress and teachers' mental health?

Answer

A robust discussion was held about the tactical decision made to implement our changes in the way that we have. There was a strongly held view that if we had been more aggressive we wouldn't have necessarily had any better results but we would have lost the essential ethos/value of the school that we hold so dear. We discussed other schools in the area that were in similar position to us but had implemented change differently to us – no example was given that has worked in a positive way. Although there is still lots of work to be done and improvements that can be made, we are happy that we have maintained the ethos of the school and are making ever increasing improvements. Regarding the well-being of the teachers, DJ confirmed that the period of intense monitoring and reviews has come to an end and so that has lifted some of the pressure on the teachers. He now has a solid file of monitoring on each of the teachers/classes to base action points on. Teachers have spent the past couple of weeks doing child assessments. DJ has had conversations with all teachers about how they are dealing with the stress of the term and no one reported any problems that couldn't be solved by the current process of mentoring. All NQTs said that they were happy to proceed with their first year. SH also confirmed that she had spoken to all the NQTs this week and they seemed much more settled than at the beginning of term and more comfortable with their roles.

AOB

No other items were raised.

The date of the next meeting would be determined after the next FGB meeting and the Christmas break.

Governor Impact Statement

We had gained a full understanding of where we are with regards progress in Maths and Reading in particular. We had a more comprehensive understanding of the curriculum, how it is applied and the impact on teaching and learning. We had also held good discussions which had embedded the rationale behind our recent hiring decisions and the pace of change at school.