

The Viridis Federation of Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden Schools

Governing Body Sub-committee
at Southwold School

On Tuesday 30th November 2021 at 5.00pm

Committee Members

Lenna Marson (LM)
Aya Haidar (AH)
Ian Rathbone (IR)
Alberta Senyah (AS)
Noah Birksted-Breen (NBB)
Stephen O'Brien (SOB)
Rachel Davie (RD)

Clerk: Anoushka Babapulle

1. Apologies /Consent for Absence

Apologies from Noah Birksted-Breen (NBB) and Alberta Senyah (AS)

2. Governing Body Organisation

- 2.1 Membership: Lenna Marson nominated Chair by Ian Rathbone – No objections. Aya Haidar nominated Vice Chair by Lenna Marson – No objections
- 2.2 Declarations of interest in items on the agenda & register of pecuniary interests for 2021/2022: No comments
- 2.3 Acknowledgement of Terms of References: No comments
- 2.4 Code of Conduct: No comments
- 2.5 Governing Body Annual Calendar for 2021-2022: No comments

3. Agreements of the minutes from the last meeting

No comments. Minutes agreed.

4. Headteacher's Report:

4.1 Curriculum & Standards

Page 30. 42% of pupils are PPG.

Page 30. Table 1 shows that across the school disadvantaged pupils attain broadly in line compared with their peers in Reading. There is not a gap of more than 10% between PPG and non-PPG children in attainment. There is an exception to this in Year 2 where PPG children attain better than their peers.

(AH) queried when referring to disadvantaged pupils why they are labelled as such.

Disadvantaged pupils are any children who receive FSM or have done in the last six years, children known to CSC, or children whose parents are in the armed forces. The national average of PPG pupils is 21%.

(IR) noted that the all three schools within the Federation are in the poorest wards of the Hackney Borough and that it was very good thing that pupils are improving so much.

Page 30. Table 2 SOB noted with reference to the difference between pupil attainments in Year 3 that a large number of PPG children in that cohort are also SEND.

Page 30. Table 3 In Numeracy PPG perform the strongest of all subject areas. One of the biggest issues facing PPG children is language deficit and this is less of an issue within Numeracy as opposed to reading and writing. By Year 6, the gap in attainment between PPG and non-PPG pupils is very small.

4.2 Quality of Education

Page 30. Quality of Education: 54% of teaching is graded as Outstanding. This percentage does not include Early Career Teacher (ECT). 31% of teaching is graded as Good and 15% as Requires Improvement. This figure is not typical of teaching at Southwold and this 15% reflects two teachers. They both have imbedding good plans in place, which means they have the support of a DHT and a personalised CPD plan. The imbedding good plan lasts six weeks with the aim that on completion a teacher is graded as Good. One of teachers graded as RI will be leaving at Christmas and the other one is now graded Good.

(AH) queried are the teaching profiles OFSTED inspected or internally inspected.

(SOB) the teaching profile is how teachers are graded. There is a variety of tools utilised to grade teachers. All teachers are observed every term. The school grades teaching based on typicality, books and outcomes, learning environment and behaviour and attitudes in their classrooms.

(AH) queried if this is done by each Head at each school or by (SOB) across the Federation.

This is carried out internally by the leadership team of each school respectively and then validated across sites.

There is one ECT and two RQTs on the teaching profile. The school is delivering its own Early Career Program instead of buying into one externally. From discussions with other schools who buy into recognised programmes the program delivered internally is much better than what is being offered.

(IR) queried how much extra time this involves in terms of the members of staff overseeing this.

(SOB) oversees the programme across the Federation and is supported by DHTs. At the start of each term there is an introductory meeting to the module that will be studied over that term. There are webinars for ECTs and RQTs to watch reading material. ECTs have a mentor and a six-week development plan.

(IR) noted this sounds great if this is manageable and much better than buying into an external service.

(SOB) the school wanted to deliver something locally and feedback on the staff survey is very positive from NQTs and apprentices. Comments from other schools who buy into external provision note those programmes are delivered by people who are unknown to staff and they appear less well organised.

(IR) noted this sounds like a much friendlier and encouraging approach.

(LM) noted in her experience as a RQT that there is an enthusiasm when delivering content from by leaders. During COVID-19 and the resulting interruptions to the apprenticeships and NQT programmes there remained support.

ECTs have a handbook and RQTs have a teaching backwards book, which is about working towards Outstanding teaching.

4.3 Behaviour & safety

Southwold is working towards the Silver Eco-schools award having achieved the Bronze.

(AH) queried how the school is working towards achieving Green Flag accreditation from Eco-schools and if this is viable following the feedback report re: the Bronze award.

This journey has just begun at Southwold however, Orchard is already a Green Flag school. This means that the processes that need to be undertaken to move towards Green Flag status are already done across the Federation. The process with Eco-schools means that you have to start with the Bronze award and work your way along. A meeting between the Eco-schools lead at Southwold and parents was recently arranged and there is discussions about providing a coffee morning on Eco-schools for parents.

(AH) queried whether the changes that Eco-schools have suggested are within the schools power to implement for example with reference to the school menu

(RD) there is an external catering contractor and some of the bigger decisions have an impact across the Federation. There are however opportunities to consider the recommendations and have a process of discussion and dialogue. Concerning the Green Schools award processes to attain this already happen across the Federation. There has to be an action plan in place where it is set out what you'll be doing and the school will then need to evidence how this has been achieved. The Green Flag is about a sustained contribution to that agenda over a longer period.

(SOB) noted as an example that when the Federation went through a procurement process and moved catering companies one of the reasons for changing the provider was because they were trying to reduce their carbon footprint however, this detail would not be something that the school community would have direct knowledge of, the award provides a platform for documenting the wider considerations the school engages in and subsequent action.

(AH) noted that a coffee morning for Eco-Schools is very important, as it is more accessible option for parents to feel included in the conversation, for ideas to be suggested and for parents to feel empowered so that changes can be implemented in the home environment as well as in school.

(IR) queried with regards to Eco-Schools does this just relate to the school menu or wider issues.

Southwold has previously had a Gold Award but it only lasts for a fixed period so therefore the school has reapplied and is going through the process again.

(RD) Orchard were reaccredited the Green Flag last academic year. There are strong working relationships with Sustainable Hackney a local organisation who do a wide range of things to support the schools' green agenda. Sustainable Hackney are undertaking a research project which the Federation will take part in.

Best practice visits are due in the Spring term which are linked to sustainability and how that can be improved within the curriculum.

(AH) queried why not all schools in the Federation have the Green Flag award as Orchard does

Each school has its own responsibility for seeking and applying for an award. Best practice is shared across the Federation and some things are worked on together where appropriate. The awards are sought not for the accolade but for the process, the schools need to undertake. Knowledge attained via the process is shared throughout the Federation to ensure best practice across the board where one individual school may not have a focus on a particular accolade in a given period.

Page 30. Behaviour & Safety: There has been one fixed term exclusion since the last report. The child who was excluded physical injured a member of staff. These types of incidents are rare.

(IR) queried if the teacher was ok.

The injury broke the skin and therefore the decision was to made to implement a fixed term exclusion. The member of staff was then signed off sick and incidents like this can have wider repercussions. The decision to exclude a pupil is not taken lightly

(AH) queried if the measures were the same across all year groups or are fixed term exclusions only designed for older pupils.

The Behaviour Policy is applied equally across the school. Each case is considered individually and the child in question had a number of measures in place to support their behaviour prior to the incident.

4.4 Operational data

Page 30. Operational Data: The pupil role has fallen since the Summer term to 368. This is the lowest the pupil role has been in an Autumn term since (SOB) started at Southwold. Pupil role is an ongoing issue and as a result it forms part of the school development plan. It is also an issue across the Borough and the Capital.

Attendance is currently 96% and was 96.1% at the time of writing the report. There have been a lot of colds, bugs and flu experienced throughout the school. There is also a concern that attendance figures may be impacted over the Christmas break as a lot of families have reported they wish to take an extended break to travel abroad however at present this is now looking less likely.

4.5 Current Risks and Priorities

There have been two rounds of testing in Year 6 and the current cohort are expected to exceed the 2019 national averages.

5. School Development & Evaluation

5.1 School Development Plan

5.2 Self-Evaluation Form

Pages 31-35. (SOB) noted to be recognised as an Outstanding school which Southwold was in 2019 there must be no areas for development and therefore this is why there are none recorded on the School Development Plan.

Within the school improvement plan there is foci for the year within five categories.

A Communications Manager was hired and supports in increasing the public profile of the school.

The School Development Plan is reviewed termly to look at how the school is progressing towards the actions detailed and then the plan is reviewed in the Summer Term

(IR) queried concerning the pupil role whether the school would accept pupils from outside the Borough who live relatively close. Noting that a large development of new housing is being built in a neighbouring Borough.

Yes. Across the Federation there are pupils who attend who do not live within Hackney however new housing does not necessarily mean more children in the area. The falling pupil role is affected by various factors including Britain's exit from the European Union, COVID-19, rehousing and a falling birth rate etc.

(LM) further noted that the housing around Southwold is mainly temporary accommodation.

(SOB) the consequence is high mobility as children taken on via in year admissions throughout the year but the school will also find pupils leaving.

Pages 36-37. The Self Evaluation is a summary of everything that you would need to know about the school such as accreditations/awards and what the school is doing well in.

6. Statements

6.1 PPG Strategy Statement and Recovery Funding

6.2 Sports Statement

Pages 38-44: The PPG statement has changed this academic year as the government has set a format of how the PPG statement should look. The expectation is that there is a three-year plan in place and this will run from 2020-23.

Within this year only, there is also an additional allocation of recovery funding from the government because of COVID-19.

The statement of intent explains the current context and how funding is allocated.

From the data detailed, there are no significant gaps between pupils who are disadvantaged and those who are not. This is tracked very carefully to ensure children are achieving in the way they should be and that interventions are implemented when needed.

There are three types of intervention, which show how money is spent. These are teaching, targeted support and wider strategies. Each area of how money is spent is backed with research or evidence to show how the decision making was made.

(IR) noted this is an amazing report and queried with regards to the last point of the 'Statement of Intent' if this is the report.

Yes. Every year the school evaluates the previous year.

(IR) noted that the total budgeted cost of approximately £235k was very good value for money considering all the activity and provision detailed.

It is very important to evaluate continually and if something is not working then you should adapt

Pages 45-47: Primary Sports & PE Funding 2021 – 2022. This funding has been in place since 2012. It is not a substantial amount of money but it does enhance the schools provision.

(RD) noted with reference to swimming that pupils are only able to undertake lessons once during their primary education in Year 4 due to the oversubscription of local swimming pools by schools across the Borough where demand outweighs the supply. This is unfortunate.

(IR) queried if the opening of Britannia Leisure Centre can help with this.

It potentially may aid provision in Hoxton Garden but not the other schools who are geographically further away. It may also help by reducing the demand within other leisure centres where openings may then occur but at present it is too early to know. The percentages detailed in the report are based on the assessment from the leisure centre.

(IR) queried if the primary sports fund was not received next academic year would the school still commit to providing the cycling this facilitates.

Yes. The school ring fences money in the budget to stay ahead of changes to funding. Cycling costs considerably more than the funding provided and therefore the school is subsidising this provision significantly.

(IR) queried if figures for the commitment the school makes to cycling were available.

Broadly speaking the school is match funding the provision. There is also an additional commitment in the budget this year to ensure the school is taking part in all cycling competitions. (RD) can provide exact figures but the contribution is around £15k.

7. Consideration of staff wellbeing: staff survey headlines

Pages 48-50: The staff survey was positive and there was an increase in those participating opposed to the previous year.

(SOB) formulated the action plan with DHTs and actions stem from responses that had less than 90% agreement.

With reference to staff wellbeing (SOB) noted that many staff had been off with coughs and colds. The school paid a private company to offer the flu jab to staff so that they did not need to go to their GP in their own time.

(RD) noted the uptake for this across the three schools was not high however, next year the school will look to adapt this to offer more flexibility to staff of how and when they will take up the flu jab if interested

(IR) queried concerning the wording of the statement in the survey where 59% of teachers who responded found their teaching assistant highly effective in class if the statement could read simply that teaching assistants were effective.

The schools aims for all TAs to be highly effective in class.

The school survey will be run twice a year going forward. The wording of statements is something that can be considered moving forward. By running the survey twice a year if there is an identified issue earlier in the year, the school can take action which hopefully also mitigates any impact on staff retention

(IR) noted this is a very good staff survey particularly in light of the last two years.

The school wants the wellbeing responses to be 100% and continue to work on listening and responding to feedback

(AH) queried whether the staff surveys are anonymous and if they are how the school responds to those who do not feel supported.

When the survey is undertaken respondents need to identify what school they work in and what area they work in so it can be identified where issues may be having an impact.



Exit surveys also take place when staff are leaving which will explore reasons why staff may have chosen to move on and how they have seen their time within the Federation. This has been undertaken in the last two years.

8. Any Other Business

No comments.

Meeting finished 6.15pm.

9. Glossary of Common Terms

No comments.