



ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
Minutes of the virtual Meeting of the Performance Enrichment Committee
Wednesday 17th January 2024. 7pm

Present: Kate Gordon (Chair); Dave Dymond; Robert Howell; Andrew Burrell; Vincent Onuchi; David Colwill; Hajar Alami; Adedayo Benson.

In Attendance: Michael Kiedyszko; Sarah Tweddle; Najma Hussain; Richard Watkins; Rachel Lawson; Christian Lim; James Taylor.

Apologies: Zoe Watling.

Clerk: Deborah Savage

Agenda Item	
1.	Welcome & Apologies. The chair welcomed all to this meeting and thanked them for attending. Apologies had been sent in advance by Zoe Watling and these were accepted. Yota Dimitriadi is taking a break from governors at the moment due to work pressures and did not attend. This meeting took place via Zoom, but was NOT recorded.
2.	Declarations of Interest. There were no declarations of interest.
3.	Verbal Report from the EHT. The EHT informed Governors that he has written a comprehensive report to Governors for the FGB taking place in 7 days, so for this meeting he wanted to draw governors' attention to two key areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The DfE has now published school data on their website (the first since 2019 due to Covid disruption) and the performance tables are there for Governors to look at. It is also possible to make comparisons of ASPS data against the data from other schools and Governors were encouraged to do this.2. The school has been informed in the last 10 days that RBC has reversed their decision to remove the Modular building from ASPS – which the school will now retain, but this building will be repurposed to house a unit for pupils with additional needs. This will include pupils currently within the Sunshine room along with other children with complex needs who would be out of classrooms for at least 80% of the time. This unit will be part of a bigger role out of provision by RBC to meet the increasing need to educate the rising number of children with special needs in the borough. Funding is currently available to enable this project which will perhaps open to pupils in September 2024.

	<p>There are many aspects yet to be decided and worked out, including how many places will be available and for what level of need; how admissions will be run and how the unit will be staffed. It was suggested that the SEND link Governor might like to become involved in the planning of this unit which would be discussed more at next week's FGB meeting.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Reports from KS2 Phase leads (& subject updates).</p> <p>The Chair reminded those present that we had a full and interesting PEC meeting before Christmas where staff from the Nursey and EYFS along with KS1 spoke to governors. It was noted that there were some common themes that arose during this meeting, which may also arise in tonight's discussions.</p> <p>1. Year 3 /RE (Christian)</p> <p>The Year 3 lead had written a report for Governors that was circulated prior to the meeting and he spoke about the key aspects to governors. The autumn focus for Year 3 staff was to work to ensure a smooth transition from KS1 to Lower KS2 for the children. Classes had been shuffled, which has benefitted the children, along with the fact that two staff have also moved from year 2 to year 3 with the children. A big change from year 2 that has taken some adjusting to has been the reduction from 4 classes to 3 classes in core subjects but this has been aided by streaming classes for reading and maths. There has been a real focus on writing, as children's assessments indicated a 10% reduction in writing levels. Handwriting and SPAG has been ringfenced in lesson time. When the cohort was in year 2, they struggled with resilience, maintaining focus and with self-regulation so staff are continuing to work on these skills. One of the year 3 support staff is ELSA trained so this is helpful. Year 3 does have children with a high level of need including 4 with EHCPs (3 of these children are in the same class). There have also been a number of new starters, including 2 children with no English.</p> <p>Governor Question: You appear to have a lower level of persistent absenteeism in year 3 than in other years – do you know why this is? I think it is just luck really.</p> <p>RE:</p> <p>The school uses the Discovery RE programme, and this is being used consistently throughout the school. Work has been done to ensure each year group has a trip or visit each year and artefact boxes are also being used within lessons. Whole school monitoring is taking place to ensure skill progression (such as critical thinking skills) and to make sure that children are able to discuss their learning and also add their own personal resonance. The next focus for RE curriculum development is on assessment and ongoing pupil conferencing to discuss their learning.</p> <p>Governor Question: How do you asses RE? At the end of each unit of learning, the programme has one key question that staff can use for teacher assessment, but this</p>

subject is not as clear cut as others so it can be challenging to assess. Having pupil conferences can assist with assessment.

Governor Question: How do RE lessons relate to an individual child's personal development? This is the advantage of using the Discovery programme as SMSC (Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural learning) is inbuilt in the lesson planning. The work we do to instil values in our children was picked up by Ofsted and rated strong. Different topics, including the major religions are taught and lessons do link learning to a child's own religion and to contexts outside of school.

Governor Question: Religious studies do not resonate with all children – how do you work with a child who is not interested in this subject and does that make it harder to test their understanding? This topic links strongly to PHSE and British Values teaching which aims to instil tolerance for all those with a belief system and for those with no beliefs. This curriculum develops a child's understanding that they have choices themselves and that they need to respect the choices others make.

2. Year 4 / Science (Richard)

The Year 4 lead had written a report that was circulated to governors prior to the meeting, and he spoke to Governors about the main points. He explained that the Year 3 and Year 4 leads work closely together. Year 4 has also seen some new starters this academic year including 1 new EHCP child and two with low English skills. Writing is also a focus for year 4 and is ringfenced in the timetable. The writing assessment was carried out earlier than usual this year and it showed that only 40% were working at expected. Staff feel that children have made positive progress over the last 6 weeks and this figure is now expected to be more than 50% of children working at expected. There are some children in Year 4 who are working at Year 2 levels so are behind the cohort – but these children are making fast progress.

A challenge for year 4 is children reading at home. Whilst there are lots of keen readers in the year, staff find it a struggle to get parents engaged with reading at home – especially parents of low-level readers. At a recent Year 4 curriculum evening attended by about 40-50% of parents, staff took the opportunity to push reading at home. It is possible that some children read at home, but that parents do not complete the reading diaries. Vulnerable readers are heard to read in school 2 or 3 times a week and this is ring-fenced to ensure it happens.

Year 4 has a high number of children who are persistently absent (16), but this includes two children with serious long-term medical conditions. Work is sent home to these children for completion if, and only if, they are strong enough. There are also two children with a school phobia and efforts are made to meet and greet these children and encourage games to help them relax into the school day. The meeting was informed that mixing up the classes from Year 3 had done a lot of favours for the

cohort and that children were responding well to the new class rewards chart system. Children had a good attitude to learning and were also encouraging each other. Geography lessons have a new scheme of work which the children are enjoying and are engaged with and this has resulted in some positive written work.

Governor Question: Is there an online way of encouraging reading at home? Or could we have a morning Reading club like the breakfast club? Lower years do have online reading resources; we distribute hard copy books in year 4 and have a number of book collections to choose from within school. There is also a wide range of material for the children to choose from. We will continue to push reading at home at all parents' events. We had thought about asking parents in to help with reading in school which might also help build parents' confidence in supporting reading – but we need to consider the child protection issues around this. Reading and writing are our two main focus areas for development.

Governor Question: Is the decrease in reading at home, or the lack of feedback about reading at home, comparable to a general trend for this age of child? It is true that we get less feedback about reading at home from older children – many may read but we don't know about this as reading diaries are not completed. It is a concern particularly for our more vulnerable readers.

Governor Comment: As a parent, I am never sure how much the reading diaries are read at school by staff. Perhaps it would be useful if staff ticked or stamped any comment by parents so we know that they had been read? Yes – this is interesting – at the school my children attend, the parents get house points which are then recorded in school against the child's house. Perhaps if we replied to parents this might offer encouragement to parents to complete the diaries.

Governor Question: Do you ask children what their interests are, to try to match them with books that might interest them? Yes – within school we have 4 different libraries/collections of books they can choose from and these include fiction, non-fiction, poetry, comic-style books, picture books – there is a wide range of books to choose from.

Governor Comment: Children of lower reading ability have made big improvements which is great to see. Yes – we make time to work with the children that need extra support, who are sometimes EAL children who pick up the language fast when they are immersed in it.

Science:

The meeting was informed that a new science lead was taking over responsibility for this subject – governors would hear from Miss Elsje House in future meetings. The staff lead reported that, at a pupil voice meeting 2 years ago, when asked what jobs you could do with science, the children only responded with "scientist". Now,

when asked, children could name between 20 to 30 different jobs and they have a much better understanding of the different sciences (chemistry, physics and biology) which is very pleasing. Work has been done on the assessment of science, which is paper based and the next area to develop will be the assessment of practical work and how children can plan, carry out, and assess experiments.

It was noted that the link governor for science has not yet met with the staff lead.

ACTION: Link governor to contact new science lead to arrange a meeting.

3. Year 5 / History (Michael)

The year 5 phase lead had written a report which had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting and he talked about the main points in this report. Year 5 have experienced staffing issues with a support staff member off which did affect the support that could be offered to children. Support is now working well however. There has been almost a 10% jump in reading attainment since September which is pleasing. The year 5 parents curriculum meeting was used to push reading at home and the need for parental support with this – sometimes parents are astonishing in their lack of support for their children. Children are streamed for reading and this has been beneficial. Lower ability readers have made more progress as we have been able to focus on weaknesses and increase their vocabulary knowledge.

We have also seen a jump in maths attainment which is pleasing -however retention remains a problem with the less able learner. Knowledge of times tables has increased too – perhaps the rewards system has helped here.

As has been discussed, writing was assessed early this year and we have seen an improvement since then. We are now better able to assess and moderate writing assessment and we are confident that there will be an improvement in Term 4.

The completion of maths homework, particularly amongst the lower ability group has seen some improvement, but there is still more to do here. We do offer homework clubs and attendance is encouraged.

Governor Question: Are you seeing maths confidence improving too? Yes- some children are frightened of maths. Attendance at homework clubs that can support a child's learning and practise is not good.

The meeting was told of a child who struggles with maths and who was not confident, but who now reports that she enjoys maths and her confidence has grown. This child is now doing well.

Governor Question: How do you approach a child with no interest in maths or science – do we explain why maths is relevant (e.g. for personal finance which I think needs greater emphasis in schools and needs to be reflected more in the curriculum.)

We do arithmetic in school every day and we do use examples that reflect real life – for example using pounds and decimals in shopping examples. We make maths practical where we can and applicable to real life situations that children are familiar with. Using puzzles and maths tricks can make children so engaged that they go home and show their parents these maths tricks. Some maths is being able to spot patterns and sometimes you can engage children more readily with this aspect and make maths more fun. Fractions can be a hard sell but there are ways – we use pizzas to show that $1/5$ is larger than $1/10$ even though 10 is a bigger number.

History.

History was one of the subjects chose by Ofsted for a “deep dive” with pleasing results. Staff can help to plan a unit in skeleton form and Ofsted were pleased to see this collaboration. The area of focus they suggested for us was to ensure disciplinary knowledge was embedded and how this helps us investigate the past. An example would be comparing the differences between civilizations and putting these into context. Testing disciplinary knowledge is different for different subjects – we will work on improving this and ensuring consistency between classes and over the year groups.

Governor Question: Is it hard to schedule History lessons in the timetable? No harder than for any other subject really - what is hard is picking what to teach as the subject is so vast and we have limited time. We feel it is better to have greater depth of a particular aspect rather than a superficial look at a wider breath of content.

4. Year 6 / Maths & English (Najma & Rachel)

Generally, Year 6 have settled well although we have some children who are persistently absent and we chase this straight away. We teach to ability in maths, and the lowest ability is a large group. We have found that it is better to give pupils 2 maths questions for homework each day, rather than a bigger amount of work once a week. Pupils are making better progress this way. Reading is also streamed, with the DHT teaching the lower ability pupils. These pupils often don't have parental support with reading at home so they are supported at school and the school do group reading. This is having a positive effect on these children's writing. Improving vocabulary and “clocking up the reading miles” by spending an hour every day reading does make a big difference to the children's comprehension and writing.

We are holding maths booster classes once a week after school for 45mins. Currently we see 28 children to reinforce their learning. We did this last year and it was very successful so we have started these classes earlier in the academic year this year. Parents are supportive of their children attending these classes. Year 6 staff liaise with parents all the time – giving positive messages to parents. Year 6 staff are really proud of the children who are working hard. Streaming by ability works well to focus on particular needs – arithmetic has improved and we are now focussing on reasoning now that reading skills are improving. We have areas we want to develop including assessment so that we can be sure that progress is being made.

We also have an issue with parents not writing in reading diaries, but we ask that year 6 children take the responsibility to log their own books and reading in preparation for year 7 and to begin to become more independent.

Governor Question: Is it too early for SATS preparation at the moment? We are still teaching the curriculum currently although we are beginning to expose children to SATS questions in maths as good practise. The children do not know the questions are SATS questions however.

Governor Question: How do you balance attainment with wellbeing considerations? **Some children do get anxious, and it is possible to have success in life without academic success at school.** ASPS children work at their own pace and all children develop at different rates, and as a school we recognise this and reflect this by teaching in small steps. Higher ability pupils work at a much faster pace. For some children, repetition is key and we work to help children find a coping mechanism to deal with learning maths if maths is not a favourite subject. We work hard to develop resilience in our children, but we work under a constrained system where success is measured in terms of maths, science and English success. We try to show children that there are avenues in the world they can move into if they are not strong in these traditional subjects.

We have a strong focus on child wellbeing and work hard as a school to celebrate the “whole” child – e.g. giving house points and recognition for success outside school too – whether that is in music/dance /sports classes & clubs etc.

The meeting was informed that Ofsted spent 3 hours doing a “deep dive” into maths and concluded that the consistently outstanding outcomes at the end of KS2 were due to a whole school approach of small steps teaching and maths mastery rather than teaching a limited curriculum. Ofsted recognised that teaching was adapted to suit the individual child and boost their confidence so that maths was accessible to all children. The school works hard to ensure that there are no gaps in times tables knowledge or number bonds as this can limit achievement and confidence. Ofsted saw in their pupil voice sessions with the pupils that ASPS children enjoy maths.

We do feel that for the most part, we have got maths right at ASPS – although we are not complacent. This is recognised by others too - we have been approached by the South East Maths Hub. The school also had a LA review of maths teaching this year too which went well. ASPS teaches the White Rose maths content in school.

The CoG thanked the maths leaders for their leadership of maths at school, although it was also recognised that the maths teaching team is large and all staff are involved to a greater or lesser extent so success is down to the hard work of everyone involved.

The meeting was informed that some year 7's return to ASPS and talk to staff – who were told that the top set maths class at Bulmershe Secondary is mostly made up of ASPS former pupils – which is pleasing to hear.

It is noted that all groups perform well at ASPS including the vulnerable pupils and that results significantly outperform National figures. No child moves on to secondary school from ASPS disadvantaged.

English.

Writing is lagging behind and interventions are being planned to boost attainment.

5. Attendance & Behaviour / Geography (James)

Attendance is improving year on year although we have seen a recent dip since December due to families taking extended holidays. Overall, attendance is up ¾% on last year's figures.

ASPS is part of a group of Reading schools that are sharing attendance data and we find that the LA are inconsistent with the cut off dates for fining parents for holidays in term time. Our parents tend to be very knowledgeable of the system and play it to avoid paying fines. There is a national effort to get back to pre-pandemic attendance levels and we do see an improving picture at ASPS.

Governor Comment: Some of our neighbouring schools have had more severe attendance issues post-Christmas and this is partly a cultural issue. It is also an LA issue in comparison to other LAs. It is true that Reading has a multicultural demographic and families tend to spend longer overseas when visiting family. We are meeting with the local MP to discuss this issue. It is also true that secondary schools have a bigger problem to tackle than primaries.

Wellbeing is a high priority for the school – and staff wellbeing does seem to have improved now that Ofsted have been and gone! There are currently wellbeing surveys out with staff and pupils and the results will be analysed and fed back to governors at a future meeting.

Governor Question: Do you get support from parents and the LA and how does this impact staff wellbeing? Our stakeholders do have impact on wellbeing, which has been affected by the pandemic. Everyone here focuses on the wellbeing of pupils and positive responses feedback into positive relationships with stakeholders. There are stresses caused when issues arise, but building relationships can help to alleviate them.

Behaviour:

There were some behaviour issues that arose in KS1 but we feel that these are now calming down. The measures we took did have a positive impact. General behaviour in the school is good and this was noticed and commented on by Ofsted. The class charts

	<p>reward system is incentivising positive behaviour and the values of the Sutton Six really help to foster good behaviour and attitudes.</p> <p>Governor Question: You use the therapeutic approach to behaviour management in school – how consistently is this used by staff across the school? We have implemented this approach for a few years now based on the values of the Sutton Six. We aim to teach positive behaviour rather than focus on negatives. This does not mean that we ignore poor behaviour, just that we use instances of poor behaviour as a teaching point for the child and staff. We find that eventually children become self-monitoring. Staff are trained and they look to see if a child is doing his/her best, and if not, staff need to be curious to find out why not. There are still consequences to child’s poor behaviour but we aim to help children learn from this.</p> <p>Governor Comment: The new class charts reward system is helping with this? Yes – although we do not yet use this system to record negative behaviour – this is currently set to Zero as we wanted children to be encouraged by the system. We plan to revisit this so we can analyse “lower-level, nuisance” behaviours in the future. We do however track more serious negative behaviour in CPOMS.</p> <p>Geography.</p> <p>We have started to use the scheme Oddizzi for our geography teaching this academic year as studies have shown that generally, geography teaching is the subject least well taught at primary level. Maybe this is because many staff are not familiar with the subject. This award-winning scheme only does geography so this subject is its sole focus and it covers the entire geography curriculum. It is fully resourced and offers lots of opportunity to children which we are learning about the more we use it. It has already had a positive impact on the confidence of both the children and staff and we have seen children’s writing improve too. All staff have had training from the Ordinance Survey on how to use Digimaps and staff are growing in confidence in using this. We have made great strides in our teaching of geography.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Phase lead staff leave the meeting at this point.</p> <p>The chair thanked the staff both for writing their reports and for attending the meeting to talk to governors and answer questions. It is clear that there is much hard work behind the reports and it is lovely to hear about this. At 20.50pm phase lead staff left the call.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Reports from Link Governors.</p> <p>A number of reports had been written and submitted by link governors following their meetings with staff. These had been circulated prior to the meeting but due to time constraints, it was decided not to ask governors to discuss these individually, but instead governors could read the reports in the GovernorHub meeting folder.</p>

	<p>Governor Comment: Teaching staff have only just left the meeting - we are keeping them too long at the end of a working day. Perhaps we should look at our style of meetings and discuss if there is anything we can do to lessen the impact of these meetings on staff.</p> <p>The EHT informed the meeting that it was important for staff to talk to governors and to have the chance to report on successes and hear the governors celebrate these, as well as outline what are the areas of focus in school. SEND is a big issue in classrooms and we hope that the plans for an ARP (additionally resourced provision) in school will help to alleviate this pressure in the classroom. There are aspects to be worked out for this ARP which we hope will be established quickly.</p>
7.	<p>Minutes of the meeting held 13th December 2023.</p> <p>These had been circulated in advance and were accepted as a true record. ACTION: they will be signed in GovernorHub as soon as possible.</p> <p>The actions from this meeting were reviewed. The CoG reported that he has had conversation with the LA about the poor communication between agencies about children with special needs and established that the problem seems to lie with the Health Trust. Efforts are ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing ACTION: CoG and also SEND link Governor to talk with EHT/Senco and SBM about the new ARP planned for the modular building.</p> <p>ACTION: remaining link governors who have not yet met with staff are to arrange meetings asap. These include RE, maths, computing and science.</p> <p>All other actions were completed.</p>
8.	<p>Matters Arising.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
9.	<p>Policies for Approval.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Curriculum Policy. This had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting. DECISION: APPROVED. 2. EYFS Policy. This had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting. DECISION: APPROVED. 3. SEND Policy. This had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting. DECISION: APPROVED.
10.	<p>Governor Training & Development</p> <p>Due to time constraints, this item was carried over to be discussed at the FGB to be held next week.</p>
11.	<p>Wellbeing & Equality.</p> <p>It was decided, in the light that staff and pupil wellbeing surveys are currently being carried out, to carry this item over to discuss once survey results are known. Equality was discussed at the PEC meeting held in December and no issues have arisen since then. The CoG asked if anyone had spoken to Yota recently to see how she is? No one has so this would be followed up.</p>

12.	Issues for parents/FGB/Confidentiality. Some issues will be carried over to the FGB next week – there we no issues that needed to be communicated to parents nor any requiring confidential part 2 minutes.
13.	Any Other Business. No items of AOB were raised.
14.	Date of Next PEC Meeting: Wednesday 8th May.

Meeting closed: 21.10pm

Actions:

Action:	Owner:
CoG to continue to raise issue of poor communication between agencies involved in the care of a SEND child with the LA SEND Manager / health trust.	DD
CoG and SEND link governor to meet with Senco/EHT/SBM to discuss SEND strategy and new ARP.	DD/KG/EHT/SBM/ Senco
Chair to sign minutes of meetings held 29 th March 2023 & 13 th December 2023 in GovHub.	KG
Link governor to contact new science lead to arrange a meeting.	AB
Remaining link governors who have not yet met staff to do so as soon as possible.	VO/YD/AB
Governors to send reports on link meetings to clerk.	DD

Attendance at PEC meetings 2023/24 (2 meetings to date)

Dave Dymond	2 of 2 meetings
Robert Howell	2 of 2 meetings
Adedayo Benson	2 of 2 meetings
Yota Dimitriadi	0 of 2 meetings
Kate Gordon	2 of 2 meetings
Andrew Burrell	2 of 2 meetings
Hajar Alami	2 of 2 meetings
Zoe Watling	1 of 2 meetings
Vincent Onuchi	1 of 2 meetings
David Colwill	2 of 2 meetings