

6. Data Analysis for 2022 to 2023.

The Headteacher walked the Committee through the Data Analysis document.

He mentioned that the School had received a letter of congratulation from the Local Authority, which had been shared with the teaching staff. Governors thanked the Head Teacher and staff for this performance.

According to the Headteacher, the Data Analysis held no surprises when it was shared with the School's Senior Leadership Team. This data is already known in the normal course of the School's management. Targets for teachers had been met and teacher performance is universally strong.

A Governor asked if the school has resilient, happy and able children. The head teacher stated that while this was broadly true and reflected in data about outcomes and attendance, it was clearly the case that the pandemic was having a lasting effect on mental health of children in all schools and across all age-ranges, and particularly on the social skills of younger children.

The Head Teacher stated that the core curriculum is important as grounding for secondary school, but the children have breadth outside of the curriculum.

Educational attainment is very strong across the board, but for disadvantaged children this is a particular challenge for the School and nationally. The Head Teacher explained that there is a shifting demographic, with increasing numbers of pupil premium children.

A Governor asked about Persistent Absence being high, particular in Early Years.

The Head Teacher explained that this was mainly authorised. In some cases, a child that had not attended school for many months would be receiving a partial home tuition. He said that the school was continuously tackling the issue of persistent absence during the course of the school year and that parental engagement is important in order to reduce this.

A Governor asked for more information about the home tuition plan.

The Head Teacher explained that if a child that has been absent for 15 days a referral could be made to the Local Authority. There would be a possibility for the child to have home tutoring, funded by the Local Authority.

The Head Teacher told the Committee that there are 99 disadvantaged children in the school. The percentage was a little below the national average but higher than the national averages pre-pandemic.

A Governor asked if the school makes in-year changes in how Pupil Premium is spent.

The Head Teacher explained that effectively, this is how the school operates, reporting via the Pupil Premium report to the Full Governing Body. As an additional point, he said that a lot of the pupil premium budget funded Teaching Assistants and that monitoring is carefully planned to ensure children receive the correct target support from teaching assistants. The Head Teacher also shared that Sarah Barrett would be assuming responsibility for monitoring attendance.

A Governor asked if attendance improves as cohorts move up through the school.

The Head Teacher replied that attendance of individuals whose attendance has been problematic does generally improve over time as the school works with children who are persistently absent. The school's persistent absence figures were below national averages but higher than pre-pandemic levels.

A Governor asked about the challenges facing the Year 3 cohort whose results, while in line or above national averages, are lower than pre-pandemic levels for St Matthew's.

The Head Teacher replied that although this cohort has experienced an adverse impact due to lower socialisation, isolation and other impacts of covid, most of those who did not achieve age-related expectations were not that far away from the standard. However, the long-term impact of the lower socialisation and their behaviour for learning is unknown at this time.

A Governor asked what extra-curricular activities are available to children in order to improve socialisation.

The Head Teacher outlined the activities with two key challenges that were being addressed:

- Focus (poor attention spans)
- Resilience

A Governor added that children were mirroring adults in this regard. The Head Teacher added that teachers are making school activities shorter, snappier and more visual.

7. Phonics Action Plan.

The *Monster Phonics* scheme has been introduced at the School. Governors received

feedback on the initial phases of the scheme. The Head Teacher said that they are learning how to use the underlying software system as they go along. Teacher feedback is that in lessons, the introduction of the scheme was going quite well, but it was taking longer to deliver (due to the number of sessions per child, per week) and this puts more pressure on other aspects of the curriculum. There has been fine-tuning of the PowerPoint slides associated with the scheme.

The expectation is to have three guided reading sessions per child per week but due to timetabling pressures, this is currently delivered at a rate of two guided reading sessions per child per week.

For context, the Head Teacher explained to the Committee that the school used to use Storytime *Phonics* which was one guided-reading session per child per week which would focus on other aspects of reading, not just phonics. In most years the school achieved above national averages in the Year One Phonics Screening Check.

Feedback from reception is that phonics some aspects of progress (e.g. blending and segmenting) are progressing better and that the children really like the new scheme, but it is very early days.

The meeting Chair stated that this was good progress against the action plan.

The Head Teacher said “Well done” to Kate Spencer-Allen for a successful implementation of the new phonics scheme given the pace required. He added that the objective is to deliver as close as possible to the scheme’s requirements and make necessary tweaks where necessary.

Finally, the Head Teacher shared the positive news to the Committee that the childrens’ phonics check at the end of Year 2 is above the national average.

8. Planning Link Governor Visits.

SEND/PP planned for January 2024.

Phonics Link Governor visit has taken place

Science planned for end of January 2024

Maths planned for December 2023 or January 2024

9. Dates of future meetings and agreed agenda items.

8th February 2024 at 17.30hrs

20th June 2024 at 17.30hrs

10. Any Other Business.

Updated School Development Plan (or “Exec Summary” version) should be published to the School website

Pupil Premium information should be updated as per the annual cycle in December.

The meeting ending at 1848hrs.