



Standards and Effectiveness Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 21st of January 2025 at 18:00 in school

Present Dave Hardcastle (Chair) Mark Newman
Mary-Kate Swiers (Head of School) Natalie Wong

In Attendance Joseph Batchelor (Governance Support Officer, Clerk)
Sam Hardcastle (Assistant Headteacher)
Sarah Murray (SENCo)

		Action								
1	<p>WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENTS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>Everyone was welcomed to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received, with consent from Luke Zwalf.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>									
2	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON THE 19th OF SEPTEMBER 2024, MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION POINTS - <i>Previously distributed</i></p> <p>The minutes of the meetings held on the 19th of September 2024 were agreed as true and accurate records and were duly approved.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <table><tr><th></th><th>Action</th><th>Person</th><th>Update</th></tr><tr><td>1.</td><td>Share Pupil Premium Link Governor report – to be included on next FGB agenda.</td><td>Luke Zwalf/Clerk</td><td>Completed</td></tr></table>		Action	Person	Update	1.	Share Pupil Premium Link Governor report – to be included on next FGB agenda.	Luke Zwalf/Clerk	Completed	
	Action	Person	Update							
1.	Share Pupil Premium Link Governor report – to be included on next FGB agenda.	Luke Zwalf/Clerk	Completed							
3	<p>DATA REVIEW</p> <p><i>The Headteacher’s Report for S&E Spring 1 was taken as read.</i></p> <p>The Head of School reported highlighted that on the back of the last meeting of the Standards and Effectiveness, the school had identified that Key Stage 1 needed further development.</p>									

In response to a question from a governor, the Head of School clarified that a line in the document should refer to 'changes made by the KS1 team', rather than 'changes made to the KS1 team'.

The Assistant Headteacher reported that high profile behaviour had been a focus of CPD among staff. Staff had visited other classrooms where behaviour was outstanding and reflected on their own practice. Classroom assemblies had a different behaviour focus each week. Accessible copies were made of the school's routines and expectations, which created a universal language for the students.

A governor asked whether the universal approach to behaviour was embedded consistently. The Assistant Headteacher answered that the new behaviour approach was embedded very consistently, with support staff, and RMSA staff using it. The language used was consistent, and the children knew the expectations.

The Head of School highlighted that in HT2 there had been a 40% reduction in Timeout As.

A governor asked whether this had indicated that low level behaviour had improved. The Head of School answered that it had. The incidents of low level behaviour that remained mostly took place in the playground during break and lunch.

The Head of School reported that one pupil had received 58% of Timeout Cs.

A governor asked what was in place to support that pupil. The Head of School answered that the pupil had a part- time placement at Kestrel, supplemented by two days at alternative provision and a day at Dringhouses which would be reviewed at the end of term.

A governor asked whether the aim of Kestrel was to help the pupil be able to access mainstream education. The Head of School confirmed that it was, provided it was found that mainstream education was the appropriate setting for the pupil.

The SENDCo reported that the school was looking at the outside environment in the EYFS provision. £800 had been spent on initial resources and enhancements, and a further £5000 would be spent on furniture. Additional money had been bought into the school due to the opening of The Nest. Units had been lowered so that the children could be seen more easily.

A governor asked whether EYFS was assessed to greater learning depth. The SENDCo answered that EYFS was assessed by 'Good Learning Development' (GLD).

The Head of School reported that oracy had been a key part of the School Development Plan. Pupils were coming into the school with greater speech and language needs, and the Head of School noted that high quality speech, reasoning and debate was not frequently modelled in wider society and the media. The school had considered signing up to a scheme 'Voice 21', but it was not financially workable. The school was reviewing oracy progression from EYFS through to Year 6, and was considering how to weave oracy into the curriculum offer. Pupils were given debate and discussion rules, as well as sentence stems for the pupils that needed it.

There was a brief discussion concerning the oracy focus. The governors were enthusiastic about the Head of School's suggestions for oracy focus, and the SENDCo highlighted that staff were very enthusiastic, and the improved behaviour had helped facilitate the oracy.

The Head of School reported that there were a number of pupils who were not meeting the prime areas in EYFS, these were personal, social, emotional, physical development, and self regulation. 9% of pupils were on track for GLD when they came into the school. At the time of the meeting the proportion had risen to 22%: the end of year target was 80%.

In response to a question from a governor, the Head of School explained that the baseline development of pupils entering the school was significantly lower than it had been. Some pupils were in nappies, and two pupils were wetting themselves. There were a number of poor speakers in EYFS.

A governor asked whether these EYFS pupils were babies during covid. The Head of School answered that they were, and explained that they were typical of their cohort across the city. The SENDCo explained that there was a small number of pupils who found listening difficult, but noted that their reading and writing was on track. There were six pupils in EYFS on the special needs register. There were two pupils with EHCPs in reception.

A governor asked whether the SENDCo expected the cohort that was behind in EYFS to have caught up by the end of reception. The SENDCo answered that she did, and noted that 74% or higher would be an appropriate target.

The Head of School reported that the school had reworked teaching assistant timetables, and noted that from the Monday after the meeting, there would be an extra adult in EYFS.

A governor asked whether the increase in need had made it more difficult for the EYFS team. The SENDCo confirmed that it had, and the Head of School noted that the high number of varied needs created additional challenge.

A governor asked whether the change was due to the pandemic. The Head of School answered that the change was partially attributable to the pandemic, and was partially a societal cultural change.

Key Stage 1

The Head of School reported that the Year 1 cohort had made positive progress in reading and maths, and positive outcomes were beginning to be seen in writing. The writing cycle had been improved: pupils would get an hour of writing a day as well as daily handwriting.

A governor asked how the curriculum was split in Key Stage 1. The Head of School answered each day, with the exception of the PPA day, pupils received half an hour of phonics, an hour of writing, half an hour of reading, an hour of maths, an hour of the foundation subjects, and the rest of the time was small groups. On PPA days, pupils did PSHE, PE, and music.

The SENDCo noted that the writing sessions were made longer as the pupils were not mature enough to write in the 40 minutes they had previously.

The Head of School explained that Key Stage 1 would be taking part in a whole class reading session during the assembly slot to maximise learning time.

In response to a question from a governor, the Head of School explained that all Key Stage 1 year groups received the extra time for writing.

Key Stage 2

The Assistant Headteacher reported that there had been a soft start for all children, which had focused on routines and expectations. This was particularly important for the Year 3 children who were moving into a more formalised style of learning. Writing was the lowest attaining area in Lower Key Stage 2, and the school was looking at what could be done to improve attainment in writing. A new writing cycle had been implemented in lower Key Stage 2, which involved more freedom for the pupils working towards greater depth while the pupils that were working towards and below were worked with deliberately.

A governor asked whether the Head of School thought that focusing on lower ability was the right approach, considering the need for greater depth focus. The head of school answered that making sure all pupils made progress was important but the school had a duty to ensure that children leave Dringhouses with the core skills to be successful adults, whilst ensuring that pupils had the opportunity to be challenged. The Head of School also noted that the senior leadership team suspected that one of the reasons for lower proportions of pupils achieving greater depth in the past was due to the pupils working towards greater depth not being given as many opportunities to develop their creativity and independence, whereas the new writing cycle give pupils that opportunity.

A governor asked when the school would expect to see the impact of the new writing cycle. The Head of School answered that the impact could be seen already: certain knowledge gaps seen in pupils had been closed.

The Head of School emphasised that the greater depth figures looked very positive for Year 6.

The SENDCo emphasised that the oracy project was working very well for Year 5 and Year 6, and noted that the sentence stems had a positive impact.

SEND

The SENDCo reported that the school had seven students with EHCPs at the time of the meeting, which the school expected would rise to 10 or 12 by the end of the year. Pupils with SEND needs had more provision. The school was part of the PINS (Partnerships for the Inclusivity of Neurodiversity in Schools) project, through which staff had accessed training around SEND needs. The school would be implementing two standing desks, as well as quiet fiddle toys. The school had also reviewed widgets and scaffolding. One pupil had come through Key Stage 1 without having his targets fulfilled, who had since made significant progress due to the scaffolding

and other provision in place to support him.

A teaching assistant had undertaken an ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) course, which was very positive, and would bring the number of ELSAs in the school to three. Some pupils were receiving softer starts, and the SENDCo noted that the school was providing more pupils with breakfast than it had previously. The most significant project was the opening of the Nest, which would accommodate six pupils with significant SEND need.

A governor asked whether those six children had EHCPs. The SENDCo answered that two of the pupils had EHCPs, and a third was the subject of an application process for an EHCP.

A governor asked whether pupils accessing the Nest would be in the Nest for the entirety of the school day. The SENDCo answered that pupils accessing the Nest would be in the Nest for mornings only. Pupils in the Nest would also access classroom lessons.

In response to a question from a governor, the SENDCo explained that the aim of the Nest was to enable the pupils accessing the Nest to access mainstream provision. The SENDCo was working with the local authority as well as the SENDCo at Copmanthorpe Primary School around the Nest provision.

A governor noted that the school would not want the Nest to become a de facto 'Danesgate Pathway'. The Head of School concurred, and noted that the Nest had to be set up due to the limited external support. The Head of School emphasised the importance of getting the Nest right so that appropriate support could be delivered for the pupils to enable them to access an appropriate curriculum that meets their needs

There was a brief discussion around specialist settings. The Assistant Headteacher noted that pupils in the Nest would have plans to get them back into mainstream provision.

The SENDCo noted that two pupils in Year 6 were on track to achieve greater depth in all areas.

There was a brief conversation concerning how data was formatted.

The governors noted that the Nest seemed to be a positive endeavour for the school to pursue.

The Head of School highlighted that the school had managed to fill reception for the 2025/2026 academic year, which was very positive.

The governors commended the work of staff at the school for this achievement.

The Head of School noted that open days had been particularly successful for increasing uptake.

Pupil Premium

	<p>The Head of School highlighted that nationally, the attainment of pupil premium pupils was the hardest to move. The catchment of the school was changing, and the school had seen an increased number of pupil premium pupils within school. There had been an increase in the number of pupils from Stay City, which was where refugee families were based. Pupil premium writing attainment was low.</p> <p>The SENDCo noted that a third of the SEN register consisted of pupil premium pupils.</p> <p>The Head of School emphasised the importance of focusing on basic skills. Every pupil premium pupil had been reviewed, with the aim of understanding what their barriers to learning were, and what could be done to overcome those barriers.</p>	
4	<p>SCHOOL AIMS</p> <p><i>There were no items for discussion</i></p>	
5	<p>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN REVIEW</p> <p><i>There were no items for discussion</i></p>	
6	<p>QUALITY OF TEACHING</p> <p><i>There were no items for discussion</i></p>	
7	<p>INCLUSION</p> <p>7.1 – Behaviour</p> <p><i>There were no items for discussion.</i></p> <p>7.2 – Attendance</p> <p><i>The Autumn Term Attendance Report was taken as read.</i></p> <p>The Head of School highlighted that the overall attendance for the school was 95.97% for the Autumn term, which was above national average. The school's rate of persistent absence (students with attendance below 90%) was also below the national average, which was positive.</p> <p>A governor noted that unauthorised absences could be for a parent taking their child on holiday, and asked what else caused persistent absences. The Head of School answered that unauthorised absences could be for pupils that were school refusers, or who were ill where the GP did not support the illness.</p> <p>The SENDCO noted that the school had started using the attendance penguin to encourage pupils to attend school, which was very popular with the pupils.</p>	
8	<p>POLICIES</p>	

	<p><i>The Dringhouses Primary School Pupil Premium strategy was taken as read.</i></p> <p>A governor noted that the budgeted cost listed on the document was higher than what was put into the budget.</p> <p><i>Action: Head of School to check budget discrepancies between the Pupil Premium Strategy and the budget.</i></p> <p><i>The governors unanimously approved the Pupil Premium Strategy.</i></p>	
9	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no other business to report.</p>	
10	<p>DETERMINATION OF CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS</p> <p>The governors commended the work of the school and the success that the school had seen across different areas.</p> <p>There were no items to be recorded as confidential.</p>	
11	<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thursday the 22nd of May at 6pm. 	

The meeting ended at 18:56.

Minutes approved at the Standards and Effectiveness Committee meeting held on the 23rd of April 2025.

Action Plan following the Meeting of the Standards and Effectiveness Committee held on the 21st of January 2025 at 6pm

Action		Item No.	Person	Date
1.	<i>Head of School to check budget discrepancies between the Pupil Premium Strategy and the budget</i>	8	Head of School	Next S&E

Items for next Committee meeting

Items for next FGB