

Gillespie Learning Committee 20.11.2019
Minutes

Present: Jodie, Claire, Mark, Katrina, Sarah, Mikel, Sanila, Tom

Apologies: Louise, Sanila, Ashley

The purpose of the meeting was to review the draft School Improvement Plan 2019-20 which had been circulated by Mark in advance.

SIP Priority 1 - reading, writing and maths

Louise commented, via correspondence, that it seems there is more of an improvement focus around reading/writing and a maintain/sustain focus in maths. It would be useful to understand the rationale for this a bit further.

Mark explained there had been significant change on reading and focus on literacy in EYs to respond to results and increasing curriculum focus (as discussed in previous Learning Committee meetings). In maths there is no significant change of approach, but continuing emphasis on bedding throughout the curriculum.

Louise also had also sent some more detailed questions which Jodie would forward to Mark.

SIP Priority 2 - broad and balanced curriculum

Governors were pleased to see the strong focus and detailed planning already underway around reviewing, developing and revising schemes of work across foundation subjects.

Jodie asked about capturing outcomes in foundation subjects, and how this might be done without creating overly cumbersome marking structures. Mark explained how exercise books are being more closely monitored by senior teachers to ensure evidence of clear progression and sequencing of teaching and learning. Results and progression in core subjects will continue to be indicators as core/foundation subjects are increasingly integrated. Lesson observations, work surveys and pupil interviews will check differentiated learning.

Mickel noted that there is not significant mention of SEN. In general we have the same approach to SEN as to everyone. **Mark said he would update the outcomes section of the framework to capture SEN outcomes.**

SIP Priority 3 - emotional wellbeing/mental health

Mark presented the new Islington Mental Health Audit which Gillespie has now signed up to - this assessment/framework is relevant to both priority 3 and 4 and will be conducted by external evaluators over the next few weeks providing a useful baselining exercise.

Sarah commented on the very strong behaviour in the school - notable by comparison to any other school she had worked in.

Claire asked about how children would be surveyed. Tom asked how parents confidence will be captured/measured. Mark talked through the variety of mediums which will be used including surveys and focus groups. The audit will start in Year 2 so younger children won't be engaged.

Claire asked what sort of behaviour changes we would expect to see in practical terms. Jodie asked for a framework of skills/behaviours which brings together mental health and resilience/ social and emotional skills and spells out what the school should seek to achieve. Mark said the audit will begin the process of defining and clarifying objectives in this area.

SIP Priority 4 - staff wellbeing and work/life balance

Governors were supportive of this significant new focus commenting that it reflects national objectives and should strengthen the school.

Claire asked for the exit interview process which has recently been introduced to be captured within the outcomes of this section of the SIP. Jodie supported this and asked for this to be extended to re-entry post maternity/paternity leave. **Mark agreed to make these changes.**

Tom asked what was meant in practical terms by the reduction in bureaucracy. Mark and Sarah explained that, for example, the school is moving to request more detailed medium term plans, and less on individual plans - the medium term plans would become more of a working document that helps teachers think through sequencing of lessons.

Governors discussed the risks around reducing some of the more standardised mechanisms, and the fact that while there is in some senses a reduction of pressure (e.g. on standardised marking) in other senses there will be new challenges on teachers (e.g. to ensure they are still picking up where children need additional support etc). Mark and Katrina explained that their aim is to provide teachers with the tools to address this, for example they recently gave teachers a guide on good practice AfL marking although it will be up to teachers to decide if/how to use this.

Next meeting

Agreed that either the spring learning committee meeting or full governors meeting would include initial audit from mental health

Jodie Reed
10.02.2020