

Gillespie Primary School Learning Committee
Minutes of a meeting held on 12th December 2023

Present: Jodie Reed (Chair), Mark Owen, Shelley Wragg, Hafsa Obokar, Mandy Leatham, Fin Craig

In attendance: Katrina Moses

Introduction

The Chair proposed that the agenda be changed from a detailed review of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) to a more thorough review of the recently published Ofsted report and any actions arising from it. This was agreed by all at the meeting. The review of the SIP would be moved to the next meeting of the committee.

Mark referred to notes prepared by him and Katrina following their meeting with the inspectors to discuss their conclusions. This and the report itself became the agenda for the meeting.

Mark began by mentioning that the SIP builds on the strengths identified by the Ofsted report.

Issues highlighted included the following:

1. The inspectors emphasised that their deep dive into subjects evidenced the school's commitment to an ambitious curriculum, and they referred on several occasions to the school "aiming high" and providing opportunities beyond the national curriculum.
2. The report highlighted that all staff were highly trained, including the TAs who has been well trained by the Early Reading lead.
3. The inspectors pointed out how maths teaching went beyond the national curriculum, and how teachers were well trained ("skilled and attuned") in maths teaching and in helping address pupils' misconceptions when a pupil struggled.
4. Music teaching was highly praised, with inspectors noting the children's use of correct vocabulary. The Key Stage 1 music lesson that was observed had the curriculum ambition and expectation of a secondary school music lesson.
5. Science teaching received praise from the inspectors, again as being delivered at a level beyond the National Curriculum. The Science for Life project was specifically named by the inspectors.
6. Pupils were noted by the inspectors to be self-motivated to behave and demonstrated a high level of perseverance and resilience. The "growth mindset" wraps around everything and the whole school buys into it.
7. The inspector highlighted the teachers' excellent feedback, and the enthusiasm for further improvement of the school.
8. The inspectors' conclusions in the report on many issues (for example participation in extracurricular activities and safety on line) came about at least in part as a result of their conversations with pupils.
9. there was a stress by the inspectors on the school's inclusion of all SEN pupils.
10. the very favourable conclusions on leadership came as a result of very positive responses in the parent survey, staff responses and the children's survey.
11. The safeguarding check was thorough, but the only small concern raised was that some members of staff mentioned contacting governors if there was a safeguarding concern about the head teacher, rather than specifically the chair of governors. Otherwise there were no concerns. The inspectors noted that staff were well trained to look out for FGM and had had Prevent training. They said that there was a culture of safeguarding and a lot of pastoral support for the children.
12. The inspectors commented that teachers and TAs seemed very well trained in SEN issues (among many other things).

The Chair said that the governors recognised that it was a team effort that had achieved such a good result, and that all staff should share credit for it. The governors all passed on their thanks and congratulations to the senior leadership team and all staff.

Mark stressed that there would be no complacency, and that the school would treat the Ofsted report as a foundation to build upon.