

MAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Meeting of Governing Body Wednesday 15 March 2017 at 6.00pm in the Staff Room

Attendees :-

Judith Greenwood (Chair)	Kate Stalker (to 7.30pm)
Alison Cox	Zareen Islam (to 7.30pm)
Anna Chaudhri	Petroc Mackenzie-Williams
Sarah Stepney	Mary Wheeler
Jim Thorpe	Paula Ayliffe (to 7.30pm)
Kate Vadhia (Clerk)	Jas Hill (Head) (to 7.30pm)

Action

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were accepted from Jo Sharpington, David Hargreaves, Bridget Somekh and Mary Cullen.

No apologies had been received from Rob Thompson or Avi Bhangaonkar.

2. **GOVERNOR ISSUES**

The governors unanimously voted to co-opt Jane McHugh on to the governing body.

Following Laurie's resignation the Finance Committee is in need of a new Chair, preferably with financial experience. Judith is acting Chair for now. Any governor who is interested to contact Kate.

All

Zareen to join MEG to fill the vacancy left by Laurie.

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest relating to any items on the agenda.

3. **MATHS MASTERY**

Jo Harbour gave a presentation to the GB about maths mastery at Mayfield.

Mastery is the buzzword of the moment in maths teaching and the concept is based on maths teaching from the far east, Shanghai and Singapore in particular. The government has made funding available to support mastery. Jo was selected as one of 140 teachers nationally to train as a mastery specialist. Jo is now working with six other schools in the county.

Shanghai and Singapore have very different cultures from England and there are things that we do very, very well in England. Comparison tests show high attainment in the far east; in England there is a long tail of pupils not reaching the expected age-related levels.

Q: What has an impact?

A: Thinking about **mathematical reasoning**; giving children sentences they can use to explain their thinking. For example when teaching multiplication in Y2 use the terms factor and product. Using the correct language embeds in their understanding.

Fluency; good conceptual understanding of basic facts eg times tables, number bonds. In the far east children know these facts much better than children in England. It's about making connections not just learning by rote.

Coherence; curriculum has changed from spiral to spending longer on topics and

not moving on while children are still grasping the concept. Topics are not necessarily revisited during the year but a taught topic will be used in other work throughout the year, building on what has been taught.

Representation and structure; makes it very easy to tell children the rules of maths. The Mayfield children made over 10k salt-dough hedgehogs earlier in the year and they have been used in teaching many aspects of maths including counting and arranging patterns. One year group used them to represent a Roman legion. Using resources to help understanding of maths.

Questions; using carefully thought about questions to make the children do the maths you want them to do.

Q: What impact has there been?

A: During her recent maths-focused visit, Margaret Leverett looked at the work being done in lots of classrooms and noted the children's ability to articulate what they were learning via stem sentences. There has been lots of CPD on this and Jo has been on hand to help and advise teachers.

The use of resources such as the hedgehogs to demonstrate concepts. Jo gave a quick example of using a partially full glass of water to represent $\frac{2}{3}$ of a full glass. This would lead to pictures of glasses to colour in to represent different fractions and then would move on to using a number line to look at where $\frac{2}{3}$ appeared in relation to zero and one.

Q: What has been the impact on the tail?

A: What mastery is trying to do can only benefit children who finds maths difficult. Ultimately this way of teaching will really make a difference in giving a deeper understanding and increasing fluency. Teachers are thinking about maths more than before. It is helping with SEN children. It was noted that Mayfield has a very wide range of SEN children which is a real challenge for class teachers.

Q: Does the success of the method depend on having lots of 1:1?

A: No, the children work together and share ideas. Different groups use different resources and do different level work at the same time. The key for teachers is knowing all their pupils really well and planning carefully so that everyone will achieve by the end of the lesson via lots of different routes to learning. The children do not just give an answer but explain how they got the answer which is very useful for the other children. Mastery is good for high ability children and leads to deeper thinking – not just dealing with bigger numbers, dealing with deeper connections.

Q: How long has mastery been in use?

A: Jo trained last year so it's now in its second year at Mayfield. There has been a huge learning curve for teachers and a change in culture in the classrooms.

Getting children to think "How do I know that?" is very good for higher order thinking ie in higher education.

The governors thanked Jo for her very interesting talk.

4. **SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUES STANDARD**

The GB considered the previously circulated SFVS document which had been prepared by the Finance Committee. The document recorded the committee's concern over the loss of Laurie's expertise.

The SFVS was unanimously approved.

5. **MAT UPDATE**

Actions

Judith updated the GB on progress with the MAT process. The chairs and vice-chairs plus three senior leaders from the interested schools (Spinney, Mayfield, Bassingbourn, Fulbourn and The Grove) had met. Helen Renfrew-Knight from Tim Coulson's office also attended to provide advice. It was noted that the five interested schools represented a good mix and are all very focussed on improving standards.

The GBs of Fulbourn and The Spinney have formally passed a resolution stating their intention to apply for academy status with the aim of forming CIT.

The trust members so far are Charlie Helps (experienced company director), Pamela Burnard (creative learning expert and a Professor at The Faculty of Education), Lord Jim Knight (former Labour minister and MD of TES Global), Teresa Cremin (Professor of Education at The Open University), Lynn Churchman OBE (maths specialist). Below the trust will sit the Board of Directors (BoD) the chair of which will also be a trustee and Simon Pratt-Adams (Deputy Dean of Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education at ARU) has been approached about this post. The BoD will need members with high level expertise in finance, HR and law. Ideally there will be a representative from each school on the BoD and Anna has expressed interest in representing Mayfield.

Below the BoD will be a local advisory board for each member school, responsible for monitoring their school's own standards and managing local issues such as staff wellbeing, parental satisfaction, school ethos, safeguarding, premises management etc.

There will be a formal scheme of delegation to set out which body is responsible for what.

Q: Will each school keep its identity or will schools be expected to conform to a MAT standard eg change of name, MAT-wide uniform? Will this be in writing?

A: All five schools definitely want to keep their own identities and this will be secured in writing although it was acknowledged that there will be some changes in the future – over the next few years the MAT will probably evolve towards some centralised systems for example in assessment. It will be up to Mayfield to put forward a good case to fight our corner. We have lots of good things to share which the other schools are interested in. It was agreed that we have to be clear about what control we are ceding and what we wish to retain. There will be no lead primary and the BoD will be neutral. It was hoped that a bigger organisation would lift pressure off the individual schools.

A further meeting is scheduled for Monday 20th March at Mayfield.

The view of the SLT is that we have made a decision to proceed but won't commit until all the details are known. At this stage we have to move forward and start due diligence and consultation. To do this the GB has to agree its intention to convert to academy status with the aim of forming CIT. Consultations to take place in late April/May and if satisfactory then an application to convert to be made in late May with the conversion/MAT formation taking place on 1 January 2018. It was noted that it will be possible to drop out at any time before the papers are signed in December.

Resolution: Mayfield Primary School will apply to the Secretary of State to convert to academy status with the intention of joining with The Spinney to form a new Multi-Academy Trust with other primary schools.

Action

The resolution was passed with a unanimous vote.

The GB to schedule an extra meeting in May after the consultation period has ended to consider next steps before an application is submitted. Judith/Kate to arrange a date as soon as possible.

Judith/Kate

6. GOVERNOR BRIEFINGS

Judith had attended the spring term governors briefing and had followed up an issue with Ofsted/governor training with Jim.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

News from the Governing Body

At their meeting on 15 March the Governing Body:

- welcomed Jane McHugh as a co-opted governor.
- thanked Jo Harbour for an excellent talk on maths mastery.
- continued to pursue MAT options and are planning to consult with parents/carers, staff and other stakeholders in late April/May.
- The GB are looking for governors, particularly those who can bring some finance experience. This is a very exciting time to be a governor as there are some far-reaching decisions to be made about Multi-Academy Trusts. No previous experience of school governance is necessary and training is available. The governors are a very welcoming and friendly bunch. If you are interested or know someone who is, please contact Kate Vadhia at kvadhia@mayfield.cambs.sch.uk or via the school office.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.