

"A school where children not only have high achievement, but experience opportunities to enrich their lives.

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CLIFTON GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Committee held in the School on Tuesday 2nd October 2018 at 6.00pm

Present:	Dave Brown (Headteacher) Lynn Comer Sue Boyle	Pete Murray Joanne Lunardi Tobie Abel
In attendance:	Nicola Jones (Deputy Headteacher) Jess Swarbrick (Governance Support Officer - Clerk)	

	<u>Executive Summary</u>	
1.	<u>Election of Committee Chair & Vice-Chair</u>	
2.	<u>Welcome & Introductions, Apologies, Declarations of Interest</u> Apologies were received from Jonathan Wilcox and Richard Dacosta. There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	<u>Minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2018</u> Previously distributed. The minutes were agreed and signed.	
4.	<u>Action Plan and Matters Arising</u> Progress against the action plan was noted, see main minutes for details.	
5.	<u>TLC Terms of Reference Review</u> Previously distributed. Recommended for approval by the Full Governing Body unchanged	
6.	<u>Draft Ofsted Report</u> Previously distributed. A detailed discussion took place following the recent Ofsted inspection. See main minutes for details	
7.	<u>Safeguarding (standing item)</u> The Deputy Headteacher provided a verbal update on safeguarding in school. There were no issues to report.	
8.	<u>Behaviour & Attendance Update</u> Governors noted the whole school attendance figures for 2017/18, which were tabled for information.	
9.	<u>2018 Outcomes</u> Previously distributed. This had formed part of the discussion under item 6.	
10.	<u>School Development Plan and Draft LA Plan</u> Previously distributed. This had formed part of the discussion under item 6.	
11.	<u>Curriculum Developments</u> The Deputy Headteacher provided a brief overview of the launch of the new curriculum at the start of the autumn term.	
12.	<u>Any Other Business</u> Governors agreed that further discussion of leadership and management should be carried forward to the Full Governing Body meeting on 16 th October.	
		Action
1.	<u>Election of Committee Chair & Vice-Chair</u> Tobie Abel was unanimously elected as TLC Committee Chair for a term of one year. Jonathan Wilcox was nominated for the role of Vice-Chair of the committee, but was absent from the meeting. It was agreed that a final decision on appointment of committee Vice-Chair should therefore be carried forward to the next meeting.	
2.	<u>Welcome & Introductions, Apologies for Absence, Declarations of Interest</u> Apologies were received, with consent, from Jonathan Wilcox and Richard Dacosta. There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	<u>Minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2018</u> Previously distributed. The minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed by	

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	the Chair of Governors.	
4.	<p><u>Action Plan & Matters Arising</u> With reference to the Action Plan: 1. <i>Development of induction pack for governors to include safeguarding information</i> The Deputy Headteacher tabled a proposed induction checklist for governors, which included three sections: a simple skills audit; a list of ongoing business of the governing body to be understood; and finally a list of opportunities to come into school and enhance understanding of the role. This last section included assembly, attending a staff meeting and visitation a lesson. The Deputy Headteacher advised that the checklist had been based on a simplified staff induction.</p> <p>Governors agreed that this was a helpful document, but asked how it would be managed in practice, to ensure that it was completed effectively. The Headteacher advised that the Business Manager would be responsible for ensuring the induction process was reviewed and completed, and would work with the Chair of Governors to enable this. Governors agreed it would be helpful to include a clear timeline of when each stage was expected to be completed.</p> <p>2. <i>Review Inclusion Support Officer job description to reflect DSL role</i> Completed.</p>	
5.	<p><u>TLC Terms of Reference Review</u> Previously distributed. Governors agreed the terms of reference unchanged, and recommended them for approval by the Full Governing Body on 16th October.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Draft Ofsted Report</u> Governors discussed the draft Ofsted report, which had been previously distributed. It was noted that the highlighted version also circulated was very useful, as this clearly indicated areas for development, areas of strength and where initiatives and actions had been recognised to be in place, but not fully embedded. The Headteacher advised that no factual errors had been corrected in the draft; and it was expected that the final report would be unchanged.</p> <p>The Headteacher advised that reflection on the report was needed, evaluating the fair challenges within it, as well as the parts which it was felt weren't a fair representation of the school.</p> <p>Governors agreed the need for this reflection, in order to develop a plan to move forward. The governing body's role was crucial to ensure that their strategic questions and challenge helped to contribute to this plan. The Headteacher advised that the School Development Plan which had been circulated with the agenda, covered all of the priorities which the school would be focusing on this year. He further advised that work had already started to cross-reference this with areas for improvement within the Ofsted report.</p> <p>Governors asked whether the key point within the Ofsted report was that outcomes were not good because children were not pushed enough academically. Governors challenged the Headteacher about whether this was the case, and that children were overly protected. It was noted that the report did not specifically say that expectations weren't high enough, though this could be implied.</p> <p>The Headteacher stated that he recognised this challenge from governors, and that the key issue was that the school's outcomes were not seen to be high enough under the current system of measurement. The Headteacher advised that he did believe the school had high expectations for all children, though recognised governors' challenge in light of the outcomes.</p>	

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The Headteacher advised that there were some very different extremes in terms of level of ability and need within the school. He recognised that there was a question to be asked about whether enough was being done for the higher attainers, to ensure they were being encouraged to be the best they could be.

The Headteacher emphasised the ethos of the school, which was to provide a broader and enriched education experience whilst still wanting children to succeed academically. He advised that levels of expectation and pace of learning were things that were discussed on a regular basis with all staff. He noted, however, that governors' challenge about whether expectations were high enough for higher attainers was fair, as this was reflected in the school's results.

The Deputy Headteacher advised that white, British, working class boys were a key focus group, both nationally and in school in terms of progress and attainment. **Governors noted that children within identified vulnerable groups including SEN and complex needs were well supported in school. However, it was further noted that the Ofsted report had highlighted outcomes for Pupil Premium and disadvantaged children as not being high enough.** The Deputy Headteacher noted that the majority of Pupil Premium children also crossed into other groups in terms of need.

Governors asked whether there were any disadvantaged children in school who did not have multiple complex needs. The Headteacher confirmed that there were some, and these children had generally achieved very well.

Whilst he recognised that Ofsted looked at data as part of their inspection to form a judgement, the Headteacher advised of the need to look at all indicators. He added that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had highlighted the progress figures during the inspection, which whilst not yet positive were significantly improved.

Governors challenged whether the Headteacher believed the bar had been set high enough for all children in terms of expectations. The Headteacher advised that he did believe this, though recognised the need for consistency in some areas.

Further to this question regarding expectations, governors asked how much resources and time was spent on academic focus in school. The Headteacher advised that the answer to this was the vast majority. He explained that academic focus underpinned most of what went on in the school, though he recognised why governors would question this.

Governors noted that they were surprised by the comments within the report on Writing, and asked why leadership of Writing had been reported as not consistently applied throughout the school. Governors asked whether this was an area which needed to be addressed. The Deputy Headteacher advised that part of the reason for this was due to the timing of the inspection, which had occurred in the second week of the new academic year. She explained that the school had started the term with a Learning to Learn focus, encouraging growth mindset and taking the time to establish good learning skills.

Governors challenged whether the pace of learning in school was fast enough, or whether this had just not been the case during the inspection due to it being the start of the school year. The Headteacher argued that the emphasis should not be about speed or pace of learning, but about knowing the individual child, looking at their current position and how to move them on to their next

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step.

The Headteacher agreed that there were some issues with the timing of the inspection being in the first full week of the school year, particularly following building work over the summer and having four new teachers who had just started. However, though he recognised that some issues brought up in the report were fair challenges, he did not believe that these did not make it a good school. The Headteacher suggested that the initial focus of the governing body should be leadership and management, as this would be key in moving forward to make real gains.

Governors recognised the need to focus on leadership and management, both of the SLT and the governing body itself. However, governors further challenged the Headteacher about outcomes, as the report stated that if these were not good then the school could not be judged as good. Governors challenged that if the level of expectation, amount of resources and motivation of children were all pitched at the right level, was there an argument to say that the best way of improving outcomes was further coaching of pupils in how to sit exams? Governors further questioned whether this needed to be approached through consistency of progress throughout the school.

The Headteacher advised that data tracking and regular daily discussions amongst staff focused on progress and moving children forward, though he recognised the need to ensure that this was being done at the right pace. He further advised that the School Development Plan included a whole school approach to coaching pupils in terms of sitting for the tests. The Headteacher assured governors that children were not sent into the SATs with no preparation, as practice tests and timing techniques were a key part of their learning. However, he argued that there was a question about what the right level was for this.

In response to this question, governors asked how much preparation and support was given for children who may have been identified as not on track to meet the expected level.

The Headteacher advised that the previous year, there had been booster groups for pupils before and after school and at lunchtime, from January up to the tests in May. He advised that this had particularly targeted vulnerable groups. In addition, there had been a focus on Reading and Maths in the four to five weeks prior to the tests, with a renewed focus on Writing once these were completed. The Headteacher questioned how much further this could be taken without being at risk of game playing in terms of tests.

The Headteacher advised that it was his role to find the balance between academic, coaching, and the school's belief of how education should be. He added that this was a challenge, and something that he and the rest of the staff questioned constantly.

Governors challenged that all that the Headteacher was saying regarding expectations and level of challenge, did not match up to the outcomes over the past three years, with two thirds of children not reaching the expected level and fewer gaining greater depth. Governors noted that whilst they supported the ethos of the school, there had to be a challenge of why more children were not reaching the expected level of attainment.

The Headteacher raised the issue of context, highlighting that he genuinely did not believe most people, including many governors, understood the level of disadvantage of some pupils. He added that he would argue all classes had more than 25% of pupils with more than one barrier to learning. In

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response to a challenge from governors that these barriers should not be insurmountable, the Deputy Headteacher advised that it was a question of the complexity of the combination of barriers which presented the issue. The Headteacher emphasised that this was not an excuse, but was a key issue for the school in identifying, supporting and overcoming these to enable children to achieve.

Governors asked what key priorities had been identified. The Headteacher advised that the School Development Plan included a focus on teaching & learning, leadership, behaviour, attendance and Maths. He added that the philosophy of the school was to strive for every single aspect to be better every time.

A question was raised regarding the curriculum, and whether the basic skills in English and Maths were embedded throughout the foundation subjects. Governors further challenged who was responsible for ensuring that this was in place, and for monitoring it. The Headteacher advised that 60% of teaching occurred in the morning and 40% in the afternoon. Overall, mornings were spent teaching English and Maths only, with the other subjects covered in the afternoon. The Headteacher advised that he would expect there to be a Maths or English element in all of the other subjects.

Governors asked whether there had been an audit of this, to ensure that the required skills were being covered. The Headteacher advised that the Deputy Headteacher had responsibility over the wider curriculum, along with the English and Maths subject leaders.

The Deputy Headteacher advised that English was driving almost everything else in school at the moment. She explained that a whole school topic fed into a focus for each year group, with an English lead in terms of a key book or text. It was agreed that it was harder to make Maths cross-curricular, and the Deputy Headteacher advised that the real priority was to ensure challenge, flow and basic skills within dedicated Maths lessons in the mornings. The Headteacher added that review and long term memory had been identified as an issue, and teachers were therefore now revisiting key elements more regularly to help boost children's retention of these skills.

Governors asked whether an audit could be undertaken of foundation subjects, to look for opportunities to reinforce or revisit maths, for example through food technology and science.

The Headteacher cautioned against a knee jerk reaction to the report. He confirmed to governors that the SLT were constantly striving to improve Maths and English in school. The Headteacher assured governors that whilst he was not saying that nothing needed to change following the inspection, he wanted to emphasise that the school was already on that journey of improvement.

Governors agreed that as a committee, they needed to be able to be confident that they challenge they were providing was effective, and was responding promptly to issues as they arose. It was further agreed that a clearer plan was needed to track data and expected outcomes between now and the next meeting in January.

It was agreed that Tobie Abel as TLC Chair, Joanne Lunardi as English Link Governor and Kath Wood as Maths Link Governor should arrange more regular meetings with the Deputy Headteacher. These meetings would provide the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of data tracking and planned interventions. It was agreed that the first of these meetings should be arranged before half term.

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7.	<p><u>Safeguarding (standing item)</u> There were no issues to report. The Deputy Headteacher provided a verbal update from the Inclusion Leader on safeguarding in school and the number of children currently on the register.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Behaviour & Attendance Update</u> The final attendance figures for 2017/18 were tabled for information. It was noted that this was internal data only at present, as national figures were not yet available.</p> <p>The Deputy Headteacher advised that final figures showed whole school attendance was just under 96%, which was around national average and an improvement on the previous year.</p> <p>The Deputy Headteacher reported that persistent absentee figures had also dropped significantly from 2016/17, though were higher than the national average. It was noted that Jonathan Wilcox, link governor for behaviour and attendance, would interrogate the detail of this further and report back.</p> <p>The Deputy Headteacher advised that the Attendance Team had already met this term and identified those children needing targeted intervention. She added that the school were confident that the strategies which had been put in place last year had improved attendance in school and would continue to do so.</p>	
9.	<p><u>2018 Outcomes</u> Previously distributed. It was noted that these had been discussed in detail at the full governing body meeting on 17th July, as well as covered with the Ofsted report discussion under item 6.</p>	
10.	<p><u>School Development Plan and Draft LA Plan</u> Governors noted the School Development Plan, which had been updated to include the LA plan following a meeting with the Head of Primary Effectiveness.</p> <p>The Headteacher advised that a draft action plan had been submitted to the LA School Improvement Board (YSAB) following publication of the outcomes in July, requesting funding to support school improvement. He reported that this had been initially rejected on the grounds that assurance was needed that outcomes would be better the following year.</p> <p>The Headteacher advised that since this, the Ofsted inspection had taken place, and the plan would therefore be developed and re-submitted for funding. He advised that the key questions were around how best to continue to improve teaching and learning, and how to further improve leadership and management. He advised that the funding requested was around £12,000.</p> <p>Governors asked whether it was possible to ask the Resources Committee whether any additional money could be found in the budget for this. It was agreed that if possible, additional money could be raised from other activities to support this school improvement. The Headteacher agreed the importance of continuing to maximise income through grant applications and other means for the benefit of the endgame of great education, which included great academic outcomes.</p>	
11.	<p><u>Curriculum Developments</u> It was noted that some points relating to curriculum development had been covered under item 6. The Deputy Headteacher reported that the biggest change was the handing back of control to teachers for wider subjects. She explained that teachers now had the opportunity to decide when the national curriculum objectives for each year group were taught over the year, linking these into the</p>	

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	<p>whole school topics. The Deputy Headteacher advised that curriculum leaders would monitor the effectiveness of this approach in each class.</p> <p>Governors agreed that it would be helpful to receive reports from subject leaders about the monitoring process, and whether this approach was effective. It was also agreed that governors would benefit from subject leaders coming in to present to the committee, providing more detail on how their subject was taught, as well as the link to English and Maths.</p> <p>In response to a question about homework, the Deputy Headteacher reported that this had been re-launched as home learning, with a range of more extra-curricular activities to complete. In addition to this, parents and carers had been encouraged to continue to support reading, spellings and Times-table Rock Stars on a regular basis to help children maximise learning at home.</p> <p>Governors asked whether there was an initiative to have higher attainers buddy and support lower attainers. The Headteacher reported that this was in place, and SLT had discussed developing this by matching each member of staff with a child or children to listen to them read every day, where they were not getting these opportunities at home.</p> <p>Governors requested feedback on how this was working at the next meeting.</p>	NJ
12.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>It was agreed that the areas of the Ofsted report relating to effectiveness of leadership and management should be addressed at the full governing body meeting on 16th October.</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that morale in school was high, despite the outcome of the inspection. He advised that the school planned to hold a series of meetings for parents once the final report had been published, to provide the opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns and discuss the content of the report. It was agreed that governors should attend these if they were able, to be a part of this process.</p> <p>The Headteacher emphasised that he did not wish to seem complacent or defensive of the report, but needed to reassure parents that this was still a great school, and everyone involved believed in what was being done. Governors agreed that it was important to manage this, but suggested that it could be a good opportunity to invite feedback from parents about what they think.</p>	
13.	<p><u>Date and Time of Next Meetings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Tuesday 22nd January 2019, 6pm* Tuesday 2nd April 2019, 6pm* Tuesday 25th June, 6pm	

The meeting closed at 8.15pm



Tobie Abel, TLC Committee Chair

Date

22/11/19

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Clifton Green Primary School - Action Plan following the meeting of the Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Committee held on 2nd October 2018

	Action	Agenda Item	Person(s) Responsible	Timescale
1	Arrange initial meeting of governor working group to interrogate and understand data	6	Deputy Headteacher	ASAP
2	Feedback on buddy system	11	Deputy Headteacher	22/01/19

Future Agenda Items:

English & Maths Subject Leader Presentations

Feedback on buddying system for reading

Update from governor working group on data scrutiny