



## Directors' Note for Portfolio Groups

Portfolio title: Pilton Infants' LGB

Date of meeting: 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023, 5.30pm

Attended by: John Mortimer (head of school), Brian Holme, Jessica Haynes-Holme, Lindsay Tranter-Sharpe, Kate Nolan, Ian Thomas (CEO), Verity Goss (clerk, virtual).

### Brief overview of discussion

#### Welcome and Apologies

BH welcomed all to the meeting. First meeting of the Local Governing Body. No apologies – all present.

#### Confirmation of Local Governing Body members, appointment of chair

Confirmation of new Local Governing Body members – BH, JHH, LTS, KN. KN was willing to stand as chair – had previously been the vice chair for the full governing board before academisation. IT clarified the role of the chair within the LGB. Vice chair was not required in an LGB. Agreed KN to take on the role of chair.

Potential new local governors – there had been one person who had been interested, but had not heard further. Recruitment adverts had gone in the newsletter. KN had also written about her experience which sent out information about being a governor. IT recommended that any parents that came to mind as suitable could also be approached directly.

#### Declaration of business interests

Local governors completed register of business forms.

#### Previous minutes

Minutes from last FGB received.

#### Matters brought forward

None.

Neil Swait report and one page summary had been received. Ofsted – new framework no longer had a two year exemption after academisation – expecting one year exemption.

## **Monitoring and Accountability**

### Review Head's report

Including: pupil numbers, attendance, staffing, safeguarding, pupil premium, SEND

School Improvement Plan and Priorities

Curriculum

Data

SIP Priorities

Staffing

All had received HT report. Questions were invited.

Attendance looked good – 3% increase from the previous year. Unauthorised vs authorised – most absence was authorised. JM explained what would contribute to an unauthorised absence. There did seem to be some absence request forms starting to come in – holidays were being unauthorised. New guidance had been released around attendance.

Pupil numbers – the school was now full – there had been a Y1 child leave, but another was joining the school to fill the place. SEND and Pupil Premium numbers had increased slightly. As staff were getting to know the Reception children there were more being placed on the SEND register. Two more EHCP applications were being completed.

Suspensions and exclusions – there had been five suspensions in the two weeks before half term, which was very unusual. These had had an impact – children had made good improvements on their behaviour. The school had exhausted other options. There was one child with two exclusions – parents were looking at alternative settings, and an early review had been called. Parents had been very supportive.

Safeguarding – two children were on the child protection register, no indication that they would come off at the moment. No children in need, four on early help. SCR had been checked and was compliant.

JM explained the staffing changes – some staff had picked up additional hours. The new cleaner had been recruited by TEAM. Currently there was an advert out for a part time TA to support three children in Reception. There was a flexible working request for a staff member returning from maternity leave – currently going through the process. Two first absence meetings – one occupational health referral.

*Open evenings – were these drop in evenings or with appointments?* These had been drop in sessions. Local governors discussed how useful for parents the different type of sessions were. Drop in sessions allowed parents time to look at books, often with their children which was positive. Attendance at these evenings was fairly good. The reading and phonics workshops were fairly well attended – feedback was very

good. It was always difficult to find a time to suit all parents.

Buildings – no RAAC.

Quality of education – there had been two reviews this time. These had discussed curriculum design, and talked about what had been worked on since the last visits. Visits had looked at Early Years and data. The English curriculum had been rewritten to match the phonics scheme.

Neil Swait visit – JM stated that this had felt a very positive day and showed how much staff had worked and come on over the past two years. IT stated it was very clear the amount of progress that had taken place. It was clear the school was in a good place with things looked at on the day. JM had fed back all the positive information back to the staff. BH – some staff had found conflicting information from the two visits, it would be good to have the consistency. JM and IT had reflected on whether to go ahead with Neil Swait’s visit so soon after the DCC visit – had gone ahead as found the reports very useful. Also picked up by Neil – very positive learning behaviours. He had spent most time in Reception/Year One – Year Two had the more challenging behaviours. Staff were working at this and could see improvements. Staff were working on building engagement and working on learning behaviours. It was improving, but did take time. This was also a cohort that had missed a lot of learning due to Covid. JHH stated staff had worked really hard this year – they really wanted to work well with the children, and were working on lots of different strategies. JM explained the pastoral support in place – there was a morning group for children who found it difficult to come in to school. The school was due to start Opal after Christmas.

*Was there a link between the behaviour and exclusion policies, or did they conflict?* Yes, they were in line and linked.

*Reception children with additional support – how was this going? Staff were expecting it to be a significant challenge?* JM stated that this was going well – the time spent in school had been building up. The EHCP reviews would be requesting more funding so the children could build up to full time. Parents were noticing good changes at home. The two TAs who were supporting these children were doing a very good job and the children were making good progress. There was an EHCP being applied for for another child – JM explained how they were currently being supported.

Personal development – the school had launched the vision. Every class was doing a canvas to be displayed in the school, bringing the vision to life for this children, where they could see it.

Clubs were going well – new singing and signing club had started. JM explained the visits and trips planned.

Governor visits: reports & proposed future visits

Another review planned next week – looking at curriculum design.

## **Academy items**

### Health and Safety

Report had been received – attended by JM, premises manager and business manager. BH felt it would be useful to have a priority set against each item. *What were the priorities as far as JM was concerned?* JM felt fire related items were the most important. JM explained which items had already been actioned. IT explained what would happen on subsequent visits, with the current sheet used to ensure items were being actioned. Premises team were strategic about which items were completed when, fitting in with when children were in school.

### Approval of policies – none this meeting.

Local governors were aware that as a Local Governing Body they had less policies they were responsible for.

## **Strategic**

### MAT Update

IT stated that there would be a period of time where they would be learning what a local governing body did within TEAM. IT had put together a document clarifying what LGBs do, taking through the specific role – IT would circulate. IT shared the activities local governors were involved in – very school based activities, focussed on the children.

### Governor Visits

Moving forward it would be helpful to organise these visits linked with the school improvement plan. Within TEAM there had been three Ofsted inspections in the past six months, two of which had been two day inspections. Feedback from these had been given to all the heads of schools, including JM. It was important to remember that when the call came there was preparation that could be done to help with the inspection. Leading up to the inspection there was discussion on what subjects were classed as a strength of the school – the inspectors would always look at early reading and phonics, and maths. The school would need to decide which foundation subjects they considered strengths – good to look at on LGB visits. Leading up to the inspection there was time for the subject leader to present their subject. Staff would always meet the inspector in twos. After the conversation with staff inspectors would go and look at the school environment. At Pilton Bluecoat, inspectors had also asked to see a subject that the school felt needed development. All subject leaders were very clear about what would happen if their subject was put forward, preparation took place with the subject leaders. SEND was also a focus of inspections. Support plans needed to include sharp and smart targets. Inspections would included analysis around attendance like governors do at the meeting. In a two day inspection there would be moments when staff were put under pressure, but they had worked with staff on this. At the end of day one inspectors would start shaping what they would look at in day two. Pilton Bluecoat inspection had gone well, and IT would now collate the questions that were asked, as staff were able to learn from these in other schools. Inspectors would meet with trustees and local governors for

a 45 minute discussion – they would be asked in to meet with IT/Dan Polak an hour before the meeting to update on the inspection so far and run through.

Things were settled around the trust – there were a couple of schools that were tackling situations where there was a high level of need. There was an increase in this nationally.

Training date with Neil Swait – 5<sup>th</sup> December. KN was attending this, BH was hoping to attend.

**Review: What likely impact has this meeting had on childrens’ outcomes?**

It was important for local governors to know the progress of collaboration within the MAT, and support of the MAT with the school and Ofsted. Improvements of school from visits – local governors were able to learn and then able to support the school in its current form. Safeguarding was essential to ensure children were safe. Plans were in place to ensure the support of children with additional needs. Local governors had a good picture of how the school and vision were moving forward.

*How do local governors feed back to the trustees?* Minutes went to full trustees meetings. Specific issues were also raised where needed. Trustees did also visit individual schools. *How were trustees able to question higher up governance if needed?* Can go through Head of School/a trustee/clerk. Local governors could attend a trustees meeting if there was a specific issue. If there were key action points that needed bringing up, these were listed separately on the trustees meeting agenda. *Was Pilton Infants the only school without a trustee on the Local Governing Body?* No – there was discussion with the Regional Schools Commissioner around governance. TEAM had previously operated with the model of a trustee being the chair of the Local Governing Body – this was difficult as the trust got bigger and was not seen as a good model. In the trust action plan was to look at other models, and what was working well in other trusts.

Standards and scrutiny – heads of schools met with trustees and brought up any particular issues. EYFS/Infants was considered in this as much as KS2. IT stated that TEAM had been moving away from a trustee linked to each school – all the trustees had responsibility for all the schools. IT stated that if there was anyone within the Pilton Infants community they felt would be a good trustee to encourage them to get in contact.

**Any other business**

Thanks given to BH for his work as chair of governors for the past few years.

Safeguarding training normally took place at the beginning of the new year – due for renewal in January. JM was organising this.

Local governors felt it would be good to have the sign outside the school updated now they were part of TEAM.

**Date of next meeting**

Fewer meetings were needed as a local governing body. Meetings set for Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March and Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July.

Three Valleys partnership – had written to say the school was no longer part of this. There would be some documents to sign off.

Meeting ended 6.50pm.