

Context for report

Our first meeting of the academic year pragmatically and necessarily privileges the following:

- It checks and scrutinises all measures and indicators of behaviour and safety and wellbeing incrementally as the year has unfolded (sharing has been half-termly across the year to FGB and committee)
- It focuses on the young people who left us in 2017;
- It looks back on the improvement journey and forward to what next;
- It considers the school's self-evaluation and the range of supporting and pertinent evidence and information.
- It does so in broad strokes with governors accessing detailed supporting information and scrutinising formally at our meeting and informally in the weeks prior to meeting.
- Its relative simplicity does not mean our discussion and debate will lack rigour or detail; it is a scaffold to facilitate just that.

The key documents shared prior to meeting and supporting and informing this report are listed below.

There is a final strand of the immediate challenges and opportunities in safely running the school day to day that emerged and coalesced as 2016-17 closed the summer played out and 2017-18 began and these are best addressed here and should be a part of our conversation when we meet: there is looking forward strategically and remaining pragmatically focussed on the here and now.

The immediate challenges are:

- The loss of staff in a timescale and contexts where safe and effective recruitment could not and cannot be rushed and it will be the New Year before we can fill gaps and that in turn impacts ever present staff;
- The established trend of challenge and the reassertion of expectation and the rhythms of school life post the long summer holiday made more complex by the induction of new students;
- The innately risky nature of our work and the critical matter of proactive and flexible and innovative working across the team;

In all this governors are establishing a way of working where a breadth and variety of information is shared and they work through it prompted by their roles and interests and then explore and question not only when we meet but via email and informal meetings in the weeks leading to our formal meeting and in practice this on-going perhaps prompted by a visit but often it is just the natural engagement and curiosity and sense of duty in governors and we thank them for that..

Read at 80% across two pages so pertinent SIP and Ofsted descriptors line up adjacent to reporting.

MMc 05.09.17

Effectiveness of leadership and management: current self-evaluation: good

Planned and proactive school improvement activity in 2016-17

1. Both by design and accident the exposure and emergence of new leaders played out positively across the year
2. Governors continued to experience school and explore and test a range of reporting measures and indicators.

The impact of that improvement activity?

1. Emergence of new talented and committed leaders in the operation of the school, in behaviour and in the curriculum and learning and teaching.
2. The governors' understanding of the school and good practice have both broadened and deepened and so their ability to call the senior team to account is sharpened.

The impact of that improvement activity on pupil outcomes?

1. The critical positive climate for learning scaffolded by positive relationships and wider good order and discipline, health and safety and wellbeing of the community all sustained and protected and promoted by strong compassionate "parenting" and these underpin student development as learners and people.
2. The greater accountability and scrutiny stronger governance brings is a kind of advocacy for the children and young people that calls the adults responsible for them to account.

The challenges and obstacles to improvement; threats and opportunities

1. The loss of leaders and emerging leaders for a range of reasons professional and personal threatened to undermine the push for more distributed leadership.
2. The loss of a hugely talented and committed chair, an experienced and deeply valued clerk and a community governor of insight as above threatened to undermine the push for more vigorous and informed governance.

Consequent reactive school improvement activity

1. A healthy bulge in middle leadership talent emerged to fill gaps and a credible confidence and ambition and optimism characterised this talent pool and it was across disciplines and roles.
2. We were able to develop the strong talent within the governing body team and recruit secure new talent.

The impact of that improvement activity?

1. "Leadership" across the team blossomed and new vigorous talent stepped up sustaining and accelerating the planned push for more "leaders".
2. Governance continued to be more canny and robust in its work in challenging and calling the school to account and it also sustained the healthier balance of support the departing chair had initiated and was embedding; the tricky matter of "critical friendship" was being pursued still.

The impact of that improvement activity on pupil outcomes?

1. As described above and made credible by evidence that informs and supports SEF the critical positive climate for learning consolidated and promoted.
2. The mixture of stick and carrot, challenge and support encouraged both accountability and high motivation in senior leaders and the wider team thus benefitting the children and young people.

What next in 2017-18?

1. New leaders whether we call them "middle" or "senior" is arguably irrelevant: it is this emerging ambition and optimism and "can do" culture they personify we want to embed and build on.
2. New governors are accelerated in their exposure to the school and established governors ask incrementally more and tougher questions of the headteacher and senior team

1. **Identified improvement challenges and risks?** Delegating operational leadership and behaviour management has created risks and caused setbacks and will continue to do so but must be persisted with because only by facing and tackling that risk, challenge and adversity can emerging school leaders grow in confidence and effectiveness

Consequent proactive (planned) school improvement activity? We must persist in creating high quality operational leadership capacity and senior colleagues must be further exposed to risk and challenge in order to grow and we must accept we may have to go backwards to go forwards in behaviour management so capacity is authentically secure.

2. **Identified improvement challenges and risks?** Sustaining and consolidating the progress made in governance that could slip or be lost unless we maintain the rigour and enthusiasm that has characterised the new team in 2015-2016. We must be sure they can call us to account incrementally more confidently and robustly.

Consequent proactive (planned) school improvement activity? The matter of developing and embedding governor understanding of and insight into our specialist work through both a frequent “critical-friend” presence in the school and an established timetable for scrutiny with increasing governor awareness of and fluency in the use of all available and potential measures and indicators:

Pertinent Ofsted grade descriptors: the effectiveness of leadership and management; “good”

- Leaders set high expectations of pupils and staff. They lead by example to create a culture of respect and tolerance. The positive relationships between leaders, staff and pupils support the progress of all pupils at the school.
- Leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils and promote improvement effectively. The school’s actions secure improvement in disadvantaged pupils’ progress, which is rising, including in English and mathematics.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of education at the school. This helps them plan, monitor and refine actions to improve all key aspects of the school’s work.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity and diversity, resulting in a positive school culture. Staff and pupils work together to prevent any form of direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour. Leaders, staff and pupils do not tolerate prejudiced behaviour.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and staff take appropriate action to identify pupils who may be at risk of neglect, abuse or sexual exploitation, reporting concerns and supporting the needs of those pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment: current self-evaluation **good**

Planned and proactive school improvement activity in 2016-17

1. The conversation about best practice formal and informal imbued school life and each briefing and debriefing each "best practice session.
2. Personalisation grew and packages diversified.

The impact of that improvement activity?

1. Teaching across the school with one exception was reliably and consistently good and sometimes outstanding.
2. Young people who were disengaged or disengaging were reengaged and this impacted also on their conventional class based learning and the wider climate in the school community.

The impact of that improvement activity on pupil outcomes?

1. In a very large majority pupils experienced orderly and purposeful classrooms and lessons promoting their learning and personal development.
2. Individual youngsters as risk of disengagement and in some cases FTE and or PEX stayed safe, engaged and their disaffection softened and a wide range of accreditation and experiences achieved.

Emerging challenges and obstacles to improvement; threats and opportunities

1. Complex and risky youngsters and combinations of youngsters and their mercurial and enigmatic natures generated on going challenges for the teaching team.
2. Issues of quality assurance and maintaining high standards in learning, behaviour and safeguarding emerged and spiked occasionally but persistently.

Consequent reactive school improvement activity

1. The best teachers reacted with transparency, urgency and creativity seeking solutions and change in them and their practice to promote positive changes in their pupils.
2. The senior colleague leading was relentlessly alert and proactive in challenging and working with providers to ensure clarity established and improvements secured.

The impact of that improvement activity?

1. The school community remained an orderly and purposeful place of learning.
2. Closer working and a harmonisation of expectation and standards the result

The impact of that improvement activity on pupil outcomes?

1. As described above in a very large majority pupils experienced orderly and purposeful classrooms and lessons promoting their learning and personal development.
3. As described above Individual youngsters as risk of disengagement and in some cases FTE and or PEX stayed safe, engaged and their disaffection softened and a wide range of accreditation and experiences achieved.

What next in 2017-18?

1. We have identified it is professional values and characteristics that underpin and drive prove change: we all want to get fit only some if us do and the "conversation" is not about what best practice looks like we have agreed that but why some achieve it and others do not and the former given influence and the latter challenged and supported to do so.
2. AHT leading continues work to QA others working for our children most powerfully securing their safety and that the quality of education is not diluted.

- 1. Identified improvement challenges and risks?** Scrutiny of quality of teaching in the round evidences how in our setting predictably given the shifting, mercurial and complex nature of our students the challenge to good order and the positive climate for learning in each classroom is relentless and established and highly, talented and competent teachers can be undone. The threats of our own passivity and stoicism and student energy outdoing our own are ever present

Consequent proactive (planned) school improvement activity? The collective team imperative then supports those teachers individually at risk and we must continue to focus our energy on the “conversation” about best teaching practice (and imbued in that will be best behaviour management) in all its nuances: how can we do things consistently well, differently and or better? It will require a relentlessly proactive pragmatic/creative response: one as relentless as the risks and challenges the students and student combinations present.

- 2. Identified improvement challenges and risks?** An elite of bright complex and risky young people over time have demonstrated a need to access a different rhythm to their learning and school life or they become disaffected and disengaged and this impacts not only their behaviour and learning but is detrimental to the wider school community: it can lead to exclusion both literal and figurative.

Consequent proactive (planned) school improvement activity? The growing use of alternative provision, personalised packages and vocational learning have proven repeatedly successful and whilst challenging to set up and sustain and maintain high quality their positive and inclusive impact on both individuals and wider community very powerful and necessary.

Pertinent Ofsted grade descriptors: the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; “good”

- Teachers use effective planning to help pupils learn well. Time in lessons is used productively. Pupils focus well on their learning because teachers reinforce expectations for conduct and set clear tasks that challenge pupils.
- Teachers develop, consolidate and deepen pupils’ knowledge, understanding and skills. They give sufficient time for pupils to review what they are learning and to develop further. Teachers identify and support effectively those pupils who start to fall behind and intervene quickly to help them to improve their learning.
- Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan learning that sustains pupils’ interest and challenges their thinking. They use questioning skilfully to probe pupils’ responses and they reshape tasks and explanations so that pupils better understand new concepts. Teachers tackle misconceptions and build on pupils’ strengths.
- Teachers expect and encourage all pupils to work with positive attitudes so that they can apply themselves and make strong progress.
- Most pupils commit to improving their work. They are given time to apply their knowledge and understanding in new ways that stretches their thinking in a wide range of subjects, and to practise key skills.
- Teachers challenge stereotypes and the use of derogatory language in lessons and around the school. Teachers promote equality of opportunity and diversity in teaching and learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare: current self-evaluation: good

Planned and proactive school improvement activity in 2016-17

1. The “conversation” about risk and promoting the welfare and safety of the children and young people privileged every day at daily briefings and debriefings and in our best practice sessions and twilight training.
2. The PSHE curriculum was reviewed rewritten and re-launched.

The impact of that improvement activity?

1. The multiple, complex and diverse risks were managed and made safe
2. The children and young people accessed dedicated lessons in keeping themselves safe.

The impact of that improvement activity on pupil outcomes?

1. As SEF evidence “Seven Days in March” case study describes many individual children and young people were supported and kept safe from a range of sometimes very mundane sometimes very powerful risks.
2. The formal dialogue about for example “gender” reinforces and encourages the on-going and powerful informal conversation and the children and young people better informed

Emerging challenges and obstacles to improvement; threats and opportunities

1. Sometimes chronic and persistent staff absence and losses increased risks by stretching our capacity to be alive to and make them safe.
2. Staff absence that included key figures in delivery of PSHE.

Consequent reactive school improvement activity

1. The core of the team showed great generosity of spirit and resilience in absorbing losses and through diligence and discretionary effort gaps in capacity were filled.
2. Leading and able staff delivered PSHE to ensure content was supported by good relationships and behaviour.

The impact of that improvement activity?

1. As the range of indicators and measures shared in SEF support and evidence the community as a whole and each child at risk kept safe.
2. Ensuring experienced and authoritative staff delivered PSHE ensured quality of conversation about sensitive and complex issues.

The impact of that improvement activity on pupil outcomes?

1. The many children and young people at risk and or risky were supported and kept safe.
2. Pupils explored and discussed challenging subjects in a positive climate ensuring their seriousness and worth promoted and reflection and learning of good quality.

What next in 2017-18?

1. Draft SIP for 2017-18 describes, “ *We all consolidate and protect the rigorous habitual sharing of safeguarding risks generated by and around the children, by their lives, by us, by our systems and ways of working and critically act quickly and intelligently to manage and make those risks safe.*”

- 1. Identified improvement challenges and risks?** Staff reflection and sharing adds to ever present sense we are but must remain super vigilant in and reliably promote and consolidate protecting and safeguarding.

Consequent proactive (planned) school improvement activity? The conversation about known and emerging risks and challenges and best or faulty practice in safeguarding, student welfare and behaviour management is privileged and prominent every day and the team is challenged daily to do things consistently well, better and or differently to meet the constant challenges and risks and any emerging frailties are tackled and the most powerful best practice embedded.

- 2. And we need to do more to help children be autonomously, proactively safe and happy and make others safe and happy?**

Consequent proactive (planned) school improvement activity? Develop in parallel PSHE curriculum and a whole school approach where high quality relationships between students and staff mean the children and young people can be challenged and supported to be autonomously safer.

Pertinent Ofsted grade descriptors: personal development, behaviour and welfare; “good”

- Pupils’ good conduct reflects the school’s efforts to promote high standards. There are marked improvements in behaviour for individuals or groups with particular behavioural needs.
- Parents, staff and pupils have no well-founded concerns about personal development, behaviour and welfare.
- The school’s open culture promotes all aspects of pupils’ welfare. Pupils are safe and feel safe.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day, including at lunchtimes.
- In secondary schools, pupils use impartial careers guidance to make choices about the next stage of their education, employment, self-employment or training.
- Teachers and other adults are quick to tackle the rare use of derogatory or aggressive language and always challenge stereotyping.
- Teachers and other adults promote clear messages about the impact of bullying and prejudiced behaviour on pupils’ well-being. Pupils work well with the school to tackle and prevent the rare occurrences of bullying.

Supporting documents	Pertinence
1. School improvement 2016-17	Did we progress? Did we address the right things? Are we doing the right things next?
2. Draft school improvement 2017-18	Are they the right priorities? What will they look like in more detail? Do we need a sharper focus? Do we need a broader focus?
3. School self-evaluation and all supporting evidence and document	Is it credible? Does the available evidence support it? Does it “triangulate” with governor experience of the school? Is it too optimistic? Is it too pessimistic?
4. Key documents from SEF supporting evidence: behaviour and safety review	From attendance and exclusion to our measures of personal development a range of indicators and measures that evidences how risks are made safe.
5. Key documents from SEF supporting evidence: Leavers in 2017	Did they achieve enough as learners and people? What do their achievements and outcomes tell us about the quality of our work from leadership and management through learning to personal development?
6. Access to all website published documents for example our safeguarding portfolio (www.barleyleane.devon.sch.uk click “about us” section”)	Governors curiosity often leads to these documents for example scrutinising absconding naturally prompts a look at our guidance on its management.