

MINCHINHAMPTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
Focused governor committee visits

Policy and SDP priority links

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| Parent Survey |
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Agreed visit details

| Governor(s) | Activity | Date and time |
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| David Powell (DP) | Headteacher Forum, led by Nick Moss (HT) and Kerry Tonner (DH) 4 parents (P) | 13/07/2022 |

Outcomes, progress, barriers and evidence

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| <p>Note of visit.</p> <p>The forum was provided by NM to follow up parent surveys and a governor parent forum. NM had provided good notice of the meeting, but only four parents attended representing pupils from Y1-Y6. NM covered the key points raised at the parent survey and governor forum. The following notes aim to reflect the conversation that ensued.</p> <p>HT started by tackling concerns raised about ‘behaviour’</p> <p>HT Pupils have always exhibited a range of behaviour challenges, but that what the school was managing now was not this, but ‘emotional dysregulation (ED) as a result of the pandemic.’ The school was engaging in approaches to overcome this.</p> <p>P In some families this would affect parents also.</p> <p>P My children have been challenging at home and I’m also concerned that teachers have to manage this as well as learning. Evidence shows that children suffering the effect of ‘childhood trauma’ can stunt them emotionally & academically.</p> <p>HT Concern that the external bodies that assess school performance locally and nationally haven’t got this issue – only interested in judging schools on academic progress. By next year the school could have 20 EHCP’s, a huge increase. There are more pupils exhibiting Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) and ASD post pandemic. This will have an impact on learning, but we are learning to manage this. However, the school needs to currently prioritise emotional health over academic as children can’t learn if emotionally dysregulated.</p> <p>P Do you have a plan for Sept? I have a concern there’s a perception that naughty children are ‘rewarded’ by leaving the class. Would the school consider engaging with the parent group willing to volunteer to support?</p> <p>HT Removing the dysregulated child allows others access to learn and the child an opportunity to calm. The school is looking to get volunteers back in for reading and other support. This is one strategy amongst many being considered next year.</p> <p>P Would school consider parents as volunteers to support catch-up learning</p> <p>HT Volunteer parents would need to be confident and have skills.</p> <p>DH Our volunteers have been involved with supporting crafts (cooking, sewing, art etc) in past</p> <p>HT In order to manage the emotional dysregulation the school entered a ‘State of emergency’ over the past few months. This has helped us recover. The current setup leaves HT&DH managing much of the ED challenge on a day-to-day basis. This is not sustainable in Sept. A range of strategies will be introduced as the school resets for Sept. I am aiming to introduce a new ‘nurture’ approach and am working with alternative provision partners to give some children opportunities to</p> |
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have settings away from school art times to better meet their needs. The school is also looking to recruit more TA's but HT struggling to recruit.

P Does the school only recruit qualified TA's? School adverts state this? Maybe school could widen field of applications if people with relevant skillsets are sought rather than restricting to qualified?

HT I'd be open to unqualified applicants, but they would need to evidence commitment and relevant skills/competencies.

P Does the school provide any trauma informed training for lunch staff and others?

DH All staff did trauma training after 1st & 2nd lockdowns.

HT Most training has focused on emotional needs, trauma and the wider SEN issues. The school faces challenging funding issues for SEN as a EHCP does not carry funding by default.

P So, in September, my child will be one of 30 pupils with 1 teacher and part-time TA + a number with challenging issues? How will the school provide appropriate learning for him?

HT School has strong pastoral set-up. There will be enough 1:1 + nurture + support from other settings to make this manageable.

HT Huge concern currently re young child access to internet & mobile phones. Even if parents ban this, other pupils come to school sharing graphic and disturbing info well beyond their years.

DH Parental education is key. The school has offered Internet Safety training for parents, but have low parent uptake. Chn at school are provided with esafety sessions. School is aware of Y3's now owning mobile phones!

P So much communication it's difficult to prioritise to decide which mtg's to attend. Communication addressed later in mtg.

P I'm concerned the gap between pupils increased gap coming back from covid, due to those who have & haven't been learning in lockdown. Can the more able be stretched while providing catch-up? Specifically in Maths...

DH Maths structured to 3 levels to ensure all cover the basic learning and more able can move into the higher two levels.

HT This is not to do with Covid, but the new approach to Maths. Children need to consolidate learning, not just race on up the ladder. There is a need to ensure all knowledge & understanding building blocks are in place. School to hold parent sessions to support them in understanding this approach.

Communication challenges

HT affirmed that there are issues with providing clear lines of communication with parents. This has been exacerbated by the office staffing being one down. Communication has become somewhat mixed during the pandemic and he pledged to improve the school's approach over the coming few months.

DP Observed that, as a new governor, the school website is very good at providing a wide range of information to parents and others. The challenge often is how regularly parents visit the website.

Concerns over information from school about how children are progressing.

HT Much evidence demonstrates that homework has a low impact on learning, but school accepts that it does give a window into what your child's doing that week. We recognise that without school set homework, understanding the weekly class activity is difficult. He asked parents to offer thoughts.

P The termly curriculum map termly was useful. Is this still being offered? A parent also finds that Tapestry helps provide an insight. Parents present find MyMaths v flexible and useful. There was a request that the school considered stretching it down to Y1.

DH also reminded all of Spelling Shed. HT & DH agreed to remind all staff to signpost this.

P I accept there is a clear difference of opinion on the school's homework. I choose not to engage with academic activity after school but offer my child broader opportunities.

DH The school is concerned that some approaches in setting homework will further widen the gap between families that can and those that struggle.

P Agreed, the school signposts so much choice should parents want to do homework.

DH Yes, the school signposts, but we have not been inclined to provide and follow-up/mark. No proof that this is an effective use of teacher time.

P I agree, signposting is helpful, but I suggest school leaves parents with the choice as to how much learning they do at home.

P Y7 will be a big shock, but it'll be for parents and secondary school to be responsible to prepare children for this transition.

Understanding issues around the quality of info provided at parent evenings.

HT Keen to explore this issue further, but time running out at this forum. School is open to exploring ways to help parents secure the understanding of how their child is performing. The school will resist the 'where's my child in the class?' question.

P I'd like a more informed idea as to where my child is sits with her learning, and how best to support her as a learner?

P As a parent, I always assume 'no news is good news' Teacher explains where child needs to focus and how school and parent can work as partners in taking issues forward.

HT We will go away think on this issue further. You want children with right learning mindset. We use standardised tests that allow us to identify individual performance against national norms. We don't share this generally with parents, but will draw individual parents attention to the evidence it provides if we feel it beneficial to help child move forward. The school philosophy is that you can't run education system that ends up with winners & losers.

DP Governors, including the school's parent governors, have oversight of all standardised testing and other assessments. No individuals identified, but we understand progress of classes, groups & cohorts.

P This is reassuring to know.

The meeting closed at 4.30

Implications for governing body

- This was only a small sample of parents, but the conversation was of a high quality and helped the school and parents move forward on the issues the Head had identified from the other survey activity.
- It is worth considering if governors can be involved in the range of training opportunities the school provides to counter the emotional dysregulation and the wider SEN challenges. Perhaps we could attend some of the staff training sessions.
- Governors may wish to consider how they can reach out to ensure that more parent voice is heard over the coming year.