

Minutes of the Morley Memorial Learning Committee

4 February 2016

Attendance: Anna Robinson (AR)
 Nikki Brown (Head)
 Nicky Odgers (NO) (Chair)
 Melissa Ward (MW)
 Ruth Kershner (RK)
 Shareta Passingham (SP)
 Emma Linney (EL) (Clerk)

Apologies: Marc Neesam (MN)

Venue: School

	Notes	Actions
1.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Marc Neesam (Mark submitted a number of questions in advance of the meeting which were used to inform the discussion).</p> <p>Shareta Passingham, new parent governor, was welcomed to the Committee.</p>	
2.	<p>Notice of AOB</p> <p>None.</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>None.</p>	
4.	<p>Minutes of the last meeting, 5 October 2015 (circulated) and matters arising</p> <p><u>Guidance on anonymised data (item 5, pp.3):</u> RK agreed to look into this further.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the chair.</p>	<p>RK – pick up on how to look in detail at data without identifying individual children.</p>

	Notes	Actions
		Clerk – upload minutes to school website.
5.	<p>Data Autumn term 2015 (circulated)</p> <p><u>Reception</u> MW introduced the Reception data for the autumn term and circulated a useful summary of the new baseline assessment. She noted that this year’s assessment was a pilot, and that the data would not be used to track children’s progress or attainment through to Y6. It was noted that 62% of children achieved ‘typical’ scores compared with the national average of 37%. This was not unexpected as children usually start at Morley with a high entry point. MW advised that children who scored low levels of well-being and involvement would be targeted with additional intervention and differentiated activities throughout the year in order to ensure that they demonstrate a good level of development in July.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the baseline assessment and how it would work in practice, particularly for children who arrive at the school mid-year.</p> <p>A GB asked why scores for PSD appeared to be low. MW: This had been the case at other schools in the pilot and was due to the requirement to answer ‘yes or no’ to statements, rather than to broadly agree that a child had fulfilled each criteria.</p> <p>MW provided information about the different ways children in EY were assessed.</p> <p><u>Key Stage 1 and 2</u> The Head gave an overview of the autumn term progress and attainment data and the new no-levels approach. This was the first data compiled by teachers under the new national curriculum, and the new national benchmarking standards had only been received this week. She advised caution in reading the data given all the changes, and felt that it was not yet reliable as teachers were not yet secure or confident in their assessment of children against the new NC. Given this, NB advised there was limited value in scrutinising the no-levels data.</p>	

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	<p>A GB asked how best to help teachers’ judgements of banding become more reliable. Head: Lots of systems were already in place including cross year-group moderation, work scrutiny, and additional time for lesson planning. She noted that the previous NC had been in place for over 15 years and that it would take time, effort and energy for teachers to get up to speed on the new one. This was a daunting prospect and a difficult time for schools.</p> <p>The Head also talked about how children now have to meet all statements in order to achieve age related expectations (ARE), unlike the previous best-fit approach. GBs should therefore expect to see progress and attainment in writing in particular drop due to children’s spelling and handwriting. GBs understood this and agreed that it was important to be ready for this at the end of the year and to find ways to ensure children and staff were not demoralised.</p> <p><u>Reading</u> Given the seemingly low scores for reading in KS2, and concern about the reliability and robustness of the TT data, the Head felt it appropriate for all KS2 children to sit the New Group Reading Test (NGRT), an independent reading screening test, as a way to benchmark the autumn term data and assess whether there were specific children who would benefit from intervention. The Test gives an individual reading age, reading score and percentile score. The Head was pleased to report that the results showed no cause for concern in any year group.</p> <p>A GB asked whether the school was starting to build a database of the TT assessment statements and what they meant in practice. Head: Confirmed that this was the case, initially in reading, writing and maths. However, there was concern that if the framework doesn’t match the KS2 statutory tests, the school’s internal assessment results would not meet the national ones. She advised that the priority of teachers was still to focus on teaching and learning in the classroom, and not on assessment and data. The Committee welcomed this.</p> <p><u>Learning walk</u> The Head took the Committee on a walk through a number of KS1 and 2 classrooms to look at the learning environment, an identified priority in the SDP. The Head reported that at the recent Keeping In Touch (KIT) visit from the local authority advisor, staff had been praised for the very high quality of the learning</p>	

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	<p>environment. The advisor had praised the quality and presentation of the children’s books, and the obvious pride children took in their work. The Committee asked the Head to pass on its thanks to teachers.</p> <p>A GB asked what impact the new NC and banding was having on staff, particularly in relation to performance management. Head: work scrutiny was being used along side data and learning objectives to ensure fairness.</p> <p>A GB asked how the school would be tracking trends, e.g. progress of boys compared with girls, given the unreliability of the data. Head: Admitted that until the data was more robust, trends were difficult to track. The SLT was however finding other ways to support analysis, for example the next work scrutiny would be looking at books of PP children. The Committee asked the Head, where possible, to report differences between different groups to enable the GB to see trends more easily. (e.g. to show the gap between attainment of PP and non-PP children, or the gap between boys and girls etc).</p> <p>A GB asked if standardised tests were available under the new banding system. Head: Felt that these were not yet robust or reliable. Among other things, teachers were using abacus (termly assessments) and statutory word lists to monitor children’s learning and understanding in spelling</p> <p>A GB asked how best to show appreciation of teachers and recognition of their hard work. Head: Felt that teachers see the GB as having a mostly ‘monitoring’ role and that a simple gesture following the learning walk would be appreciate.</p>	
6.	<p>Policy reviews: Home Learning (new) (circulated)</p> <p>The Head introduced the new policy, which was drafted in collaboration with teachers and partially in response to requests from parents for clarification on home learning at school. The Head felt that the policy was sufficiently open ended to allow year group teachers the flexibility to assign home learning where appropriate.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the value and aim of home working, and the difference between weekly home learning and long-term projects. The Committee agreed with the Head that the latter was an important way of giving children choice and independence.</p>	

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	<p>The Committee agreed the policy and would review it again in 3 years.</p>	<p>Clerk: Upload policy to school website</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>SEN visit report, Autumn 2015 (circulated)</p> <p>RK highlighted key points to her report. The Committee agreed to discuss the issues in more detail at the next meeting, with particular focus on how the new SEN/D code of practice was being implemented within school and how the school could meet the challenges of limited support from the local authority. It was also felt that the Resources Committee should consider the impact of decreases in funding as part of its budget setting discussions this term.</p> <p>The Head advised that she had recently advertised for a new assistant head post with responsibility for inclusion, which would ease the burden on Kerry (Deputy Head).</p>	<p>Head – raise SEN/D funding issue with Resources Committee.\</p> <p>Carry forward SEN/D discussion to next meeting.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Creative Curriculum (paper circulated)</p> <p>Discussion focused on what a “creative curriculum” would look like at Morley, what challenges the school face in achieving the goals and what broad approach the school would like to adopt to achieve these goals. NB described her vision of establishing a physical environment which stimulated the imagination, clarifying with staff what the expectations were for being “creative” and developing the teaching of arts subjects. Challenges are around staff recruitment and retention which impact on the ability of the school to implement plans, and the amount of time staff are currently having to devote to getting to grips with new assessment procedures and planning the new curriculum. Broad approaches to deliver the “creative curriculum” are a plan to and recruit more specialist teachers to deliver arts subjects and possibly trying to achieve recognised awards such as Arts Mark which would provide teachers with a clear and robust framework to follow.</p> <p>It was agreed that more work was required to unpick what the school’s wider vision statement meant and how its goals could be measured, and that focus should be given to this across the GB over the coming 12 months.</p>	

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	Furthermore, the Head advised that she was currently consulting staff on the Teaching and Learning policy and that this would provide further clarity to teachers and parents.	
9.	Date of next meeting: 16 June 2016	
	The meeting opened at 7.30pm and closed at 9.30pm	

All decisions pay due regard to the school's equality policy and the Equality Act 2010

Abbreviations: SL – Subject Leader, LA – Local Authority, A GB – A governor, The GB – The Governing Body, TT – target tracker, RAP – Raising Achievement Plan, YR – Reception, SEN/D – special educational needs and disabilities, FSM – free school meals, EAL – English as an additional language, PP – Pupil Premium, GLD – Good Level of Development. (Early Years). SPAG – spelling and grammar, TA – teaching assistant, NAHT – National Association of Head Teachers, ARE – age related expectations, KIT – Keeping In Touch.