

Governor's Newsletter
Summer Term 2015

At the last meeting of the year, the school's senior leadership team (Mark, Michelle, Melanie, Rob, Kathryn and Katie) joined us to present their assessment of how well the school had met its eight priorities for the year. Below is a brief summary of what was discussed.

- 1. *Children eligible for Pupil Premium/identified as vulnerable make good progress towards their end of year targets in reading, writing and maths.***
- 2. *Children who are below national expectations in maths make good progress towards their end of year targets.***

The school's success in these first 2 priorities is a mixed picture and targets have only been partially met. For pupil premium children, there was some good progress in KS1 (Years 1 & 2) but less consistent evidence of this in all subjects in KS2 (Years 3, 4, 5 & 6). Again, progress towards targets in maths was achieved more consistently at KS1 than KS2.

As the Learning and Achievement report below highlights, the introduction of a new assessment system and a significant hike in expected standards have made this a very challenging year for all schools. Target setting was hard to do accurately and the raised standards have impacted pupil premium results in particular. Despite the uneven data, the governing body recognises how hard the school has worked this year to improve outcomes for these particular groups of children. There will be more in-depth scrutiny of the results early next term when more detailed progress data becomes available. Pupil premium progress will remain a priority next year.

- 3. *In line with our vision and values, to develop children's resilience, risk taking and perseverance***

It was agreed the school's work with Building Learning Power (BLP) had started well with evidence of a whole school emphasis on resilience, risk taking and perseverance through use of language by teachers, assemblies, themes in FAB projects etc. The school ran well attended sessions for parents and reported seeing the impact in of their work in attitudes and in the learning environment.

- 4. *Adopt new assessment and tracking procedures to support good progress across the school***

As mentioned above, getting a new assessment system in place has been challenging. Information was often not available until late in the year and there was some confusion about expectations. The school has devoted a huge amount of time into getting it in place and by year end the priority has been met. The school is confident that staff are now well positioned and more confident in using the system and in having an agreed understanding of the expectations. It may require further adjustments in response to changes from government next year.

- 5. *Implement recommendations arising from the support staff consultation***

This priority was well met. Last year the school consulted with support staff to produce a raft of recommendations to make better use of their skills and experience and to improve morale. This year, support staff had performance management meetings, observations, ongoing professional development and regular meetings with senior leaders to share ideas and concerns. The working party met again at the end of the year to assess the progress and make further recommendations for next year.

6. Continue to embed the role of phase leaders through weekly planning sessions, teaching and lesson study

This is the second year of the new phase leader structure and it has successfully embedded further this year. Phase leaders have provided class teachers with lesson planning support, lesson study, in class teaching and behaviour support. Senior leaders report a much closer connection with pupils, better knowledge of their progress and improved professional dialogue with teachers and support staff in their phases.

7. Embed a culture of Rights Respecting Behaviour as part of our whole school ethos

This priority was well met as evidenced by the ongoing efforts to integrate the language and behaviours of Rights Respecting schools in lessons and assemblies and with the introduction of new charters. A recent safeguarding and behaviour review, carried out by the local authority, positively referenced the school's work in this area.

8. Develop and improve transition arrangements across the school

This priority was well met. Much effort was spent preparing Y6 children for the move to secondary and Y6 behaviour in the summer term, which can often be quite unsettled, was much improved on last year. There were also improvements in transition arrangements for vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs. The school has also focused on transition between KS1 and KS2, with Y2 children spending time in the junior playground to get them ready for the change next term.

Next year's priorities continued to be refined but are likely to include a continued focus on pupil premium progress, developing collaboration skills, meeting the financial challenges ahead, supporting staff well - being, developing the behaviour policy and, in line with our vision and values, promoting kindness, empathy and respect.

The governing body would like to thank the staff for putting so much hard work into this year's priorities and in meeting them so well. This has been a particular difficult year for all schools and we are indebted to the professionalism and talent of our staff.

Each of the committees met twice this term and below are a summary of their reports. .

Learning and Achievement Committee (LAC, Chair Mike Yule)

This is traditionally the time when the Learning and Achievement Committee considers the EYFS, KS1 and 2 SATS results. This is the first year under the new provisions laid down by the Department for Education and the results as follows:

KS2:

	Reading	Writing	SPAG	Maths	Combined
National	66%	74%	72%	70%	53%
Brookfield	75%	74%	74%	79%	63%

KS1 (Provisional)

	Reading	Writing	Maths	Combined
Camden	75%	66%	74%	63%
Brookfield	86%	70%	80%	66%

EYFS: 63% of children attained a 'good', compared to 66% of children across Camden. The school's slightly lower than borough average result masks the fact that in the 17 learning goals, Brookfield EFYS significantly improved on last year's results. The school scored very highly in most areas (most were in the 90s) but only 63% reached the expected standard for writing. In order to get an overall 'good' each child has to meet the expected standard in all areas so the writing depressed the overall result. Without losing sight of the need for the children to experience a broad curriculum, reading and writing will be an area of focus next year.

LAC has been involved in monitoring the way the school has had to adapt to the new curriculum and assessment provisions, brought in by the current administration under very difficult conditions. It is important to acknowledge the following:

- This year's KS2 tests are new, entirely replacing a 20 year old system.
- They have not been used or reported before.
- They test pupils on their knowledge of a four year long curriculum that they have only been taught for two years.
- The expected standard is clearly higher than ever before
- The government has already stated that the results should not be compared with those of previous years.

This means that it is very difficult to assess with any accuracy the progress that our Y6 pupils have made although we are assured that teachers' assessments are well founded, given that we have benefited from outside moderation which validates our own findings. This is true at all levels of the school. Although the full national and Camden picture has not yet been revealed, it is clear that Brookfield pupils have still outperformed their counterparts nationally across the range of core subjects at both KS1 and 2. Children in KS1 have excelled themselves. We will continue to examine the data relating to different cohorts and determine which areas of our provision needs to be tweaked. Tremendous credit is due to the staff for implementing the new curriculum in the context of uncertainty and at times contradictory advice and materials coming out of the Department of Education.

LAC has also heard from Katherine the SENCo, who has outlined the long term ambition for the school to close the attainment gap between children with SEND and those without. This highly ambitious project will herald a new approach, building on the best practice that we have been employing to date and ensuring that expertise is disseminated throughout the staff, so that the responsibility for SEND provision is shared more effectively.

LAC also considers in detail the parents' and teachers' questionnaires and ensures that the school responds openly and promptly to the issues raised. It was noted that there was a slight downturn in responses this year and the Committee is always open to new ideas as to how to increase the response rates.

We engage in a number of learning walks throughout the year to allow us to see first-hand what's going on in lessons. This term we saw a variety of Science lessons in both Key stages. Carla, the Science lead, confirmed that the school receives comprehensive support from the local authority for its Science provision and we were impressed with the hands on nature of the Science activities and the thought that has gone into calibrating pupils' progression in their learning.

We also considered a report from Rob on the FAB projects from this year which have been deemed to have been a successful combination of inclusive process and delightful outcomes. There is a very exciting project for the coming year which we anticipate will be hugely enjoyable.

As ever, an enormous thanks to Mark and the team for their patience, hard work and comprehensive reports.

Personnel, Salaries and Wellbeing Committee (PSWB, Chair Joanna Cooke)

This term has been a busy one for PSWB (I am starting to realise they all are). While last term it was the EYFS and Safeguarding policies that got reviewed, this term it was the turn of the all-important Pay Policy. Luckily we have a governor on PSWB, Jessica Learmont-Crique, who works in employment law and she was able to lead this work.

Post-pay policy, much of PSWB's time this term has been spent discussing staffing for 2016/17. These discussions have been fruitful and PSWB feel confident that the school have a strong staff group who are well positioned across the school for the coming year. Inevitably a few members of staff resigned this year. PSWB carries out exit interviews with those staff to find out about their reasons for leaving the school and to understand how they felt about their time at Brookfield; any emerging themes from these interviews are then fed back to the school's senior leadership team.

Next term PSWB will work to establish some agreed behaviour principles for Brookfield (there are obviously frameworks already in place but the feeling is these could be updated, unified across the school and thereby strengthened). This will involve a review of all current systems of both sanctions and rewards.

Finance Committee (Chair Fiona Miller-Smith)

This term the finance committee has been focused on assessing the three year budget for the school, especially in light of the potentially quite difficult forecast funding environment. Alongside this, we have been looking at how we can increase other sources of income whether through fundraising or applying for grants to fund specific projects in the school. One new initiative is the PTA's 'My Donate' online page which enables gift aided donations to the school.

<https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/brookfieldschoolassociation>

Premises Committee (Chair Stephen Kapos)

This term the committee has focused on completing the new SEND room – a quiet room where pupils with special educational needs can go for time out or for interventions. Good progress has been made and we expect it to be finished in September.

Also, the new KS2 playground shed has been completed, and a new table tennis table and climbing wall is on order. At no cost to the school, Camden will be installing solar panels on the school roof over the summer break.

We are also delighted to report that the result of last term's exhaustive Health & Safety audit carried out by the school was upgraded to an Outstanding – with particular thanks to Cee and Derek for this.

Governor Drop In (Chair Yvette Mahon)

This term's Governor Drop-in was held on Friday July 9th 2016. Topics raised included -
A request for a simplified version of the emailed newsletter
Concerns about quantity of homework and inconsistency of marking
A plea for better communication between the PTA and the school to enable more focused fundraising

A request that the school consider staggered drop-off and pick-up times between KS1 and KS2 playgrounds

Concern that the school communicates clearly to parents the basis upon which children are 'selected' to attend activities run by our local private schools

A request that the school consider a mid-Autumn term parent-teacher meeting

Concern about adequate supervision in the playground particularly around use of Peggy's ship

Some of you will know we have also been pursuing an investigation into the viability of the school providing Halal meals twice a week. This process has proved more difficult than you might imagine and we apologise profusely for the long delay in responding to concerned parents. We are currently still waiting on Camden for their revised recommendations (due imminently) and will also - now our kitchens have been assessed for suitability - be reviewing cost implications. We will feed back to parents as soon as we are able.

These Governor Drop-in sessions are always a useful way of ensuring the school gets to hear your concerns and responds. Please see the relevant section of the website for more detailed minutes and school responses. We very much look forward to seeing and hearing you at the next Governor Drop-in in the Autumn term of the new school year.

Finally

We want to thank all those who have volunteered their time and talents to the school this term. In particular we would like to thank the PTA and chairs Sonia and Charlie and treasurer Philip who have orchestrated some fantastic school events this year culminating in the amazing summer fair.

A huge thank you to Mark and all the staff who continue to provide a rich diet of events for the children. This term's included an amazing healthy science week, a breathtakingly energized and accomplished Y6 Roald Dahl production, some great Sports Days and countless cultural trips and visits.

And thank you to all the children and their families for making the Brookfield community such a great one.

We hope you all have a fantastic summer break.

Best wishes

Governing Body

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July 2016

To find out more about the Governing Body please go to the school's website where full Governing Body minutes can be viewed. If you have any comments or suggestions or want to know more about the work we do, we can be contacted by email at the address above or drop us a note at the office.