Governor Monitoring Visit

9th December 2021

Disadvantaged/Pupil Premium

Present: Julian Beard (JB)

 Katharine Boulton (KB)

 David Churchill (DC)

 Jane Swettenham (JS)

The focus of this monitoring visit was disadvantaged/pupil premium to include the school’s new three year pupil premium strategy.

!. Introduction

Governors met with Carole Herman (CJH) and Jane Martin (JMA) who is leading on PP following the retirement of Jenny Comerford. Governors would have the opportunity to speak to those staff involved in this aspect of the school’s work. These are the staff who are leading the delivery of the school’s PP strategy. A revised PP strategy has been put together. This is a three year plan. This first year will see how the new strategy is working in practice. Data will be produced on a half termly basis and so the strategy will evolve as we go along.

2. Meeting with Mairead Hogan (MH) and Jane Martin (JMA)

DC and JS met with MH and JMA. MH is the school’s disadvantaged champion and PP support. MH has been in the role for four years. MH meets with PP students in form time and mentors them. She personally meets all year 10 PP students and some Year 11. She is now starting to meet year 8s. Students are provided with a PP passport which governors were shown examples of. This details what a student is good at and identifies what are the barriers to learning. It includes targets such as improving English and records the strategies they find helpful in the classroom. The PP passport is attached to SIMs so all teachers have access to it. EHCP numbers have increased due to the pandemic. PP students have been particularly disadvantaged by the pandemic. There is a PP link in each department. MH highlighted that students missed in person teaching during periods that the school was closed and this negatively impacted well- being and progress.

MH updated governors on Club 100 which has been running for 4 years. Students receive extra support which is delivered during PE lessons. However, there are challenges with engagement and securing parental support. It has to be a compromise. There has been some degree of parental pushback as the support was delivered during PE lessons students. These students have issues with literacy and therefore difficulties accessing the curriculum. It is important that these children are in school. Parents were highlighting well-being issues if they missed PE. The school did not want their attendance being affected. So, a compromise was reached so that the children concerned miss one PE lesson and one form time rather than two PE lessons.

Some PP students do not always engage with what the school is trying to do to support them. However, there are considerable successes. Thinking Reading is an excellent programme. MH provided governors with one example of the positive impact this programme is having on individual students. One student had made remarkable progress and this in turn has had a positive impact on their engagement and behaviour. They can now successfully access their lessons. Early careers interviews are provided in May/June of year 10. It is about establishing what the individual student is aiming for. They are encouraged to pick a target for what they should do next. They are supported with things like books and equipment and exam papers.

Governors were provided with details of the comprehensive testing that is conducted to determine which students need support. The first test (Star Reading) is not particularly accurate and further testing leads to a reduction in the numbers that need support. The whole year group cohort is tested to see where the issues are. The second test refines the data and is a better indication of need. The final Probe test produces the final numbers of which students need support.

MH’s role is not behaviour that is pastoral’s role. MH is an academic mentor. Students are encouraged to keep up with PREP but this can sometimes be a challenge. Some year 10s have one to one tuition which they respond to very positively. It is important that information from MH is disseminated to staff which is done via SIMs/Edu link, so this will impact on what staff do in the classroom. It is important that staff can easily identify who is PP or who is SEN and then teachers can access MH’s link documents. Edu link is proving better than Go4schools. Lesson observations take place and will look at how staff recognise PP students. These are carried out jointly by Heads of Department and members of SLT. JMA confirmed there is an open door policy on drop ins. Formal observations are pre- arranged.

As to numbers:

 22.8% of year 7 are PP which is 56 students.

 16.7% in year 8

15.8% in year 9

14.6% in year 10

11.6% in year 11

Sarah Fraser (SF) provides 1 to 1 tutoring in literacy. SF likes to do a full term with students. SF works closely with staff and BC. MH meets the potential tutees and their parents to determine if this approach is likely to work. Attitude to learning is key here. Students are chosen that will engage with the support. It has proved popular and effective but is expensive. Three students who took part went up 10-15%. Recent examples include two students who are now meeting expectations and two exceeding. It has a positive impact on engagement and attitude in lessons. Currently 7 year 10 students are receiving one to one tuition. Dc and JS thanked MH for her time and for providing governors with an insight into her work with PP students.

MH runs a PREP club for year 8 students. The focus is on PP students and is designed to see what PREP they are missing and support them. Numbers vary usually between 12-16 students at each session. A young carer is one of the attendees. Both JMA and RD visit to provide support. They use Hegarty Maths and Bedrock during these sessions. Students are provided with refreshments. There are 3 sixth form helpers. There is a positive atmosphere and the aim is to encourage. The students are awarded C points for attendance. JMA is the SLT link for Year 8. The intention is to roll this initiative out to year 9.

Year 11 take part in inspiration sessions. Refreshments are provided and numbers are good. The focus is on a core subject each week for example Maths, English, Chemistry, Biology and Physics. The purpose is to inspire the students to revise. Good grades will provide students with more options post 16. Every PP student has a careers interview. Form tutors speak to higher ability PP students. After the year 11 conference MH will look at their current grades and where the PP students sit within the year group. They have an action plan which MH goes through with them individually. SHS use an external careers advisor which is useful. The Value Added for the 6th form is excellent. JS asked JMA if it was possible for governors to be given details of where PP progress to both post 16 and 18. JMA would look into providing a breakdown.

DC and JS thanked MH for her time and for providing governors with an insight into her work with PP students.

3. Catch up Numeracy

JB and KB met with Maggie Howells (MH) to discuss the school’s Catch up Numeracy Programme.

4. Visit to Thinking Reading and Corrective Reading

All governors met with staff and students to observe the school’s Thinking Reading /Corrective Reading Programme.

5. Meeting with Richard Drew (RD) Assistant Headteacher Assessment

All governors met with RD.

6. Meeting with Ben Clifford (BC) Assistant Headteacher English/Literacy

Governors then met BC to discuss the wide range of literacy interventions the school has put in place including Bedrock Vocabulary and Future writers and to receive an assessment of their impact.

7. Meeting with Tony Taylor Assistant (AT) Headteacher Inclusion and SenCo

All governors met with AT to discuss the school’s Thinking Reading and Catch up Numeracy programmes and their impact on progress and engagement. AT also provided governors with details of his secondment with the Essex Taskforce.

8. Feedback to CJH and JMA

Governors thanked CJH for the comprehensive programme staff had put together for our benefit. It had been interesting to see students benefiting from the Thinking Reading Programme in practice and for governors to have the opportunity to speak to students again. The work being done by MH reinforces the significant level of support in place for PP students and shows the positive impact that support is having in helping our most vulnerable students. Governors were impressed with the wide range of strategies that the school was using beyond the Thinking Reading Programme to drive improvements in literacy, the key to accessing the curriculum. Governors noted that support for numeracy is being actively developed but is not as advanced as the literacy strategies. The involvement of CJH in the Essex Taskforce and the secondment of TT shows that SHS expertise in this area is highly regarded within Essex and positive to see the school sharing its expertise.