



AVANTI HOUSE

**AVANTI HOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**MEETING OF THE**

**SCHOOL STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE**

**At Avanti House Primary School on 12 March 2019**

**Chair: Bhavana Chauhan**

In Attendance	Bhavana Chauhan - Chair Shriti Pandya – Principal Nina Patel – Trust appointed Sharla Gorsia - Parent member Shruti Bhimjiyari – Parent member Hari Patel – Parent member Riju Kapoor – Staff member
Also in attendance	Ben Smart – Maths Lead – KS2 Rupesh Hirani – Maths Lead KS1
Apologies	None
Absences	None

**RESOLUTIONS\***

SSC 3	Minutes of the SSC meeting of the 12 December 2018 were approved by the SSC members and signed by the Chair

\*All resolutions are unanimous unless otherwise stated)

**Actions arising from the meeting of 12 March 2019**

Ref	Action	Lead	Status
6.1	SP to circulate the reports from the SSC members who visit the School prior to the next SSC meeting.	SP	Pending
6.2	JB to make further enquiries about formal training for SSC members.	JB	Pending
7.1	SP once she receives a response from the MP circulate to SSC members for consideration of further steps for parent involvement in road safety concerns.	SP	Pending

7.2	SP to put further information about complaints' procedures a flow diagram to make it clear where complaints should start and their subsequent progression on the school website so that parents have a clear picture of what steps they should take and in what order.	SP	Pending
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#### **Actions arising from the SSC meeting of 12 December 2018**

Ref	Action	Lead	Status
3.1	JB will check whether the Trust require any formal induction for SSC members	JB	Pending
6	SP to arrange for half Termly curriculum to be sent out to parents with a reminder on the website	SP	Completed
7	BC to circulate date for coordinated SSC members visit to AHPS	BC	Completed

#### **GENERAL MINUTES**

##### **1. Opening Formalities**

###### **1.1 Welcome**

BC formally opened the meeting at 6.10 and welcomed all members and the Maths leads attending.

###### **1.2 Apologies**

No apologies or absences noted.

##### **2. Declarations of Interest/Conflict**

No declarations of interest in the items on the Agenda were made and no changes to existing Declarations/Register of Business were put forward.

##### **3. Minutes**

No matters were raised from the Minutes of the meeting on 12 December 2018. Therefore, the Minutes were formally approved and signed by BC.

##### **4. Principal's Report**

SP presented the Principal's Report which had previously been circulated and asked if the SSC had any questions arising from the report.

BC asked for clarification about the staff attendance table.

SP explained that there were 279 sessions of sickness absence of which 9 half days were possibly for visits to the GP or dentist. She said that although it did seem quite high but as outlined in the Principal's report, there were issues with two teachers, one of whom had been on long term sick leave and another who had also had two blocks of long term sickness. She said that these had been added to the figures but that would mean that they should be reduced next term.

BC asked whether there were support mechanisms in place to phase the teachers back into work.

SP confirmed that one teacher is now back full time and she has undertaken the "back to work" interview and all is well. The second teacher is in the second spell of sick leave and the matter is being addressed by HR.

BC asked if the teacher's second reason for leave was for the same reasons as the first.

SP confirmed that this was the case.

SG asked if this report was done on a Termly basis as it is good to be able to see the data against previous terms and establish a bench mark which was generally agreed to be good practise.

SP explained that the absences are monitored against the sickness policy. She has had informal meetings with the teacher and if the matter continues, they will meet with HR. As the procedure is quite complex, it is HR ensures that correct procedure is followed.

SB said that without the long term sick leave was taken out of the equation, the absences were quite reasonable.

HP asked about the Sports Premium funding and swimming. (Section 5 of Principal's Report)

SP explained that the school has to participate in swimming as part of the new PE curriculum. At the end of Year 6 the school has to publish how many pupils have met expected targets. She confirmed that all was in place for swimming lessons to commence on 25 March for Years 5 and 6. The pool and transport have both been booked for a thirteen week blocks.

SB asked if this was mandatory.

SP said that it is not for a specific year but the requirement was that figures were to be published by the end of Year 6, so this year Years 5 and 6 will have lessons and next year years 3 and 4 so that if any children are struggling to meet the levels, they can be supported in Year 6.

BC asked if there had been any notification of an OFSTED report.

SP said that it would possibly be next year. When the schools demerged, AHPS was considered a new school and allocated a new URN. As the school started in 2017, they are given time to settle in so would expect a visit next year.

No further questions were raised.

## **5. School Improvement Plan**

### **5.1 School Improvement Plan.**

SP explained that this is included within the Principal's report but the School's maths leads have attended the meeting to talk about their contribution to the development of the maths curriculum and to expand on the reference to the Lead in Harrow in the Principal's Report (Effectiveness of Leadership and Management.)

### **5.2 Maths Leaders**

Rupesh Hirani (RH) and Ben Smart (BS) attended the meeting.

RH began and explained that there had been a strategic decision made to have school improvement in from Harrow to provide a pair of external eyes for verification of what they were doing was correct and for assistance in what was required for improvement. The Harrow Lead who attended was Debbie Cummings who has a long history in educational improvement and as an NQT lead.

RH talked about the work with KS1. The Harrow Lead's assessment was carried out with observation of the lessons taught with himself and BS especially in the area of Maths Mastery. Teachers had asked why reasoning was taught at such a young age. The reason is that a decision was taken to follow the White Rose method of teaching which has an international basis and by inviting the Harrow Lead in meant that a check could be made that we were following the scheme correctly. She was able to provide validation and also points of improvement. Therefore, when CPD training is given on inset days, the correct training is provided.

He continued that they wanted to ensure that the staff work effective and are working Smart with resources brought in to assist and improve problem solving and reasoning even from Year 1. They have also had workshops with teachers from other schools in Harrow to discuss different ideas and approaches at cluster meetings with and he felt that they are clear in their way forward. This also means that it is easier to prepare the children for KS2 and to provide the best education for the children.

He continued that for the Staff CPD, again, meeting up with teachers from other schools mean that if other teachers or we have questions as to an approach, we can discuss and visit each other's schools. He said that he is confident that having had external confirmation that although there are different ways to teach, the way that the school is approaching the work is best for the children and the paperwork that is held confirms the work undertaken on this to date.

He also said that although their CPD does help, they have also been on other external courses to further build their knowledge and cascade to other teachers and where parents ask questions, especially about how they can help, they can be directed to the information which is on the website. There is also written feedback from parents saying that the approach followed is what they want.

He pointed out that the KS1 data shows that the children are working at greater depth and this arises out of reasoning being taught.

BC asked how long the White Rose scheme had been in use at the school.

RH replied that it started in September and is now used across the school. He continued that their action plan was that the whole school will be taught reasoning and problem solving.

BC asked if a jump on performance can be seen since September.

BS replied that he had been at the school for 3 ½ years and at first taught the Busy Ant maths approach which was OK and covered the curriculum but when looking at the children's books a lack of consistency could be seen and Bhavana queried what was happening. Therefore, a decision was taken to change the approach and instead of just doing calculations, to use reasoning, to ask "why?" They are now using the CPA approach which uses physical ways such as counters to do maths then moving on to a pictorial version and then an abstract approach. KS1 started last year but KS2 had not yet. However, he wants all the children doing the same thing. He said that if you walk into an English lesson everyone is doing the same thing. Therefore, the White Rose has been introduced to showing reasoning at work. He understands that all the teachers have taken to the approach. He explained that when Debbie had come to the school she had observed his lesson and could see the building blocks of the lesson without having to see the lesson plan. This was because his lesson followed the White Rose approach. Moving forward they have talked about how to teach to marking and feedback. The policy refers to "Oral Marking" but this is open to interpretation in maths. Therefore, he believes that it is more important to give feedback in maths. This is because in English, there are a lot of opportunities to repeat a lesson – such as punctuation in writing but in maths, if a child does not know their number bonds, they will struggle as they progress. Therefore, they follow four stages for the children to check their work and only after they have done all four can they then seek help from the teacher:

1. Check using pictorial or other resources.
2. Speak to their peers
3. Use a calculator
4. Use an answer sheet.

If the children are set 6 questions and they get 4 wrong and cannot work out why even after following all four steps above, then it is time for a teacher to become involved. He confirmed that by using this policy the children will be able to work at a greater depth more quickly. The White Rose approach allows this. It sets out small steps that lead to working at greater depth. If a child has questions they can work on them using their own reasoning skills. He had looked at the Year 3 teachers and could see that the methods they used and how and what they were doing. The teaching was excellent and consistent and the data shows an improvement. But, he believes that they can go further.

RK added that she had looked across all areas and could see that children who had been struggling are now improving in all areas including behaviour.

BS continued to give examples of work that the Harrow Lead had observed in class. He explained that White Rose allowed him to work with the children who needed a little extra help and the questions that they asked were excellent and allowed him to explain the process. He said that by using visualisation first, a child can then grasp the method and it is a lot clearer. The children are

much more engaged as opposed to children being given questions which they could do anyway. The CPA method allows all in the class, including the lower attainers to achieve.

SP added that Maths Mastery allows all children access the curriculum and once the four stages are embedded will allow the children to think about their learning. She said that this can already be seen in English.

BS said that they have started implementing a scheme where a choice of challenges is given to the children but fundamentally, they are all using the same processes each a little more challenging. This works if they are pitched right and the children are sat in groups of 2 or 3 to allow conversation between the children.

SP said that it was a very good scheme but further training sessions taken by the maths lead will allow it to be extended.

BC asked if there were any questions arising of the talk.

SG asked how parents could help as this is one of the challenges that she can see where parents are used to using their own methods and these need to be changed. He continued that it had to be a partnership.

RH said that there had been workshops but they are trying to do more and looking at the best time for parents to attend. Also, there is more information on the website, but he acknowledged that it is a cultural shift that needs to be addressed.

SP said that she had attended a workshop and she could see that the parents had been engrossed learning to use the resources. She saw that it was a revelation for them and that they will try to do more such as put more information on the website but it is a question of continuing to remind parents that these are the methods being used.

BC concluded the matter saying that it all seemed very encouraging.

## **6. Details of SSC members' visits and training**

### **6.1 Visits and Proposed visits**

SB said that she and HP had visited the school today which had been very useful talking to the children and leads.

HP agreed saying that the visit had been very educational and it was good to see firsthand the depths of work that the leads undertake. He had spoken to Ms Hirani and understood that the approach the leads take is that they take the lead and learn and then cascade their knowledge to the other teachers.

BC said that when SP sees the reports from the SSC members they can then be circulated for the next meeting to see what is being picked up and shared between the SSC members

**ACTION:** SP to circulate reports of the SSC members who visit the school prior to the next meeting.

BC then confirmed that proposed visits had now been arranged for all SSC members over the next two weeks.

SP said that following these visits she would then send out dates for summer term visits.

HP said that following their first visits, the SSC member will be able to contribute more to what they should observe at their subsequent visits.

## 6.2 Training and proposed training

JB said that regarding training, she had spoken to Shamita Kumar who had said that this was now under the remit of HR and she was still waiting to hear from Joanne in HR. She said that she would contact Shamita again to see if there was any further news.

ACTION: JB to make further enquiries about formal training for SSC members.

## 7 Any Other Business

### 7.1 Road safety at drop off and pick up.

SG raised the issue of safety at drop off and pick up. She said that the main issue was around pick up and the fact that there should be no right turns out of the school and the fact that some parents are ignoring this.

A discussion followed about the difficulties and the steps that SP and the school can and are taking. SP said that amongst other steps she had tried to approach Harrow about included:

Barriers

Pelican Crossing

Speed Limit

However, they have said that they will have to do an analysis.

She has therefore spoken to her local MP and is waiting for a response.

It was suggested that the parent body be encouraged to become involved for example with a petition.

ACTION: SP suggested that once she got a response from the MP consideration can be given to how parents can become involved

SG asked about the school's relationship with the neighbours.

SP replied that as a general rule it was good and the school tries to make good any issues that do arise.

Further suggestions as to steps that might be taken were put forward and it was accepted that many of the options required manpower that was not available.

### 7.2 Role of the SSC members

This matter had been raised by SG before the SSC meeting but had been omitted from the Agenda in error.

BC said that whilst we were waiting for the formal induction, she referred the SSC to the relevant part of the Amended Accountabilities Framework relating to the SSC members.

She said that SSC members are ambassadors. They are to promote initiatives to the parent community and when an issue such as the matter of road safety just discussed, to bring it to the SSC to discuss and provide feedback to the school.

She continued that SSC members are also formally involved in disputes if they arise in such matters of discipline or admissions. In these circumstances, a panel might be set up and SSC members can be asked to attend to ensure that correct procedure is followed.

SP continued the theme of SSC members being ambassadors saying that SSC members are the people who parents will approach about their problems. She wanted to make it clear that if this happens, members should explain the correct procedure to deal with the issue rather than just try and deal with it themselves. Sometimes it may be appropriate to bring it to a meeting if that seems the way to move the matter in the right direction. All actions should be for the benefit of the school and the children.

BC continued that parents may approach SSC members about various issues and want them to engage and “fight their corner”. However, this is not the role of the SSC. She reiterated that it is the role of the SSC to make parents aware of the school’s protocol which are also on the school website and remind them that matters should be resolved in the correct way. Failure to do this might compromise any further action that might be taken in the matter or the role of the SSC on a convened panel. She reminded them that there are only a few SSC members so it is important that their number is not limited by the members’ actions. She continued that if there is a collective issue, the member should make the school aware of it and prevent it becoming a confrontation with the school.

A discussion followed about what SSC members should do in various situations.

ACTION; It was decided that SP would put further information about complaints’ procedures and prepare a flow diagram to make it clear where complaints should start and their subsequent progression so that parents have a clear picture of what steps they should take and in what order.

The discussion then turned to social media sites and what to do if issues detrimental to the school arose in different groups.

BC said that if members came across a situation on a social media website which is damaging or hurtful to the school, she and SP should be made aware of it and then they can look at the situation themselves and take any appropriate action. This would also avoid any individual member being subject to abuse from parents. Each matter can be looked at on a case by case basis and any false information can be dispelled.

Further discussion followed and SP reminded that SSC members should be mindful of what they, themselves, put on social media sites in their role as parents.



BC also raised the issue of confidentiality when SSC members contribute to conversations in these groups. She said even if something is imminent, members cannot say anything until all the proper channels are followed.

HP raised the issue of parent representatives.

A discussion followed about the election and role of the parent representatives and whether they were part of Friends of Avanti House (FOAH) rather than through the school itself, and whether a meeting should be arranged to clarify their role as GDPR issues and questions of legal responsibility could arise.

SB raised a question about whether the school's achievements could be fed back to parents to show how initiatives and work done by the teachers are benefiting the school.

SG agreed that this might dispel some of the myths passed about by the parents.

BC made a few suggestions:

1. A day in the life of a teacher/principal/pupil/SSC member
2. Snapshots of their work or day by the children in the newsletter
3. The promotion of achievements for the benefit of the children in the newsletter
4. Abridged accounts of the SSC members' visits.

These were all generally agreed to be good ideas.

## **8 Closing Formalities**

### **8.1 Confirm Actions**

1. 6.1 - SP to circulate the reports from the SSC members who visit the School prior to the next SSC meeting.
2. 6.2 - JB to make further enquiries about formal training for SSC members.
3. 7.1 - Once SP she receives a response from the MP circulate to SSC members for consideration of further steps for parent involvement in road safety concerns.
4. 7.2 - SP to put further information about complaints' procedures a flow diagram to make it clear where complaints should start and their subsequent progression on the school website so that parents have a clear picture of what steps they should take and in what order.

### **8.2 Date of Next meeting**

The date of the next meeting is **9 July 2019 at 6.00pm**

### **8.3 Meeting Closed**

BC thanked all members for attending and their ongoing contribution to the SSC and the school and formally closed the meeting at 8.20pm

Signed by the Chair of AHPS SSC.....

Dated.....