

Governing Body Portfolio Committee Newsletter: Spring 2017

As the local portfolio committee we meet twice a term as part of the local governing board of Norton Primary Academy. Our role is to challenge and support the academy leadership to hold them to account for the performance of the academy.

Within the portfolio committee each governor has a specific responsibility to report on each half term, meeting with members of the academy leadership team, looking at a wide range of evidence including books, learning walks in classrooms, data including academic and attendance, talking to pupils and financial information as well as receiving information from others such as the academy achievement partner. All of our visits are linked to the academy improvement plan.

In order to share this more widely with parents a newsletter will be produced for parents each term to provide further details which we hope you find useful and informative.

Peter Parish: Chair of the Portfolio Committee

Portfolio holder for Leadership and Management

Spring focus: Phase Leads and Leadership and Management **Met with:**

- Bev Singleton UKS2
- Vanessa Beck LSK2
- Jon Dixon KS1
- Catherine Pearson EY

Main points:

Time has been resourced to release phase leaders for half a day per week. This has greatly increased the capacity of phase leaders to carry out their leadership function and to work with and monitor staff and pupil's work in their area. Each phase lead has an Impact Action Plan which is the focus of a half termly one to one with the Principal. The Impact Action Plans are consistently used and reviewed.

The academy makes sure that all staff are up to date with safeguarding procedures and processes in several ways. There is training for all staff at the beginning of the school year. In addition, each term, phase teams are provided with a safeguarding scenario to discuss so they can consider what the appropriate response should be. The academy uses a software system called CPOMs to support safeguarding. This makes a positive contribution to safeguarding as it provides a better way of recording safeguarding issues, gives a dated record of incidents etc. and provides up to date access to relevant records for staff.

Shaun Haywood

Portfolio holder for Outcomes for Pupils

Spring focus: English

Met with: Amy Lowes (English Lead)

Main points:

Since being appointed as the portfolio holder for outcomes in October 2016, I have visited the school to meet with school leaders so that I can explore the range of interventions on offer within the school to help every child reach their potential. My primary focus this term has been on the interventions surrounding English and meetings with the lead for English have revealed great work in that area.

I have been very impressed with not only the range of interventions and strategies employed by the academy, but by the drive and determination of all staff to ensure that all children within the academy reach their potential. Staff and leaders are clearly committed to providing the very best for students and a clear range of strategies and support is in place to support this outcome.

I have visits scheduled to meet with other leaders to allow me to see the impact of the strategies utilised by the school in action and look forward to continuing to work with academy.

Robert Cook

Portfolio holder for Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Spring focus:

Ensure Most Able are provided with opportunities to develop.

Met with: Bev Singleton (More Able Pupils Lead)

Main points:

With Bev I looked at Y2 and Y6 books and talked about the impact of the challenge Professional Development Day (PDD) in February. After the training day all members of staff completed their own action plan which they will use over the rest of the year following the 'Stretch & Challenge' approach. There is a focus on increasing the numbers of pupils working at greater depth with an ambitious target of 19% combined for reading, writing & maths for Y6 this year (national average 2016 = 5%). Within writing books for older children style was also being developed alongside technical skills.

Bev Goodall

Portfolio holder for Finance

Spring focus: Pupil Premium
Budget Monitoring

Met with: Susan Dawson (Principal)
Dominic Coltman (Accountant)

Main points:

The finance portfolio meeting is undertaken with Susan Dawson and Dominic Coltman, the regional accountant from Northern Education Trust. This term we looked at the following areas: internal audit report findings, a review of the budget set compared to actual costs and income and a catch up on how Pupil Premium was currently being spent.

Dominic and I will be meeting up once a term going forward to look more in-depth at the academy's financial transactions and to review the financial processes and systems currently in place.

Yasmin Wallas

Portfolio holder for Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare

Spring focus: Reducing pupil absence and lateness

Met with: Andrew Cowan (Vice Principal)

Main points:

This term my focus was attendance, having met with Andrew Cowan I was impressed with how he has tackled persistent absence (children missing more than the equivalent of one day a fortnight) and reduced lateness. The school have implemented some new strategies including the 'late gate', the attendance league and reintroducing 'Cake & Shake'. Having seen the data it has shown they have already been effective.

I look forward to working alongside Susan Dawson and the school next term.

Laura Love

Portfolio holder for Community

Spring focus: To discuss ways of further strengthening engagement with parents

Met with:
Leadership Team

Main points:

My primary focus this term has been based on ways of strengthening engagement with parents in the academy post Ofsted. Having shared feedback from a parent governor a lengthy discussion took place regarding different options that could be put in to place. This included Class/Phase assemblies to celebrate the children's learning each term, increasing the use of Twitter throughout the day so that parents can gain an insight into their child's day and the introduction of Parentmail.

I was very impressed with not only the range of suggestions but also the determination of all staff to strengthen parent's confidence and engagement in the Academy.