

Appendix 1 - Questions for Hemyock LGB 15.05.17

1. The new head is taking over a very successful school. What should her priorities be? (JP)

- **Prior to answering the question PR and HS asked Governors what they felt the priorities should be.** JH said that it is reassuring that the school is under such good stewardship and therefore it should be left to CW with the support of the leadership team to develop their own vision for the school. JH feels that Ventrus and the school leadership are best placed to make decisions on priorities, giving CW the necessary space to develop her own views. JP asked CW if she is bringing any useful experience from her previous schools. CW said that even during the interview processes it was clear that there are priorities and her previous experiences will be useful in assessing those. DS said that past staff changes might have unsettled parents and that future leadership should focus on a settling period before any major changes are made. HN felt that it is a courageous viewpoint for the governing body to suggest time is taken for CW to learn her new role. HN reiterated that the school cannot afford to coast and must continue to focus on high standards. CW said that her mind-set is looking at the school and what is great about the school and continuing to maintain that and improve further. HN expressed her thanks particularly to PR but to all Governors for their support around the recruitment and appointment of the new Head of School.
- HN also explained to Governors that PR has been working to support the Governing Body of St Davids School in the trust along with two other Chairs. This was superb support and outstanding practise from the school and the trust.
- Alison Hirst has just done a piece of School Improvement Work with Jill Riggs from The Duchy which has been hugely beneficial for the school also.
- **Additionally HS also suggested** - Catherine will have a very strong transition period into the role of Head of School at Hemyock. This means she will work closely with the existing Head of School, Executive Head of School and chair of governors as well as all other staff up to the end of term and moving into September. Catherine's main priorities will be to get into the building, get to know the staff, children and parents and form strong relationships with them. This will allow her to get a feel for the school and its position at the moment. With regards to the moving forward of the school, Catherine will work with the existing Head of School on the school improvement priorities for next year and why they are what they are and how with our curriculum approach this could look within the future at Hemyock. Catherine will also, understandably and expectedly, need to make her own mark on Hemyock as the new Head of School and gain the trust and respect of all stakeholders within this.

ALSO

2. **Is there an update on the situation with the preschool becoming part of Hemyock Primary, and especially how this will affect the hard-working staff that currently run the preschool? I have only heard very positive comments from parents about the preschool and preschool leaders, and I think parents would be upset if a change in leadership were to be brought in without the good will of the current preschool staff. (RW)**

Answer - Staff at Pre-School are aware that they will become part of the school. All the admin for pre-school is already done by the school and Alison Field (and previously Annabel Barr) and I do a lot of work on development with the staff over there. Alison runs some staff training for them and joins them fortnightly when they have their meetings to do some input on EYFS practice. Alison has leadership time on a Tuesday which means she goes and works on the provision that happens daily over there to try and develop it consistently, especially aiding that transition into reception for the older children.

At the moment, we are held up with legal documentation with the transition but once that is in place, we should be ready to consult. As I have mentioned, the staff are fully prepared for this happening. Alison will still be their leader as she has been and the Head of School will be their line manager. Many of the parents at preschool have children at the school and if they don't, their children would be very likely to be coming here so the continuous leadership in the long run will help parents.

Although, the leadership would look different by label to parents, in fact the everyday work wouldn't be any different to the procedures now. In fact, the staff at preschool, particularly the manager, has said it will be easier when they are completely part of the school with regards to roles and responsibility. The relationships are already built there and it is one Catherine can build as she will with all other staff when she joins.

3. What are your thoughts on the comments on bullying in the safeguarding report? (PR)

Answer - I agree that we could include it more on our refresher safeguarding training, and will take that on board to pass on as a next step. With regards to notes to parents, I think this isn't necessary as the staff are extremely sensitive at picking up children's moods and behaviours and noticing when they aren't quite right. The children are also very good at telling us when there is something wrong and this then means that the incidents never become 'bullying incidents' as they are caught in the bud. Parents will come to the class teachers or myself regarding issues they are having in school, but again, because our policy is to have such an open door, these incidents aren't bullying and are nipped in the bud before they get too far. Just because our bullying log isn't large, doesn't mean we don't deal with behavioural incidents on a lower level.

4. SEN report implies we do not have Alison Hurst for our 2 full days with a decreasing budget and some high end need do we need to be more selfish? (PR)

Answer - Yes I agree, it was only last week, that I had this conversation with her in the same words. It has been tricky as, as she has established herself within the two schools, Alison did Thursday and Friday at Hemyock and Wednesday at Sampford Peverell. We then changed this due to staff meetings being different days so Alison should be doing Wednesday, Friday here and Thursday at Sampford Peverell. With these changeover of days, there have been meetings that have been booked in advance with outside agencies that can't be changed on her original days or on the only days the outside agencies can do. I think from September, this should be much less of an issue and like you have said, needs to be with the decrease of our budget.

ALSO

5. Regarding JH's concern about the high % of SEND in Year 3... is there adequate support in that class for those children, especially as only 29% of 7 SEND children achieved the expected standard at the end of Year 2, compared with 73% nationally (assuming this data relates to the current Year 3 children). It is encouraging from the data overview that the children in this cohort without SEN performed well above the national average. (RW)

Answer - This is the current Year 3 class. With regards to the support in the classroom, there is a full time teaching assistant which is more than would normally occur within a KS2 classroom. This has meant pulling resources from elsewhere, as although there are a high number of SEN children within this class, many of them don't qualify to get funding for these needs meaning we have to use the universal support we provide as a school. Those SEN children with funding in that class have provision to meet their needs, including one not working within the classroom as they cannot access the curriculum. This child is also only going through the process of getting funding as Devon have wanted the necessary funding for them so we are in fact catering for their needs within our general school budget, however, this has to be done for the better of their education and the others within the class.

JH confirmed that the anecdotal progress is much more significant than the statistics would imply. Governors are aware that statistics such as these need to be challenged so that the actual impact can be assessed.

6. Website do we need more on curriculum here? (PR)

Answer - On our website currently is our maths philosophy and our literacy philosophy. For our topic curriculum, on the parents page, it does have a part called 'overview of curriculum at Hemyock'. Below this, it tells people to look each term at the class pages and their termly letters with regards to the specific curriculum coverage for each class.

It also has an attached document that details the curriculum coverage at Hemyock, including key elements of our teaching such as maths and literacy. It also states our topic based approach to curriculum, science and learning outside the classroom.

I will look at the Ofsted framework to ensure we are working in line with this and adapt the website where necessary.

ACTION	HS	IN DUE COURSE
--------	----	---------------

7. Data overview KS1 quite a lot under national expectations including PP, SEN, please give reasons and solutions for this? (PR)

Answer - This year group, as we have talked about above, are a class with a significantly high number of children within academic needs, and only a small amount gathering funding for these needs. The problem with the transition between assessments in EYFS and KS1 is the benchmarking. At EYFS, you can only be emerging, expected or exceeding. A large majority of children within the year 3 cohort now in EYFS hit emerging across the different curriculum areas. However, they were extremely low in this emerging label. When they then reached Year 2, some of them, due to their SEN need, had made progress, however, were still working at the top end of reception class. This mean that it was deemed to be that they had not made a lot of progress. Our solution for this group of SEN children is to keep providing them with quality first provision, strong teaching assistant support and high quality interventions so they continue to make progress, which they are.

With regards to pupil premium children, there are only 3 in the cohort of 28, one of those is also a children who finds academic learning very challenging. Therefore, two out of our three pupil premium children achieved the expected standard and one did not. However, they were not expected to against their EYFS data.

8. KS2 looks good children with SEN under but PP good, I imagine we are talking very small numbers? (PR)

Answer - Yes, we are looking at two SEN children in KS2 and 1 pupil premium.

HN pointed out how important data from this year will be particularly in relation to the recent issues with OFSTED. PR pointed out that Year 6 children this year seemed to be fairly relaxed during SATs week. SK said that the whole school atmosphere was very positive with young children being very respectful of the Year 6 children. HN expressed the huge team effort in getting all children through the recent standardised testing with all staff playing an important part in this.

9. For all governors what are your thoughts on parent involvement in repair or replacing benches etc, sponsorship for new? Pay Caleb to make new? PTFA paying for new? They won't last much longer! (PR)

Answer - PR said that this was an area highlighted in the Health & Safety report. PR suggested a report could be added to the school website of areas within the school where people could offer physical help or financial support. This could also be added to the newsletter. Ella Rice asked what the replacement costs would be and DS suggested maybe £300-£400 each. SK asked if the School Council could have a targeted project to raise funds for this and Governors agreed that this was a good idea. JP asked if Viridor had been approached for any funds as they regularly support. SK to move forward with this. JH asked if there has been any historical support from Brookridge Timber and HS said that this avenue is already being investigated.

<i>ACTION</i>	<i>SK</i>	<i>IN DUE COURSE</i>
---------------	-----------	----------------------