



for the children.

We are looking at those who are struggling to access the curriculum and trying to devise strategies to tackle this.

How do you deliver content to the older year groups?

RW: We are now calling them personal development days, and these took place today across all year groups. We have several through the year, focused on subjects which are more meaningful for this age group.

Gemma G-B is our challenge leader on PD days so she and RW have been working together on putting these days together.

For Year 7 and 8 we have bought into Jigsaw as this is used by the Primaries. There are some benefits to this, but some heavy editing has taken place, and we now have better resources in place ready for these sessions in the future.

We will also have an FCC day which focuses on diversity. Last year we had a samba drumming workshop. This time we would like to include a range of other interesting and varied topics; we are hoping to include Ukrainian lessons next time. This helps the students to experience a different day and learn about new things.

We do have a careers advisor, Tina Belcher, and this will feed into the end of year topics for Year 7 and 8 about aspirations and future plans.

How do parents support with Year 10s who want help with organising work experience?

RW: We cannot support all students to find a place but if parents find somewhere Tina can support with checking that these are appropriate places for work experience to take place.

How are you feeding local issues into the PSHE curriculum?

RW: This is where there is a benefit of me being part of the Safeguarding team. I also lead on assemblies; recently we have had assemblies on road safety, so we run these themed assemblies where necessary.

As we know that the student's knowledge of sex and relationships is not where it should be, what are we doing to prevent teenage pregnancies?

RW: Our school nurse and Safeguarding team are supporting with this.

Has there been any funding specifically for mental health support?

RW: Yes. I am part way through a mental health audit of the school and looking at what is working currently and what we need. This will inform where we spend this funding.

Are the Trust doing anything to support?

RW: Each school now have a dedicated Safeguarding lead and Sarah Gristwood from the Trust team is the lead for FCC.

Are there concerns about these PD days not being well attended?

RW: There are some concerns about these but we try to put them on at good times of the year to encourage attendance.

With all of the mental health issues which we know about, do we talk to the students about resilience?

RW: Yes. But we need to spend more time explaining this to the students and ensuring that they understand the difference between resilience and suffering well.



Literacy update

We have re-launched Accelerated Reader, which we have used before. However, we have not looked at the data before so we now analysing this information. It is running for all Year 7s and some 8s and 9s. Reading ages have been ascertained and so we now know which pupils are struggling readers and they are all now involved in interventions and have a reading buddy. This is something completely new which means we don't have a baseline on this from previous years.

There is a set programme of study.

CK has collated a good range of books covering all reading ages and topics which children can access at all times.

We are using articles with struggling readers and guided reading - both to help to increase their cultural capital and their reading, so this is a two-fold intervention. These take place in tutor time and students have reading buddies to support them.

There are a few children across the years who have missed the assessments but these will take place again in January so we will still capture these struggling readers through the year.

There are more struggling readers in Years 7 and 8 – some as low as 4-year-old reading ages. There is a connection between those children who are disengaged with lessons and those who are struggling.

In January we will also be adding in interventions in Years 8 and 9 so all of those who need interventions will have received this by the end of the year. We hope to also support those with low reading ages who are not in the lowest 20%.

We have introduced pre, during and post reading activities. This will help to support staff CPD and vocabulary for the struggling readers.

Reading questionnaires have been completed and these will be redone at the end of the year. Many of the struggling readers are more comfortable with Maths and Science – however there is a link between those with lower reading ages and Maths results as often not being able to read as well does result in lower attainment.

7

All teachers have a selection of books in their classrooms for students to choose from.

We refer to 'reading for pleasure' as 'reading as part of a healthy lifestyle' as some students really do not enjoy reading and would not choose to undertake this as a pleasurable exercise but can understand that it is a 'healthy' choice.

We have a word of the week, and displays in the library, DT, small hall, and other locations as appropriate to support reading at school.

Next steps:

- Analyse questionnaires
- We are now looking at monitoring – reading settlers are currently being used by 70% of lessons but should be 100% by the end of the year.
- 7th December – parents information evening for those wanting to support their children's reading at home.
- Staff CPD
- Interventions to support behaviour - need to look at the connection between those with lower reading ages and those who are being suspended or getting behaviour points.

Why haven't we done this before?

CK: We have come to realise that we need to address these issues in order to improve the overall outcomes for students. Covid has made this worse. It has become much more evident that we have several students who are not able to access the curriculum and we need to address it as a whole school issue.

Is this being addressed lower down the chain too?

CK: Some of these issues are persistent. Interventions are usually 6-12 weeks only.

Those who come up to FCC with only a slightly low reading age find that once they come to



Secondary, they then either plateau or go backwards in terms of ability. It is a very different setting to Primary and what is expected from them is very different.

Would we go as far as taking students out of their usual lessons to really focus on improving their reading?

CK: It is certainly possible that for those students who are getting repeatedly suspended we will be looking at this because the issue is related to poor behaviour. Some of these students are not able to access even a straightforward lesson in school where they are not even required to read, due to their low levels of understanding and inability to comprehend the content of lessons.

How many of the struggling readers are also PP, SEND or EAL students?

CK: There are cross overs between the two groups, not so much the EAL students but certainly PP and SEND. All PP students were given books, and many treasured these, even those who don't enjoy reading or school.

CK explained that it is not only those students from less affluent backgrounds which are being identified as struggling readers, but also some children from more affluent backgrounds who were just not read to as a younger child.

CK explained that being read to daily between 1 and 5 has the single largest impact upon success as an adult.

Do we need to start thinking about running sessions on parent literacy?

CK: Yes, Katie Smith ran a session on this last year but due to poor weather we only had 5 parents attend. She is the challenge leader for reading. We will be looking at running this again this year. There is a tricky balance to be struck to engage these parents too, many of whom may not have had a happy relationship with school themselves. If we get it wrong with them, we will really struggle to get them to engage in the future and then getting their children to engage becomes even more of an issue.

How and where are you inviting parents? Have you thought about contacting grandparents, who often read to their grandchildren?

CK: We have just sent the information out to all parents and invited them to attend.

Have we informed parents that their children are struggling readers?

CK: No. Research shows that parents having this information can be detrimental. We also need to complete the testing of all the students and look at how we are going to approach this first.

Safeguarding training

PD gave an update to the meeting on Safeguarding.

Emma Lynn is the new Safeguarding manager at FCC.

PD suggested that it would be good to have this update earlier in the year next year if possible.

The team

Year group Safeguarding managers.

PD is DSL and deals with Year 7 concerns.

Natalie is the Safeguarding Administrator and deals with the statistics and information behind the scenes. This helps to ensure that we don't miss anything. Emma works with Natalie to ensure that everything is captured, and the administration is done correctly and effectively.



We also now have John Vallely, e-safeguarding lead, Gemma Greenaway-Byrne, anti-bullying lead and Lynne Hammond who is the new Trust Safeguarding lead. Rebecca James is now the new neglect lead at FCC and Annabelle Saxton is the Attendance Officer. The team meet weekly to go through cases and issues.

2823 referrals took place last year.

17 referrals to the LA.

3 child protection plans.

4 children in need.

What if a pupil decides to climb over the fence?

PD: We would raise a Bromcom alert and be straight on the phone to the Police. It would then be added to the safeguarding report.

RW: We would keep this as up to date as possible but if you are with a child who is disclosing this may not be happening at the time.

The most important thing timewise is that we safeguard the child first and then we look at the processes around this and what needs to take place next.

What is the timeline between things happening and it being recorded?

PD: Issues are recorded and reacted to straight away as much as possible.

CPOMS can tell us the number of open cases and what still needs to be closed off. Now that we have two team members who aren't teaching, we can keep a much better track of cases.

The most common issues for 2022-23 are mental health concerns, attendance, and child on child abuse.

This year we have an improved mental health focus, and we are working with Debbie Earnshaw and the MHST, COGs, and have a personal development programme, and have introduced ELSA training for staff.

We need more investment in counsellors; for a school of this size, we need to invest in this going forward.

We have an increased safeguarding team (pro-active roles) and a dedicated Safeguarding Manager.

We now have stronger data so we can see trends.

The perimeter of the school is more secure, and the entrance system is more robust.

Community links have been strengthened and we have improved relationships with outside agencies to improve our in-house safeguarding – such as the Care Around the School Offer.

We were 90% reactive and are now becoming more proactive.

Key changes in KCSiE for this year are an emphasis on filtering and monitoring systems. There is also a clearer distinction between children who are on role but absent from school and those who are now being home-educated (even if learning is not taking place).

We have signed up for Smoothwall – so if a child or adult tries to access a site they shouldn't, Smoothwall then send this information over to the school and this is then dealt with as necessary. Either it is logged, and action is taken with the student or in the case of



staff the details are sent to PB. This results in improved safeguarding for students and staff members. We can also use this to help to identify the holes in the system because Sweethaven can give us a whole search history for a student which will show any sites that are able to be accessed by students despite the Smoothwall system.

Governors:

- Need to ensure that the DSL is taking responsibility for filtering and monitoring.
- Assure yourself that the child protection policy includes details of the filtering and monitoring which is taking place.
- The board should discuss with IT staff and service provider what is needed to support the college.
- The school should inform shortlisted candidates that it might conduct an online search as part of the due diligence checks for recruitment.

The government is currently considering changes to the reporting of child abuse.

Signals of abuse include:

- Difficulty concentrating
- Becoming withdrawn
- Mood or behaviour changes
- Mental health needs
- Tiredness
- Self-harming
- Increase in risk-taking behaviour
- Use of drugs/alcohol
- Frequently missing from home
- Persistent absence from education
- Have been in care
- Privately fostered
- LGBTQ+
- Family member in prison or affected by parental offending
- Have SEND or behavioural issues

We need to be more alert to our children with SEND and those who are LGBTQ+. We have had a small increase in homophobic, racist, and anti-Semitic abuse.

ACTION: PD to add his presentation to GovernorHub for governors to consult.

Parent abuse of staff – this is a safeguarding issue for staff. How is this dealt with at school? Do staff feel safe and protected?

PB: It is more through email or phone conversations as meeting in person tends to be meeting with SLT. We deal robustly with verbal or online abuse from parents to staff. In Buckinghamshire there was a collective letter sent out from all schools to remind parents of how they should behave and what will not be tolerated in relations with staff.

Are we planning to do this going forward?

PB: Yes, we are planning to try and initiate this across the Trust rather than across Oxfordshire.

RW confirmed that staff are more reluctant to pick up the phone to parents having had some bad experiences previously.

Is there anything we can do to support this and make it clear what is not acceptable?

KT explained that staff are generally very accommodating but suggested that perhaps staff should not meet with parents on their own going forward to ensure they are safe, and that



	<p>staff have witnesses should anything be claimed later on down the line.</p> <p><i>Did these letters which were sent out have an impact?</i> PB: I am not sure but it does make staff feel more secure and makes it clear what is not acceptable.</p> <p><i>Do you have many cases of grooming?</i> PD: These are dealt with in the same way as other safeguarding cases. This tends to happen in WhatsApp-type groups in Year 7 or 8 where students build relationships outside of school and grooming then takes place through this route. It tends to be academically strong children which are not usually involved in the child-on-child abuse who are the perpetrators of these kinds of cases. These tend to take place online rather than in person. We have only had one case of people trying to meet up in person.</p>	
9	<p>Standing Item: Health and Safety update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site development <p>PB confirmed that the 4th meeting with the architects has now taken place, so we have finessed the main details of the development.</p> <p>We are looking at increasing the number of outside eating areas, to extend the canteen space and create two new build blocks by the Wilson building for classrooms. We also want to collate a student services area all together in one place as currently these are spread throughout the school. We will be able to remove the temporary classrooms once these are built.</p> <p><i>Will the new buildings be single or double storey?</i> PB: The student services block will be single; the classroom blocks will be two storeys.</p> <p><i>Is there any push from OCC for us to increase capacity for 10FE due to increased space?</i> PB: No, these discussions have not taken place.</p> <p>PB confirmed we are hoping that the build will start in Summer 2025.</p>	
10	<p>Governor Link visits</p> <p>JH has undertaken a visit and uploaded her report to GovernorHub ahead of the meeting.</p> <p><i>Shall we contact subject leads or wait for you to introduce us via email?</i> ACTION: PB to email subject leads to introduce link governors. ACTION: AM to email a list of governor emails to PB. ACTION: All governors to complete a visit before the next LGB.</p>	<p>PB AM ALL</p>
11	<p>Data dashboard</p> <p>PB provided a report on the main data information for this term and asked governors to review the information and contact him with any queries or concerns.</p> <p><i>How accurate are the attendance figures?</i> PB: The sheer number of students involved means that these cannot be 100% accurate but we do our best to make these as accurate as possible.</p> <p>Our attendance levels are just below national currently.</p> <p><i>Governors discussed the recent communication asking for evidence to be provided when students have missed school.</i> PB explained that these are driven from OCC who are pushing hard on this.</p> <p><i>Could we have an update on attendance from those who are responsible for attendance at FCC at the next LGB?</i> PB will ensure that the relevant staff members will attend.</p>	



	<p><i>The biggest drop since term one is in Year 7 whereas attendance for PP students has slightly increased.</i></p> <p><i>We need to be mindful that this can show skewed figures if students take a week or two off at the start of the year. We need to look at the picture across the year.</i></p> <p>PB explained that we have had 4 cases of students leaving roll to become home learners this term.</p> <p><i>11 missing person incidents? How are the attendance team dealing with this?</i> PB: These are students who are running away from home rather than students we have lost at school. Our biggest concerns are those students who leave home but don't then appear at school. These 11 students had gone AWOL from home.</p> <p>The second progress checks for Year 11's will have taken place by the next LGB meeting so this will be available for scrutiny.</p> <p><i>Could we have a breakdown of the specific behaviour incidents for each term?</i> PB: Many of the suspensions are begun with quite low-level incidents taking place and this then escalating to higher level behaviour issues which ultimately end in suspension.</p> <p><i>It might be useful to look at these in connection to the content of the SDP.</i> PB agreed.</p> <p><i>Do the students who are struggling readers who end up in the reflection room get extra support to help them with their learning here?</i> PB: Not specifically.</p> <p><i>Governors discussed the specific issues relating to Year 7s this year.</i></p> <p><i>Are they having lunch by themselves? Do they have any exposure to older students?</i> PB: Yes, but they are more mixed during break times. Also, the Sixth formers are out at the same time as the Year 7's.</p> <p><i>How are the new split lunchtimes working for the Year 7s?</i> PB: It is working well, and they are settling back into lessons after lunch well.</p>	
<p>12</p>	<p>New Deputy Head appointment <i>How will the new Deputy Head fit into the SLT and the school?</i> PB: He will lead on Standards. He had the right vision and values to add to the team. He will work closely with Henry Bew and Maria Button to drive progress.</p> <p><i>Will this allow you to step back from the more day to day things that you are undertaking?</i> PB: Yes, this was the plan; I can then be more strategic and lead the development team.</p>	
<p>Strategic Matters</p>		
<p>13</p>	<p>Standing Item: Finance update - Pay committee meeting The committee signed off the pay committee report.</p> <p>PB explained that the recent finance meeting signed off the accounts for last year, showing a surplus of around £16k which is what we were hoping for.</p> <p>We are not yet sure of the picture for the current year as staff salary increases have not yet been confirmed by the Government.</p>	



	<p>PB explained that in terms of our own staff increases we have put through two less increases than we had budgeted for which will show a small positive impact on the budget.</p> <p><i>When we will found out about the salary increases? When we receive the funding?</i> PB: The funding is not received by the school until around October. The strike action earlier this year has pushed this date back even further.</p> <p><i>Are you looking to reinstate the late buses after school?</i> PB: We have had to reduce the budget by £250,000 this year so we had to cut the buses. This is something that has been cut out before. Uncertainty over the financial situation for this year means that we cannot restart these without this being signed off by FLT first.</p> <p>LH has already suggested linking the issue to the priorities in the SDP and the impact that this will have on areas link behaviour and attendance.</p> <p>PB explained that governors will need to approve that we access our reserves if it is the case that our budget goes into deficit due to the salary increases and late buses being reinstated.</p> <p><i>Do we have any idea of the demand for school buses?</i> PB: Not really as this is hard to ascertain. It is certainly the case that not running the buses means that some children cannot access the after school activities which are taking place, whether this be revision sessions or rehearsals for the school production of Annie.</p> <p><i>This is then impacting upon the prospects for those children who we are trying to access with our positive actions and widening the gap.</i></p> <p><i>What about the connection to behaviour – are we still issuing C3s?</i> PB: No as children are then not able to get home after detention.</p> <p>ACTION: PB will add the business case for late buses to GovernorHub for governors to review and feed back outside of committee to enable PB to then take this to the FLT Resources committee at their next meeting.</p>	
14	<p>Standing Item: School Action Plan - 6 week Improvement Plan update</p> <p>The school SDP has been uploaded to GovernorHub for governors to review and the minutes from the QoE meeting last week will be uploaded to GovernorHub shortly.</p> <p>ACTION: Governors to contact PB with any queries.</p>	ALL
15	<p>Communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FCC website <p><i>There were discussions throughout the last academic year that this was not fit for purpose or compliant with the expected standards. You said that a company was working on the website and it would be updated over the summer, As a parent I have spent some time trying to navigate the site with some frustration. This may be the first contact parents have with the school. Can you confirm when the site will be updated and the reasons for the delay?</i></p> <p>PB suggested that this should be up and running by the start of next term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BromCom <p>Governors expressed some concerns about how this is used to send information to parents and discussed the complications of this in relation to several children being at the school. PB explained that communications is part of the SDP as we know that we need to be better at this going forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents' evenings <p>These will be online again this year and going forward.</p>	



	<p>PB explained that we are trying to hold one in-person event per year group per year to help parental engagement.</p> <p>PB explained we are looking at doing some more social media for the school – this is likely to be Instagram. This is being used by some departments of the school already.</p> <p><i>We also need to look at how we are communicating the successes of the school to the wider community.</i></p> <p>PB agreed</p> <p><i>Are any of the other Heads in the Vale Academy Trust managed to sort this strategy out?</i></p> <p>PB: I don't know, I will check.</p>	PB
Other Matters		
	<p>Governor roles/skills audit results</p> <p>AM had summarised the results received from governors so far – this showed that we have some weaknesses in developing strategy, understanding budgets, and assessing risk.</p> <p>ACTION: AM to feed this back to Anne Lynn to hopefully inform future governor training sessions.</p> <p>Audit results to be looked at in more detail during the next meeting –both in terms of training needs and also whether new governors might want to take on new or other roles.</p> <p>JBr to take on e-safety as part of the Safeguarding link governor role.</p>	
16	<p>Good News Items</p> <p>None to note.</p>	
17	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Late buses (question submitted in advance of the meeting) <p><i>As PP and SEN link I am concerned about the continued absence of late buses. This means that a large number of pupils are unable to access afterschool clubs, revision sessions and extra tuition with teachers who are willing to provide this after school. This particularly affects PP children whose parents may not be able to afford the £2 flat rate for the public bus, SEN pupils who may not feel able to take public transport and pupils who live off the S6 and X35 route i.e. Longcot and Fernham. Please could you update the LGB on the plans for the late buses and if not being reinstated the rationale for this?</i></p> <p>PB: The late bus is something that I am committed to - have just written a business case to try and get the funding agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School uniform <p><i>This is an ongoing issue and I fully support the uniform policy and uniforms role in the ethos and cohesiveness of the school but I am concerned that we cannot show compliance with the statutory government guidance on the cost of school uniforms</i></p> <p>Schools should ensure that second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire. Information on second-hand uniforms should be clear for parents of current and prospective pupils and published on the school's webs Single supplier contracts should be avoided unless regular tendering competitions are run where more than one supplier can compete for the contract and where the best value for money is secured. This contract should be retendered at least every 5 years. Can you confirm when the contract last went out to tender (I assume through the FLT)?</p> <p>Schools should ensure that second-hand uniforms are available for parents to acquire. Information on second-hand uniforms should be <u>clear</u> for parents of current and prospective pupils and published on the school's website. This is requires the parents to read through the uniform policy document. It also only mentions the school as a source of second hand uniforms. We have discussed previously in the LGB the Facebook Faringdon Academy of Schools selling site which parents make good use of. Can this information be shared on the website? Is the trust/ school looking into other cost reducing initiatives such as separate logos which could be sewn onto non branded clothing?</p>	



	<p>PB: Work is ongoing it has just dropped off the radar. I will use your email as a lever to get things working again.</p> <p>PB confirmed that second hand uniform is available in school and we have adapted our uniform but we are stifled a bit on costs by only having one provider for our uniform.</p> <p><i>Governors discussed the Government guidance around uniform.</i></p> <p><i>We were required to have met these new guidelines by September – will Ofsted penalise us for this?</i></p> <p>PB: Unlikely.</p> <p>To be discussed at a future meeting – report to come from Claire Ellison as she leads on this.</p> <p>Mark Adams and Henry Bew to attend the next meeting on 30th January to give updates on their areas of responsibility.</p> <p>Behaviour to be looked at in more detail at the next meeting.</p>	
18	Close 9.30pm	