

## Record of a governor's visit to the school - Formal

**NAME: Anna Munday, Kevin Golding-Williams; Catherine Atkins DATE: 7/3/15**

### **Purpose of visit including departments or areas of school visited and staff that the governor met during the visit:**

- As agreed by the Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015 the number of meetings, during the 2015/16 academic year, would be reduced to two to enable more monitoring visits on policy areas linked to the school plan.
- This is the third of four monitoring visits. (Raise Online and data 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 2015, Maths 20<sup>th</sup> Jan 2016 and Read, Write Inc and behavior scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016)
- The focus of the visit was to review with the head teacher (HT) and deputy head teacher (DHT) data showing the current picture of Spelling Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG)
- Review a selection of books to see the delivery of SPAG across the school
- Hear from the SPAG coordinator an overview of the approach adopted and its implementation

### **Links with the School Improvement Plan**

SPAG is an action area within the Writing section of the School Improvement Plan which includes a range of objectives including:

- To establish a clear understanding of the grammatical structure and punctuation requirements of Standard English when writing in different genres.
- To ensure RWI is being adopted by and built on by all teachers / TAs across the school.
- To raise attainment and accelerate progress in Writing across the school.
- To use cross curricular links to develop writing across the curriculum.
- To raise the attainment of SPAG across the school.

### **Key questions you are investigating- send the questions to the school before the meeting if possible.**

- What progress are pupils making against national expectations
- There
- Are the actions and objectives of the School Improvement Plan being delivered
- Areas for improvement
- Review consistency between work in books with school policies to improve SPAG including marking policy and SPAG Progression Framework

### **Observations and comments by the governor- consider the hard data you may need to gather.**

#### **Data Review**

- The HT and DHT took the governors through the school's data relating to SPAG across the school
- SPAG target for year 6 is 70% - currently 57% expected and 35% exceeding
- Target Tracker data based on autumn assessments revealed spelling as an area for development
- 19/28 pupils were less than expected progress in year 5 spelling this compares to 4/28 less than expected for GPV. In Year 4 there were 12/22 pupils less than expected in spelling compared to 1/25 less than expected in GPV. In Year 3 14/24 less than expected compared with 9/28 less than expected for GPV. (grammar, punctuation and vocabulary)
- KS1 appear to be performing better at SPAG, as it is more embedded for them. KS2

have only had the focus on SPAG for 3-4 years as it was not a focus for them in KS1.

- Given these assessment results the governors asked the HT/DHT what actions were being undertaken to address this gap
- Read Write Inc is used across the school to narrow the gap with a particular focus on Key Stage 1 and also through literacy
- Key Stage 2 interventions focus on SPAG
- Specific interventions were being deployed in years 5 and 6 to address the gap such as a group of Year 6 receive booster classes for spelling
- Weekly spelling tests were being used across the school – when questioned on their assessment the HT/DHT explained they were peer assessed with the class teacher reviewing the assessments to inform each child's learning but there was a particular emphasis on rapid feedback. Spelling tests also include using spellings in sentences, so as not to isolate a word but help the children put words in context.

### **Overview of SPAG at Bean**

- The SPAG co-coordinator (SC) provided an overview of the key interventions to improve the teaching of SPAG at Bean
- Teachers were encouraged to ensure pupils make a meaningful connection between spelling and other subject areas such as science. For example spelling is highlighted in every lesson but picked up in science lessons, and specific topic words from other curriculum areas are added to weekly spelling tests as appropriate.
- The inter-school SPAG competition raised the profile in the school and encouraged greater pupil engagement
- Close relationship between teaching of literacy and SPAG in Key Stage 2
- In KS1 One of the grammar lessons will be spelling – link with Read Write Inc
- In KS2 Monday's grammar topic will then link into literacy for the rest of the week
- Spelling dictionaries have been introduced across the school from year 2 whereby pupils enter words they have trouble spelling in order to build up a bank of words over the course of the school year. It is anticipated pupils will keep these during their time at Bean. Words spelt incorrectly in the class spelling tests are added to these dictionaries
- When questioned by the governors of the teaching teams' understanding of the SPAG Progression Framework the SC explained that training has taken place through two training sessions, a grammar Inset Day at the beginning of the academic year. In order to keep up momentum staff meetings begin with the teaching team discussing and answering six SPAG questions. This is important in ensuring a mutually supportive approach to SPAG across the school
- The governors asked for clarification of the marking policy as the school's assessment policy did not show the codes used by the teaching team.
- The marking code is displayed in classrooms across KS2 and is in use. Pupils are aware of the symbols used by teachers and their meaning. The code has now been added as an appendix to the Assessment for Learning Policy which makes reference to the different marking approaches in KS1 & 2.
- The learning environment has been adapted to allow children to feel able to make mistakes, not be embarrassed but learn from those mistakes.

## **Book Review**

- Reception class books summarised achievements
- Years 1/2 included comments on text – the governors asked why Learning Intentions were absent from books after a certain number of pages. DHT explained this was because Read Write Inc was introduced in the first few months of the academic year and the Learning Intention was introduced through this scheme
- Year 3 used Read Write Inc books and SPAG exercise books
- Years 4,5 and 6 used spelling Read Write Inc exercise books and grammar exercise books for extension work.
- SPAG was less detailed in year 6 in grammar exercise books and focussed more on work within literacy books
- Currently each class is using the relevant 'Spelling' book for their year, eg year 5 using book 5. In time, however, the school will become more discerning in their use of these books, differentiating for pupils rather than working through the book from start to finish.

## **Any key issues arising for the governing body**

- Continuation funding for RWI for 2016/17
- To receive regular reports from HT on progress relating to the impact of actions to address the high levels of less than expected progress in years 3-6 for spelling during reports to FGB.
- It is important to factor in that since September, Years 3 and 6 have been exposed to the new more challenging curriculum including spelling, which is more explicit under the new curriculum and therefore, this goes some way in explaining why this is an area for development particularly in Years 3&6 but also across the school.

## **Any key issues arising for the school leadership team**

- Ensure all pupils are aware of the school's marking scheme and that this is prominently displayed in all classrooms and reinforced by the teaching team
- This committee needs to review term 4 data to see what progress is being made in this area.
- **Follow up questions :**
- **Is there a difference for pupils with SEN – Work is differentiated for SEND pupils as indicated on the provision mapping**
- **How is Pupil Premium funding being used – Children identified as working at below the expected will have additional / alternative intervention in order to address areas for development – as identified on the provision mapping. This will include PP pupils.**

## **Action following governing body meeting.**

- DHT to email data for term 4 SPAG to C & S committee when it is available.

**Signed:** Anna Munday, Kevin Golding-Williams; Catherine Atkins