

# Pennoweth School Chair's Blog

## March 2019

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Topics in this blog:

1. The Titanic 'Courtroom' with years three and four.
2. The Lunchtime Experience
3. Governor Vacancies
4. Reports this term

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019 – Informal Monitoring

**The Titanic – informal monitoring visit noting how the wider curriculum is being taught and made relevant and linked with key skills from the core subjects.**

As chair of governors I went to take part in this event with three classes from years 3 and 4 as part of their project on the Titanic, acting as judge for an enquiry into who was to blame.

The hall had been set up and I sat centrally with my notes on a desk as the children filed in- there was no intervention needed by teachers or teaching assistants in the hall. There was complete hush, the children taking the event very seriously. From that moment until the first break children came up to present their evidence in an attempt to persuade that one of the three main protagonists were at fault. The classes had been on a visit earlier in the term to the Titanic exhibition in the Maritime museum which had given them a sound base for information.

The children used persuasive language well and provided excellent evidence for what had been going on in the classroom. Some children had obviously taken their interest a bit further and could go into great detail on aspects of design or engineering of the Titanic. Some children needed the security of an exercise book to read from but all spoke clearly and were not at all flustered by being asked to speak in a large forum.

Most children, when given a secondary question or asked to justify their point of view, were able to do so. Following a really orderly exit and re-entrance after morning break the verdict was given and three children who had been particularly vociferous and stayed behind after their peers departed were asked to sum up which they did well.

The morning was hugely informative.

- Behaviour was exemplary
- Children were able to hold a role within the courtroom and take the event seriously.
- Speaking and listening skills were evident and being put into a practical situation that the children were committed to.
- Teachers had been creative and everything was very well organised.

Staff and students are to be congratulated. It would be interesting to follow up the project with some pupil conferencing with different groups to see what they made of it.

## **The Lunchtime Experience**

Governors have noted just how much hard work the school staff have put into making lunchtimes an important, enjoyable and useful part of the school day.

There are lunchtime clubs, opportunities to socialise with friends, a chance to let off steam and exercise and a drive to make the school canteen more like a restaurant experience. In all of these areas the aim is to make children feel secure, cared for, valued and treated in a way that models the way they should treat others.

Governors not only monitor the core subjects to make sure that all children are making the best progress possible but also the wider life of the school.

In the course of each term /year we:

- Check health safety by looking in detail at the building, the grounds and procedures.
- Make sure that all the statutory requirements for safeguarding are put in place by getting external experts to check our safeguarding procedures and documents such as the Single Central Record and then make sure any recommendations are followed up.
- We monitor behaviour in and around the school, not just of children but also the adults who work and visit. We keep a close eye on posts in social media.
- Set up meetings with kitchen staff on both sides of the kitchen hatch to discuss the lunchtime experience for children and make sure it is working well.
- Listen to the opinions of parents, carers and children as well as the staff to help plan for future development.

With that in mind we will be holding some focus groups so that you can let us know what the school does well and what it could improve about the lunchtime experience as a whole. If you would like to take part or if you have an opinion that you would like to put in writing for the governor team please do send it in via the office.

## **Governor Vacancies:**

Vacancies for the full governing board come up from time to time and we are always pleased to receive enquiries from anyone who thinks they might like to contribute to the work of the board in supporting the school. Occasionally we also take on associate governors who can help because they have a particular skill such as project management, the ability to check the legal compliance of the website against a check list. Please do let us know if you would like to be considered for the main Governing board or as a non-voting but fully participating associate. We can arrange a walk round the school and an informal interview. We have three evening meetings a term between 6 and 8 pm.

## **A sample of Reports to be written this term following visits:**

- Learning Walk with governors from Pencoys and Illogan.
- Early Years detailed monitoring
- English and Reading Monitoring Morning
- Mathematics Monitoring
- Safeguarding Monitoring
- Health and safety Monitoring
- Monitoring visit to check attendance and what is being put in place to ensure we do not drop below government targets.
  
- We also receive, discuss and contribute to the School Development Plan on a regular basis.
- We receive and discuss inspection reports called SILC (The School Improvement Leadership Cycle) where heads from other schools in the Crofty Trust visit and help to check on progress and the veracity of our own judgements.
- Papers and policies from the Crofty Trust and from government.