



GOVERNING BODY OF NEWCOMEN PRIMARY SCHOOL
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD AT 4:30PM ON WEDNESDAY 14 JUNE 2023

Governors Present:

Parent Governors:	Mrs L Hickley and Ms S Phoenix
Staff Governor:	Mrs E Nixon
Co-opted Governors:	Mrs N Cook, Mr B Greenwood (Vice Chair), Mrs S Hobday, Mrs S Hopper, Mr E Jones (Deputy Headteacher) and Dr B Lamb
Local Authority Governor:	Mr M Hassack (Chair)
Headteacher:	Miss K Pusztai

The meeting was held in school and started at 4:30pm. Of the 11 Governors in position at the time of the meeting, all were present, and the required quorum was met at all times.

1.	NEWCOMEN PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM INTENT
1.1	The Headteacher detailed the foundations of the school's Curriculum Intent; in January 2020, the journey began with the formulation and creation of the school's very own personalised curriculum intent with the question, 'What do we want for all our pupils by the time they have left Newcomen Primary School in Year 6?' The words that were formulated through a lengthy consultation process with all staff represent a whole school shared vision and these words will not be found anywhere else. They are unique to Newcomen Primary School and lie at the heart of everything the school believes in. The curriculum intent is the set of goals and principles that the school wants all children to aspire to during their journey through the school. The Headteacher talked through the 5 pillars in Learning Area 2 that represent our whole school intent:
1.2	<u>Pillar 1: I Can and I Will</u>
1.2.1	<i>We want our children to demonstrate self-discipline, resilience and confidence in order to embrace and persevere with challenges regardless of outcome.</i>
1.2.2	The Headteacher stated that the school gives children confidence and fosters a culture of resilient learning.
1.3	<u>Pillar 2: Knowledge is Power</u>
1.3.1	<i>We want our children to have a deep commitment to learning and retain their thirst for knowledge leaving school each day wiser than when they arrived.</i>
1.3.2	The Headteacher stated that the ethos of leaving school each day knowing more than you knew at the start of the day is something that is deeply rooted in the school's principles. The

	<p>school feels passionately that by knowing more and learning more, the children are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to have successful and fulfilling lives.</p>
1.4	<u>3: It's a Wonderful World</u>
1.4.1	<i>We want our children to be self-aware individuals proud of their unique heritage whilst being informed citizens of the world with a respectful compassion for all.</i>
1.4.2	The Headteacher stated that the school's desire is to ensure the children have a strong sense of belonging. It is essential that they know who they are and where they come from coupled with an empathy and understanding of the wonderful world around them.
1.5	<u>Pillar 4: I Stand Tall</u>
1.5.1	<i>We want our children to follow their individual chosen path by standing tall and being comfortable in their own skin whilst embracing and celebrating their unique virtues and qualities.</i>
1.5.2	The Headteacher stressed the importance of celebrating difference and the ability to stand tall and be proud of all the characteristics and qualities that make us truly unique. This is important for our children, our staff and our families.
1.6	<u>Pillar 5: I Will Play My Part</u>
1.6.1	<i>We want our children to lead a happy and fulfilling life in which they demonstrate a commendable work ethic striving to be the best version of themselves and become responsible citizens who play a positive role in modern day society.</i>
1.6.2	The Headteacher commented on the importance of embedding and promoting a culture of working hard whilst at primary school and beyond. The promotion of a strong work ethic is embedded throughout school and the sense of unity and belonging as one family ensures that all children want to play their part to be the very best versions of themselves and to contribute to the greater good.
2.	SELF-EVALUATION FORM (SEF)
2.1	The Headteacher discussed the purpose of the SEF document and the important role it plays within school. The Headteacher also talked through the SEF summary, she highlighted how essential it is that the SEF clearly links with a school's curriculum intent. At Newcomen Primary School, the SEF and curriculum intent are firmly aligned to ensure clarity and a consistent sense of purpose and whole school approach.
2.2	<u>Part 1: Quality of Education</u>
2.2.1	Our values reflect our commitment to high expectations of everyone where our curriculum is designed to allow all our children to develop important human qualities and dispositions. We work relentlessly to ensure there are no 'invisible' children here, recognising and celebrating everyone's uniqueness and success. Everyone in our school is important and included. We promote an ethos of care and trust where every member of our school community feels that they truly belong and are valued, working in partnership with parents and carers.
2.2.2	We are proud of our humanity-rich/knowledge-rich curriculum (which is strong, ambitious and research based), cultivating a love of knowledge ensuring our children are equipped to be the best version of themselves and become responsible citizens who play a positive role in modern day society.

2.3	<u>Part 2: Behaviour and Attitudes</u>
2.3.1	Pupils demonstrate impressive attitudes to learning in lessons and this makes a significant contribution to the exceptional progress they make. Pupils wholeheartedly embrace and are proud of the school's mission statement of Believe Achieve Succeed. This is a direct result of our whole school relentlessly consistent approach and genuine home-school partnership. Pupils show a high level of respect and tolerance for others both in school and in the wider community. Pupils live out the British Values in their daily interactions and a respectful culture is clear in the positive relationships around school. Pupils' behaviour is impeccable and they are recognised for their actions linked to the important values such as empathy, kindness and tolerance. Staff encourage pupils to stand tall and celebrate their uniqueness. Pupils throughout school feel safe.
2.3.2	Due to the excellent support we provide for our families in times of difficulty, attendance has remained consistently above the national figure. <i>September 2022 up to 26 May 2023</i> <i>(NPS 95.7% compared to the overall national of 92.5% and overall primary figure of 94%).</i>
2.4	<u>Part 3: Personal Development</u>
2.4.1	Leaders' commitment to the wider development of pupils is exceptional. Personal development is at the heart of our school as it promotes and embeds a range of skills that allow children to be life-long learners. This is all a part of our children's personal development, which permeates through everything we teach, explore and value. We strongly believe in helping our children to build their personal identities, confidence and self-esteem and understand what influences their decisions developing self-understanding, empathy and the ability to work with others. This helps our pupils to enjoy healthy and positive relationships in all aspects of their daily lives.
2.4.2	Pupils are confident that they are valued, appreciated and loved. We have an exceptionally strong pupil voice and School Council meets weekly the Headteacher and Governor Mrs Hobday to make decisions to benefit the school. We actively teach topical issues and are committed to a strict zero tolerance policy on any discrimination, harassment or bullying regarding all protected characteristics. We are extremely proud to have achieved School of Sanctuary status and are committed to supporting young people seeking sanctuary with our culture of welcome and inclusion.
2.5	<u>Part 4: Leadership and Management</u>
2.5.1	At Newcomen Primary School, we believe in collective ownership, shared accountability and continued school improvement. Our team approach, including effective governance, an exceptional management and leadership team and well-trained and committed staff, demonstrate a high degree of ambition and a relentless approach with effective systems, which ensures all groups of children achieve extremely well. All members of staff are driven with an inner desire to secure the best outcomes for our children and their families.
2.5.2	All leaders are aspirational for pupils and committed to providing them with the best possible life chances. Leaders ensure that moral values and integrity underpin all aspects of school life. Staff say that they feel valued and heard. They recognise the efforts that leaders make to consider their workload and well-being. Staff describe leaders as inspirational. Staff remain working here as no one wants to leave.
2.5.3	<i>"Newcomen Primary School is improving the life chances of its pupils." (Ofsted May 2022.)</i>

2.5.4	The Headteacher discussed the journey the school had been on since 2009 where it found itself 44/45 of all the schools in the local authority when measured on value-added. The transformation and journey has been profound and the whole school community should be proud of the hard work, dedication and commitment that has contributed to making the school one of the highest performing schools nationally; in 2022, the schools was ranked 16 th in The Sunday Times top 200 state primary schools. The Headteacher stressed that the strength of the curriculum has played a pivotal role in the remarkable progress that has been made during this period. It is the school's 'knowledge rich' and 'humanity rich' intent that combine to make something extremely unique and special.
3.	EXCEPTIONAL CURRICULUM OFFER
3.1	The Chair of Governors asked the teaching staff to articulate what it is that makes the school's 'knowledge rich' and 'humanity rich' curriculum offering so exceptional. The teaching staff all contributed to the following collective response:
	<p data-bbox="199 712 454 745"><u>Knowledge Rich</u></p> <p data-bbox="71 786 608 819">3.2 <u>Knowledge and Progression</u></p> <p data-bbox="71 860 1530 1111">3.2.1 The teaching staff stressed that in all subjects there is clear progression in both knowledge and skills. It is both purposeful and carefully designed. The knowledge, skills and vocabulary needed for each lesson is meticulously planned for and nothing is left to chance. This ensures that the children are very clear about what it is they must know and apply. Carefully sequenced concepts and themes also run through each subject with prior knowledge revisited and built upon. This enables strong foundations to be laid with knowledge committed to long-term memory.</p> <p data-bbox="71 1151 1530 1480">3.2.2 As well as fulfilling the statutory requirements of the national curriculum, the school prides itself on going above and beyond with a challenging and bespoke curriculum offer that meets the needs of the children and their backgrounds. We believe that an exceptional curriculum is constantly evolving to be the best it can be. Due to the fact that the majority of children within the school are White British who live in a post-industrial coastal town, specific and deliberate opportunities are implemented to ensure that the children are exposed to experiences and learning opportunities that they usually may not encounter. This could be visiting a mosque, learning about classical composers, reading about the first black astronaut, or inviting a refugee into school to talk to the children about his experiences. This is carefully planned for.</p> <p data-bbox="71 1520 1530 1626">3.2.3 Evidence-informed pedagogy plays a strong role in our curriculum provision. This research-based evidence from sources such as Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction ensures that there is a clear and consistent methodology behind the delivery of the lessons.</p> <p data-bbox="71 1666 1530 1883">3.2.4 The school also places great focus on oracy across all aspects of the curriculum. The Headteacher stated that oracy is often a forgotten skill in educational settings. At Newcomen Primary School, the mantra of 'assume nothing' is given great attention and focus. Key opportunities are planned for and implemented to ensure that all children develop the ability to communicate effectively by utilising the skills and knowledge they have acquired during the journey throughout school.</p> <p data-bbox="71 1924 1530 2132">3.2.5 The manner in which knowledge is revisited ensures that pupils are equipped with skills and knowledge, which stays with them for the rest of their lives. The Headteacher commented that when she met a past pupil who is currently sitting her GCSEs, this pupil commented to her that she still makes use of the writing checklist in her writing and the vocabulary that she acquired during her time at Newcomen, was used in her recent English examination in descriptive writing.</p>

3.2.6	<p>The teaching staff stated that they take great pride in the variety of exceptional schemes that have been implemented within school to enhance the educational provision and curriculum delivery. They support non-expert teachers to teach to an extremely high standard on a consistent basis. Fidelity is given to the scheme but professional fidelity is also used to ensure that all schemes are utilised in a manner that ensures a consistency in pedagogy in line with the school's own values and ethos: strength lies in consistency. Shaping and moulding the curriculum for the children. All subjects are taught with equal rigour within school and are aligned with the 'Newcomen Way'. Consistency in pedagogy ensures best outcomes for the children.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Vocabulary and Reading</u></p>
3.3.1	<p>Vocabulary acquisition, retention and application play a critical role at Newcomen Primary School. They act as the bedrock and the foundation of the curriculum. It is a daily focal point in every subject with a particular emphasis on Tier 2 (T2) and Tier 3 (T3) words.</p>
3.3.2	<p>The Headteacher commented that vocabulary acquisition is a national priority. When she first started her headship at Newcomen, vocabulary acquisition and application was extremely poor. Children entering the school had a very limited knowledge and understanding of the world and were unable to identify common objects. The Headteacher also referred to the culture where children are perhaps left to stare at screens with limited social and cultural interaction from those around them. A great deal of hard work has been undertaken to ensure that effective and impactful measures have been implemented to counteract this.</p>
3.3.3	<p>Reading is given priority at Newcomen Primary School. The school's approach to reading has been devised to ensure that it addresses social and cultural barriers, which may affect the children in their locality. Reading is exploited explicitly at every opportunity as a result. This includes shared reading, guided reading, home reading, READ (Read, Enjoy and Discover) Award and the Reading for Pleasure Award.</p>
3.3.4	<p><i>"The wider reading curriculum is exceptionally strong. Stories that pupils will study are carefully chosen to inspire them and broaden their understanding of the world. Daily story time is valued and enjoyed by staff and pupils alike. Leaders ensure that learning to read is prioritised for younger pupils."</i> (Ofsted May 2022.)</p>
3.3.5	<p>Lessons are underpinned by quality texts where appropriate. Books are carefully chosen to ensure that children are exposed to a wide range of genres. This helps equip them with the knowledge and understanding of the diverse world around them. Story time is valued across the school and fostering a love of reading is championed. The school wants children to live a happy and fulfilling life and reading plays a pivotal role in this. If children can't read, they are unable to access the wider curriculum; reading is an essential component of the school's curriculum. Parents and carers play a pivotal role and the school works tirelessly to ensure they proactively support the reading values and ethos of the school.</p>
3.4	<p><u>SEND</u></p> <p>The SENCDO emphasised that the school's broad and balanced curriculum is ambitious for all learners. Quality First teaching is at the forefront of this. Children with SEND at school do remarkably well regarding academic outcomes and personal achievements by the time they leave in Year 6. Personalised interventions and a graduated approach provide children with the support to flourish resulting in all children achieving exceptionally well including those with SEND. Strategies are appropriately adjusted and extremely effective Individual Support Plans are implemented working closely with parents and carers. The</p>

<p>3.5</p> <p>3.6</p> <p>3.6.1</p> <p>3.6.2</p>	<p>SENDCO is extremely visible throughout school and works within the classrooms. She supports many children with their learning and has an extensive knowledge and understanding of all the SEND children within school. The SENDCO highlighted the high expectations of pupils with SEND and that ambitious standards are set for all children to achieve; appropriate adjustments and adaptations ensure this. Strong relationships are fostered with our all our children and a great importance is placed on building their resilience.</p> <p><u>Feedback and Assessment</u></p> <p>Founded on extensive research on effective practice, a comprehensive Feedback and Assessment Policy was introduced to ensure that staff workload was given priority as the well-being of staff is of paramount importance. The policy also ensured the effective use of both summative and formative assessment across all phases. This has created a culture of continual checking and reinforcement of learning. The policy has also enabled children to take ownership of their learning by providing instant feedback within the lesson regarding their own understanding of concepts being taught. This enables teaching staff to constantly adapt their next lesson for maximum impact.</p> <p><u>Staff</u></p> <p>The Headteacher stated that a great deal of consideration is given to optimising the strengths and expertise of staff within school. Teachers, who are expert in a particular subject area, are employed across the school to ensure best outcomes for children. This includes making adaptations to the timetable to facilitate this. The school believes in the importance of teaching staff becoming 'expert' in their particular phases and honing their craft in their subject areas fostering a culture of continual improvement and professional development. The Headteacher has a clear understanding of her team; she knows everyone's strengths and she utilises this in the most successful manner to impact on positive outcomes for all learners.</p> <p>Teaching staff and support staff attend all staff training; this ensures shared accountability and a whole school team ethos.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>HUMANITY RICH</p>
<p>4.1</p> <p>4.1.1</p> <p>4.1.2</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.2.1</p>	<p><u>Behaviour</u></p> <p>The staff feel very strongly that the leadership team within school supports and empowers them to ensure extremely high standards are implemented across the whole school. Teachers are empowered to teach with no disruption to learning due to the impeccable behaviour of the children. A strong focus on positive behaviour ensures that children aspire to this and any new children arriving in school gravitate towards this positive norm and emulate their peers. All children want to behave well and all children understand the importance of learning in a calm and purposeful environment. This is a shared responsibility implemented with very clear and consistent expectations and through the compassion and mutual respect that children and staff have for each other.</p> <p><i>"Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They treat each other courteously and explain why manners are important."</i></p> <p>(Ofsted May 2022)</p> <p><u>SMSC</u></p> <p>The Headteacher stated that it is not until you walk around the school, do you truly get a 'feel' for what a special and remarkable place Newcomen Primary School is. So many</p>

<p>4.2.2</p> <p>4.2.3</p>	<p>facets of the curriculum combine to make a truly unique and inspirational educational setting. This includes SMSC, British Values, high expectations, collective worship, strong relationships, community and charity work. Pupil voice plays a pivotal role within this. The children know and understand that their voices are not only listened to, but also acted upon. This provides them with a real sense of ownership and knowledge that they truly make a difference. In particular, they are extremely proud of the school's focus on conservation and the support of local, national and international charities. The children have also taken great pride and joy in selecting heroes, who have had a profound impact on our world, to celebrate in Learning Area 4 (Heroes Past and Present).</p> <p>All personal development opportunities are meticulously planned and implemented and nothing is left to chance. The school prides itself on fostering close relationships with the children, their parents and the community. Opportunities are exploited to ensure that the local community plays a pivotal role in the curriculum provision across school. The school wants their children to have a strong sense of belonging and know more about where they live. Visits to the local area and visitors into school provide strong curriculum enrichment opportunities where the children can apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired. During such experiences, the children are always a credit to their families and school displaying mutual respect and impeccable manners.</p> <p>The environment within school is given utmost priority. The whole school team strive to create a setting that raises aspirations for all the children. It is a home away from home that encourages all children to have respect and care. The school is never standing still due to their internal desire to do what is right for the children, families and community.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>FEEDBACK FROM THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS</p>
	<p>Following discussions with staff, the Chair of Governors provided feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are all wonderful and are all so passionate. • The school has been on a remarkable journey over the years. • The curriculum is exceptional because everything is explicitly planned. • Personal Development clearly fits into all aspects of the curriculum. • There is a clear demonstration of the understanding of subject interconnection. • The values that you instil in school spills over to families and makes a difference. • The start, the pupils with SEND are given in life, is amazing.
<p>6.</p>	<p>POINTS TO CONSIDER</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't underestimate what you do. What is the norm for Newcomen is not the norm elsewhere. Don't take all the wonderful work that you do for granted. • You help change the life chances for children and change generations. This should not be underplayed. • Another governor commented that as a parent/relative of children in two different year groups, she could clearly see the consistency in the curriculum delivery.