

THE SPIRE FEDERATION

Governor Monitoring Visit

North Cockerington School
Monday 16th May 2016

M.French and D.Manders were invited to the Leadership Team Meeting with Lesley Thornes, Jane Amey and Lynn Moors.

It was very pleasing to start the morning by meeting a Year 5 pupil who had received a Headteacher's Award for his progress in writing. This showed good development of joined up writing and the pupil was clearly pleased to have received his award and have it recognised.

The purpose of the meeting was to carry out a strategic overview of The Spire Federation Schools Development Plan 2015 – 2016.

Improvement in mathematics was discussed and a scheme put forward by the National Centre for Teaching Excellence in Mathematics was considered. This would attract funding of £1000 and would require two teachers to be involved in a Maths Hub giving feedback and responses to the Yorkshire based team. This would help to embed mastery in maths across our schools. It could perhaps involve one teacher from each school from different age group teaching. The full costing implications would need to be explored further.

The KYRA group is a teaching alliance which looks as though it could provide support and professional development opportunities to replace those previously offered by CfBT. If a group of local schools were to engage with KYRA then it might be possible to see a KYRA East established closer to our schools rather than having to access training at Lincoln.

The place of writing in the new curriculum was discussed. It was felt that some of the tasks being expected were designed simply to match data expectations. The preferred and professional judgement would seem to indicate that teaching needs to build up earlier skills in order to achieve the new requirements. It was noted that there is no allowance for dyslexia under the new orders but there is a recognition of the use of dialect. Over the past year it was felt that teaching and learning have improved through good learning experiences.

Teaching Assistants are an expensive part of our schools budgets and as such we need to be sure we are making best use of their contributions. It was agreed that TAs will need to be 'upskilled'. Professional development will need to extend to these members of staff. Already we have very good TAs in place and it may be just a matter of directing their expertise into more focused areas. There are recognised levels of qualification for TAs but we look also for interpersonal skills.

The team considered the question of sustainability. We need to have in place involvements with local groups and clusters for training and development so that when staff leave these structures are in place and new members of staff can easily slot into them. We need to be open and aware of the need for future appointments.

Kindred Spirits and Global Awareness : ISA (International Schools Award) is to be renewed. The British Council Project work will continue – LM to visit China over the period of the October half-term. A visit is planned to our partner school in Whitechapel, east London in June – this might include a visit to a Mosque. It is hoped to continue the school partnership next year but it is not felt that we can afford the £500 for Kindred Spirits.

Assessment : on-going in the development plan and especially relating to the new curriculum. E.g. the terms 'some' 'many' and 'most' need to be defined. The Leadership Team will review assessment in the autumn term when they have SATs results available. It was noted that classes at North Cockerington will be named rather than identified by year group allocations.

This was a very productive and informative meeting. Thank you to the Leadership Team for inviting us to join you and share in your discussions.

Mel French

David Manders.