

Governors Meeting February 2020

Academic and Pastoral committee

1) High Performance Learning (HPL)

INSET

Eight different members of staff all gave condensed example lessons in their subject highlighting a strand of the HPL philosophy. This was both interesting and informative and really very funny at times. It was a very good start to the term with staff engaged in conversations about teaching and learning.

The Pre-prep staff were unable to attend the INSET and so the session was videoed. Pre-prep staff have subsequently watched the INSET and discussed aspects in their staff meetings.

Not only did this highlight how the HPL strands could be incorporated across the curriculum, it also showed what a wide range of excellent teachers we have at Westbourne.

Talk to parents

About 25-30 parents attended a talk about HPL within the school and what differences this would make to how we were teaching the pupils.

Key messages for the parents were:

- The school's belief that absolutely every pupil has the potential to succeed. For some the journey takes longer, but we know that with the right opportunities, support, motivation and practice all our children can reach the required standard. Think "driving test" - Are the drivers who took longer to pass their test any worse than the drivers who passed first time?
- What does that success look like at Westbourne? The answer: the ability of an individual to thrive in the next stage of life (whatever that is) - both socially and academically; whether that be science, music, horticulture, art, music, sport or the corporate world. Success for Westbourne, is well adjusted confident pupils that have all the mental strategies needed to thrive including creativity, growth mindset, social skills, problem solving, intellectual curiosity and confidence.
- HPL with its systematic teaching of certain traits, characteristics and learning styles empowers pupils to think independently, creatively and be emotionally intelligent.
- Parents can support their children by modelling HPL at home. Mrs Langford gave the example of putting up a shelf at home. If the shelf is wonky, instead of saying 'I'm rubbish at DIY' you could be reflecting out loud that 'perhaps I should have spent more time measuring before drilling the holes. I'll do that next time.'
- Recent research has shown that past assumptions about people's abilities and talents through gender, genetics or race are not valid. As K.Anders Ericsson, Swedish psychologist and Professor of Psychology at Florida State University says "Talent is grotesquely overrate. Deliberate practice is the secret to excellence."
- We place children in sets based on their current performance not 'ability'. We know that all pupils have the ability to change their current performance.

Videoing of lessons

We have now started videoing a number of lessons. We have videos from the Maths, English and Art Departments and from the Pre-prep.

I would like to show you a couple of these short videos in the meeting.

This is an excellent way of sharing of good practice amongst our staff. At the moment the videos are on main-shared but and I am looking at the best ways to share them.

3) Music

The inter-patrol music day was another huge success with 254 individual performances, 12 ensembles and of course every pupil participating in the inter-

patrol songs. The comradery and team work seen during the day, coupled with the excellence of individuals showcases that Westbourne ideal of excellence within inclusivity.

In order to engage more pupils in the music, we have decided to have academic staff in the school orchestra. We want to make music seem less elite and show the pupils that this is a part of life for all sorts of staff and not just the music department. This will start after half term and staff will perform in the concert at the end of the summer term.

The music department tried to start up a local orchestra for primary aged children but sadly there was not much uptake. This could have been the marketing and/or timing. It is definitely something worth trying again.

4) iSAMs

5) ICT

6) Overseas pupils in exams

7) International week

This year all departments took responsibility for planning international events within the curriculum.

A sample of activities is included here:

English: Japanese Haikus

Maths: Multiplication from Scotland, India, Russia and Egypt

Geography: Enormous world map drawn in chalk on a grid outside.

RS: Flags and symbols of religions from around the world.

Art: Anezka Kasparkova – 91-year-old Czech Street Artist

8) IN Department

9) Book look

10) Department reviews

Each department wrote a review and development plan in the INSET in January. Recurring themes included:

- Re-writing and updating Schemes of Work in light of Common Entrance and HPL. This will need to be in place by the end of this academic year.
- Using more ICT in lessons where appropriate. With only one laptop trolley (18 laptops) this continues to prove a problem when trying to book them for lessons.

11) Talks for parents

The Maths Department gave a “Back to School for Parents” maths evening earlier this term. The numbers were limited to 24 parents so that they could have a seat and desk. We rattled through proportional reasoning and how it can be applied to Common Entrance questions, in particular fractions and ratio.

This was a popular evening that was over-subscribed, we may need to do another one.

12) Maths and English activities mornings for local primary schools.

Maths and English Departments ran Saturday morning workshops for local primary school children; both sessions were fully booked with local year 3&4 pupils.

Hopefully these are good for our local outreach and charitable status and PR. We have changed the timings to attract pupils before the Sharman Scholarship dates.

13) Future INSET

14)Senior School fair

15) Appointments / Staffing