

Kingsmead and Newton's Walk Review of Progress against 2021-22 Priorities

Governors decided that the priorities set the previous year continued to have great relevance for our direction of travel and reflect the intended foci needed to secure further school improvement; thus, previous priorities are to continue.

Covid Impact. Covid has continued to impact to varying degrees on most aspects of school life. Sadly, it is still with us and sadly is almost a normal challenge to be faced.

The well-being of all has been a priority for governors who have been updated every meeting on challenges, mitigation, and impact.

Questionnaires evidence confidence of all stakeholders in the risk assessments and protocols established and that morale has been as high as could be expected.

As we return to a more or less normal life, we now face the repercussions time out of school brings to progress attainment and behaviour.

The resilience and determination of all has ensured confidence in the quality of education we have been able to offer our pupils

To maximise progress for all

Newton's Walk (NW)

Throughout the year the number of pupils at NW have been lower. This allowed a very personal approach which will hopefully secure progress targets are met by all and reading ages increased significantly.

Kingsmead (KM)

Assessments made in Summer 2020/21 were in line with expectations. Those securing English and Maths GCSE was up, and every pupil left having secured some qualification and key life skills.

At departmental level governors were pleased to see significant improvements in maths and science and PHSCE over the year. English remaining consistently strong.

Access to have high quality data has allowed for scrutiny and the ability to take swift action where underperformance is seen.

The transience and turbulence of our pupil number (at one stage 50% of year 11 was different to the last time data was presented) presents enormous challenges.

For all our pupils, Yrs. 7-11 the journey prior to attending our provision frequently has an enormous impact on behaviour, well-being, progress, and attendance. The personalised approach we employ, and various nurture provisions we provide supports accelerated progress for all.

Covid has continued to impact to such an extent at times that at KM there have been occasions when a class has had to move to remote learning for a limited time.

An important part of our curriculum is our vocational programmes. Covid impacted on our ability to offer these, but it did also give us an opportunity to look carefully at value for money and ensuring we could provide quality opportunities. Plans are afoot to develop our outdoor learning, and wet trade offer.

We continue to invest on our pupils well -being by offering extensive therapeutic and health support services.

To ensure our pupils are prepared for their next stage of learning

Many of our pupils have special needs and for these pupils the annual review of the EHCP is used to plan any phased transfer to the next stage of learning. We have dedicated staff who support transitions, and that support remains in place for a year. Our ability to ensure that every pupil who leaves our provision moves to employment or training has been challenged by Covid. Despite this only 5% (4 pupils) were classed as NEET (not in employment, education, or training).

Over the year we have supported 48 students to transfer to other schools and 39 pupils have secured college places, apprenticeships, or training in the forces.

To further improve behaviour and attendance to support learning

Attendance.

During the Covid lock down the provision was open for pupils.

At this time our attendance statistics exceeded national figures by some 20-40%.

As the recording of covid related absences changed we saw drop in attendance on most sites although at NW and the Castle site it is 90% + and the Special School at 80% + (above National for Special Schools)

Our systems for tracking attendance allow for daily interventions where required, regular reviews with parents and carers and half termly support from the LA

Improving attendance remains a major drive on the school and we thank parents for the support they give.

Behaviour

As with other aspects of school life we have improved our tracking of behaviour related incidents – positive and negative and worked for consistency of systems and improved consistency of application across all sites.

Pupils are awarded positive behaviour points with subsequent rewards.

Since a full return for all and after a very strange period of having to return to school life managing behaviour has been a challenge. During this time suspensions (usually for 1 day) unfortunately went up as expectations were re-established.

We are now seeing improvements. The introduction of a Respect Agreement as part of any sanction and with excellent parental support we have seen some real improvements in behaviour and little re – offending. The restorative justice work has also seen benefits with some 74% of interventions bringing success. Running alongside this work has been staff training and the introduction of a programme called “Thrive “which supports the social and emotional well-being of pupils.

Continue to develop rigorous processes to ensure that the Teaching over Time judgement is robust, and quality of teaching continues to improve so that all teaching is good or better

The quality of teaching across KM and NW is very high
The focus for staff training over the year has been to support teachers to improve their teaching skills and methods. As we move through the year there is an increasing focus on ensuring quality feedback to pupils to support their understanding and progress.
The Leadership team quality assure and monitor this work looking at teaching, workbooks, and progress data. Over 90% of teaching is judged to be at least good.

Continue to review aspects of the provision to ensure our school vision can be delivered in terms of curriculum staffing, accommodation, and value for money

Our vision of SHINE and RESPECT permeates all that we do and is the bedrock of our ethos and culture. Governors constantly monitor to ensure that this vision is a reality.
The expectations of Ofsted to ensure quality intent implementation and impact of the curriculum has supported our reviews and work over the last year, including the continued development of the nurture curriculum at the Special School, the aspirational curriculum at our Castle base and the development of our vocational curriculum.

At the Special School Ofsted said that
“The Curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. It is shaped by the leaders’ clear understanding of their pupils all of whom have special educational needs or disabilities. Leaders have made extensive changes to the curriculum to ensure it is suitable for everyone “

Our accommodation is spread across the city and each base poses its own challenges. We are blessed in the Site manager and team we employ to manage these sites. Their skills and dedication are of the highest standards have been acknowledged by external audits and the Local Authority as being outstanding.
The Governor Resources Committee continue to monitor health and safety and site security and are provided with detailed reports as well as opportunities to monitor by site visits such things as the Assets register.
Regular fire drills are carried out on each site

Value for money in all major purchases is assured by the School Business Manager and governor monitoring.

To achieve a balanced budget and financial sustainability

Balancing the budget has been a major challenge again this year.
Despite this we have managed it and achieved overall a small carry forward.
Covid saw an initial drop in pupil numbers (hence a drop in income) which in much of the provision is starting to rise.
This budgetary challenge sits alongside the LAs restructuring of SEND and Social Emotional and Mental Health provision for the city.

There have been extensive discussions throughout the year as to how our provision can best support our current pupils and the demands of the city. The results of this are still not fully known. They could offer tremendous opportunities for our pupils and ensure financial security.

Continue to develop the effectiveness of governance

Governance and Leadership of the provision remains strong.

This has been evidenced by several external audits and an Ofsted Inspection at the Special School which resulted in a good judgement.

Governors have continued to monitor the work of the provision by either remote or face to face meetings. Over the year governor training has tended to be online.

As part of the annual review of our own practice we feel that if anything, the current circumstances have sharpened our game and have not detracted from our core functions.

The Annual Governor Day provides an opportunity to look at areas we may require additional information on, or to have time to look at aspects of school life we may not normally have time for in meetings. This is an invaluable opportunity, for which we thank staff. Governors are always amazed at the commitment and humbled by the dedication of our staff.

Covid 19 – Establish protocols to ensure that our school community is supported. That the shape of the day, curriculum structure, staffing and sites provide a safe learning environment. Embed robust business continuity plans to ensure our school community is prepared for future crises

At every meeting with governors the Executive Head has reported on the well-being of pupils and staff. All questionnaires of stakeholders have evidenced confidence in the risk assessment that have been carried out.

The evaluation of every one of our priorities has been impacted on by Covid. It is therefore important that this does not become an excuse for not pressing ahead with our vision. As Covid drags on we are in a strong position to feel confident that we can cope with the challenges and provide a safe environment for all.

Our Priorities for the coming year 2022- 2023

Governors feel that these objectives are still relevant and continue to drive our work.