Cambo First School Governor Monitoring Visit. Equalities Legal Compliance. 09.04.2025

In attendance: Paula Cummings (HT)

Gill Finch (Schools EDI Lead)

Isobel Fairnley (Governor)

Pam Hartburn (Governor)

Purpose of the meeting

We meet annually to discuss the previous school year, and the challenges, opportunities and emerging concerns that will influence children's perceptions of equality and best inclusive practice.

Reflection: What did happen over the past twelve months?

When we last met, we discussed and shared our commitment to international links and friendships as a valuable opportunity to educate and inform children about the wider contexts of the world, and to help broaden knowledge and understanding of different lifestyles and people than those we encounter in rural Northumberland. Since British Council funded projects linking schools with partners in African countries came to an end, Cambo has been looking at ways to meet new international partners and sustain new friendships and learning opportunities.

In Autumn 2024, Julia had been selected to take part in a UK German Connection funded weekend to Mainz to explore new connections and find a school partner in Germany. She came back with partnerships in both Berlin and Edinburgh. These are gradually developing as pupils make and exchange shoe boxes of information about their identity, area and heritage. UK German Connection also has funding streams to enable staff or pupils to visit one-another and pay for accommodation once the projects and partnerships are established.

Paula explained how responsive and protective the PSHE curriculum and assemblies are in school, as many world events, as well as issues of body changes and growing up are of great importance to the children; they are entitled to know about and discuss issues that matter to them.

Picture News is used to provoke discussion, awareness of the wider world, and big questions of equality, equity, justice and responsibility. It is delivered as a weekly photo-based resource, and recent topical questions have included:

- Whose job is it to keep places clean and tidy (Birmingham bin strikes)
- Should music be part of every school day? (Ed Sheeran's letter to Keir Starmer about funding for music education in schools)
- How can we stay safe in the sun? (Our unusually warm spring weather).

The Pupils also have access to a publication called The Week Junior; a current affairs subscription resource, with articles written deliberately to spark conversations and a love of reading.

We had also had a session for the Year 4 children about the use of racist language, how the language that may seem current or even comical has longstanding associations with the systemic marginalisation, disempowerment and abuse of people of Global Majority heritage. For some of the children this had been emotionally difficult content to hear about and discuss. They has had the opportunity to ask questions and we answered them all during the session. Some new resources were also purchased for school, based on the children's response to them.

Monitoring progress towards meeting the previous objectives set for the 2020-2025 Cycle

Objective 1: Preparation for life in Modern Britain

We assessed the progress made against all of the milestones set last year, and these were all achieved, however we felt that one aspect of the work that we need to prioritise is to continue to recognise and work to address the precarity and inequalities faced by rural families.

We are a family-based school and we know how important it is to challenge misconceptions about rural life, and to continue to learn about, signpost and work with partners to address housing precarity, DA, the issues of transport and access to resources urban families can take for granted. We will retain and refine this objective for the next cycle.

Objective 2: post-Covid learning and the opportunities within the 'new' (in 2020) aspects of the PSHE curriculum. That curriculum was reviewed in 2024, and no response or outcome to the consultation process has been published. We await more clarity in 2025, and hope that it enhances rather than restricts the access children can have to learning at the right time in their lives, rather than at set points defined in statutory guidance.

This objective has largely been met and does not need to be extended, however a new, second objective will be developed that ensures that we teach with confidence and accuracy about protected characteristics, vulnerability and marginalised identities and how to be kind and respectful to one another and to others. This comes under the Fostering Good Relations and the Eliminate Harassment and discrimination areas of the Public Sector Equality Duty.It is a very fitting objective for our school's ethos and values.