

## **Gillespie School Learning Committee**

### **Review of Art provision and SEND provision updates**

Minutes: 21 Feb 2024

In attendance:

Jodie Reed (Chair)

Mark Owen, Lynwen Jones, Shelley Wragg

Dan Hamilton, Hafsa Abokar, Mandy Leatham

Apologies:

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of the meeting was to review the provision of art and SEND elements with regard to the updated school improvement plan. This following on from the deep dive on SEND that was provided during the 2023 summer term (I think)

#### **Art**

It has been some time since governors were provided with an update on art priorities and teaching. Mark feels the school is now able to devote more attention to art and notes it plays a critical role in mental health and wellbeing of children. In general, art topics have been linked to real world activities. The early years provision tends to be a freer curriculum with more holistic skills and learning in early years.

The school is keen to enhance provision. The SLT have observed art lessons during the term and identified some inconsistencies in delivery. Some of these are already being addressed. Notably these relate to improvement of teaching sequences in some areas to bring these in line with good practice in other areas of art teaching. With regards to the curriculum and enhancements, the team are reviewing diversity of coverage across the curriculum and ensuring equity in visits to galleries across year groups.

Lyn noted that there has been an improvement in art teaching sequences – relating to the start-to-completion of an art project (rather than sequencing across years). Done well, sequencing can demonstrate evidence of progression and learning and how skills have been developed. Lyn described supporting teachers to introduce reflection points for children during the process of teaching elements or projects, to enable ongoing demonstration of application of techniques, skills and learning.

Lyn described the twice-termly monitoring of sketch books that are used by children, to better understand teaching practice. Teachers have been encouraged to use sketch books more widely to capture work in progress and 'rough' elements that also demonstrate children's output and thinking process. This connects to an emphasis away from 'finished' work or perfection. Children are also being challenged to try things differently, to share why they have taken certain approaches with other classmates and teachers are using in-lesson feedback methods.

The school is striving to improve delivery of collaborative work in groups or whole class projects, and described a number of projects that will support this outcome. There is enthusiasm from staff to be creative with ideas and with the space the school can offer. However, the school doesn't have the scale to make one large collaborative piece each year so must be considered.

Governors asked about the support for teachers across the school to deliver the curriculum, especially if they are less confident in their own artistic abilities. Lyn, Mark and Shelley reflected on the importance of collaboration and co-support. Teachers are reviewing each others projects and techniques along with the feedback on use of sketchbooks. There is much that can be learnt from collaboration; SLT notes an example of Hassan making use of technology to deliver an art lesson is a new way that was very engaging for children.

The school plans to participate in a number of group art projects that have previously been very successful. Lyn described the Take One Picture project run by the National Gallery, which previously led to yr5 and yr6 pieces being included in an exhibition. The school plan for each class to submit an entry for the 2024 programme. Another successful project is Writing through Art (Futurezone).

Governors were very encouraged by the schools proposals and attention to art and proposed that the classroom observation in summer term could focus on art.

### **SEND adaptations update**

Following on from a prior in-depth look at how SEND children are engaged with and supported (all children with support needs, not just those with official designations/ programmes/ diagnoses) Lyn provided an update on changes that have been implemented since Spring term 2023. In general, the financial situation for all schools continues to impact what support can be offered and the school's budget for this provision is extremely limited, however, there are clear plans in place and Lyn has been very creative.

During 2023, Lyn repurposed space to create the Nurture Room, which provides space for a limited group of SEND children in EYFS and YR1 to support their learning. Lyn presented a timetable that has been established, which mirrors the mainstream lessons. Even though the approach looks labour intensive, its designed to support the children eventually being in the classroom for more time. Children from other year groups also benefit from the space, and it is available to external providers such as Speech and Language Therapists (SALT) for individual sessions. Lyn received external validation from the specialists (from the Bridge and local authority) for implementing this space, as well as the use of early morning sensory circuits that help children settle into the school day.

Progress for these children can be measured via ECHPs and the plans that Lyn has for all the children with needs under her purview.

The scheduling is designed to allow for training up expertise in the LSAs – they can attend sessions with providers, as can classroom teachers being covered by Lyn. Trickle down

training therefore happens from both private and NHS SALT providers. Providers share and reinforce learning objectives so children can apply learning. Governors asked about the funding for SALT in the school budget, which sometimes comes via EHCPs. Matched funding by school is not possible with the funding constraints - Funding is an issue across the borough. Islington also has a high percentage of pupils with additional needs (which has been under scrutiny as it is higher than nationally), slowing down provision.

SLT visited Ambler to view their sensory room to understand how it is being used. Lyn has been creative with ways deliver some of these benefits to Gillespie children, notably the early morning sensory circuits. Governors noted that FOG could be approached to supplement the sensory provisions in the nurture room.

Lyn has a programme of training that is being across the teaching body, including on on Word Aware and Colourful Semantics (which is also offered to governors, should they wish to attend).

Outreach support is coming from two third-parties, at Samuel Rhodes and a specialist from the Bridge, that has been successful so far. This has been in part to support two yr3 children who are finding the KS2 curriculum challenging. They have MLD but do not have EHCPs, therefore cannot access support through that channel. Feedback has been threaded into yr3 classroom – again ensuring that learning approaches are cascaded.

Governors asked about support beyond early years, which is comprehensive and tackling the most significant issues. This includes the wellbeing approach across the school (including My Happy Mind and pointing access to CAMHS), pastoral support.

The school reported there is good progress underway on the garden redesign project and described some of the sensory elements included in the design that will better connect the outside space.