Notes on Training 5/2/19

Policies – Evaluating their Impact

* Governors have 4 core functions
  + Setting Strategic Direction
  + Teamwork
  + Creating Robust Accountability
  + Ensuring Financial Probity
* With these core functions in mind, policies are the foundation of our vision and our principles. They should have a positive ethos, reflect our values, be consistent in look and feel, and not be overlong. Anyone looking at our policies on our website should get an immediate and consistent feel for our ethos.
* A policy is a set of principles, not procedures
* Policies underpin our consistency of practice.
* **Most importantly, every policy should set out its aims at the start. [**Once we were told this, evaluating impact rather fell into place!]
* The impact on children in school is the basic aim of all policies. Do our procedures make a difference to the child?
* Contents should
  + Have a consistent look
  + Have a clear focus, be concise and have a purpose
  + Set out roles and responsibilities
  + Explain who has been consulted
  + Highlight links to other policies
  + Have a date of implementation and review
  + Have monitoring and evaluation arrangements
* THE WORST THING WE CAN HAVE ON THE WEBSITE IS A POLICY WITH DATES WHICH ARE OUT OF DATE! THEY SELL OUR BRAND – we *must* look well organised.
* Gathering Evidence REVIEWING IS DIFFERENT FROM MONITORING
  + Monitoring should be driven by the SDP. Can’t do *every* policy though.
  + Every governor can pick up on the effectiveness of policies whenever they come into school. ie monitoring can be built into most other activities.
  + Ofsted inspectors are advised to corroborate evidence through a process of “triangulation”, testing the school’s self evaluation by examining results/outcomes, school records, and observing what actually happens.

* People who can gather evidence
  + FGB/Committee
  + Individual governors
  + Working party
  + Staff
  + Pupils
  + Stakeholders, including wider community
* Methods
  + Perceptions/observations on visits inc assemblies, school events etc
  + Talking to staff, teaching and non-teaching
  + Talking to children
  + Questionnaires to parents eg for internet policy
  + Look at relevant paperwork eg Single Central Record, Accident Book, Staff H&S training records
  + Do a site inspection with a child!

Some schools have found it effective to have a “box” on the agenda at meetings where governors can feed in any kind of evidence they have noticed that a particular policy is working effectively or otherwise. I quite like the sound of this.

MH

10.2.19