

Matching Green CE Primary School

Notes from the review undertaken on 9.6.16 by Amy Wareham acting Headteacher and Hugh Godfrey external school leadership consultant

The key findings from the review

Early Years foundation stage was an example of where very good practice was having a positive impact on the outcomes achieved by the children.

Behaviour across the school was very good, and clearly the children were keen to learn and enthusiastic about their schooling.

The Governing body has an Improvement board (IB) and this is having a positive impact on driving the school forward. The school has undergone a period of uncertainty over the leadership and this has been successfully resolved by the IB.

Teaching across the school was very inconsistent. This was evident in the marking and feedback noted in the work scrutiny and the progress of different groups of children noted from the schools performance data.

The acting Headteacher has challenged poor classroom performance and as such new staff have been appointed, the weak teaching has been removed and the staffing revised according to strengths whilst it is not yet possible to assess the impact of these changes on the outcomes for pupils it is a positive step towards addressing the issue of weak teaching.

The Acting Headteacher has been in post for a very short period of time and her enthusiasm, sound knowledge, willingness to learn, integrity and determination are real strengths which will help her and the IB improve the school despite her lack of experience.

Actions that the school may want to consider in order to improve the outcomes for the pupils.

The curriculum is requiring significant improvement, it is weak in most areas and the school needs to address this as a matter of some urgency. The school's leadership may want to consider different subject leadership models to enable the school to write a timely, relevant and meaningful curriculum that meets both the needs of the schools learners and the statutory requirements.

To challenge and engage the most able children the school may want to consider ways in which it can identify the most able and extend their learning through well planned and appropriately differentiated learning activities.

Teaching is requiring improvement however the actions taken by the acting Headteacher will ensure (hopefully) a much stronger team for September. In order that there is no loss in impetus the SLT may want to consider implementing a rigorous monitoring policy starting from July 2016 and where possible and funds permit induct new staff before the start of the new academic year enabling the new year to start with all staff ambitious for success and prepared to deliver consistently good or better teaching.

Whilst there is a SDP and SEF and these have been updated by the acting Headteacher the targets set could be supported by data that would enable the school leaders to measure the impact of their actions against performance data. This would also ensure that the school's performance can be held to account when compared to all schools/ Essex Schools and similar schools within a given radius. Leaders would benefit from developing a sound understanding of the local and national context by which they can measure and subsequently make improvements to benefit the outcomes for pupils.

Analysis of the performance of pupils in receipt of pupil premium (pp) needs to be undertaken and the IB needs to have sufficient information to comment on, challenge and justify the additional resources given to support these pupils close the disadvantage gap. For example Yr. 5 has 5/11 children on pp this is a very significant number in such a small cohort and an understanding of the progress of these children in relation to the whole cohort is essential and it is information that the school could use to its benefit.

The school would do well to analyse the attendance data, initial views suggest that absence is too high, and this may be related to significant external factors, e.g. illness, holidays etc. or may be a reflection on a dissatisfaction with the classroom climate for learning.

The IB may want to consider ways in which it can ensure that the full governing body is kept up to date with all the ongoing developments in the school.

Leadership and management

(RI plus)

The IB and acting Headteacher have set high expectations for the staff and children, and

With the IB's timely resolution of the Headteacher absence and the appointment of an acting Headteacher the school's leadership has shown itself to have the capacity to become good. The Governors are conducting the business of running the school effectively and evidence shows that they are holding the school to account. Appropriate action by the acting Headteacher to tackle weak teaching has been effective and has been supported by the IB.

Governing Body minutes and discussion with the Chair of Governors indicates that the IB supported by the LA do challenge the schools leadership, however they are very reliant on the acting Headteacher to provide information which through no fault of her own may not be sufficiently detailed or forensic in its analysis.

The curriculum is not broad and balanced, the acting Headteacher is very aware of this and is putting actions in place to address this.

The acting Headteacher and IB have a clear understanding of the schools strengths and areas for development, it is not evident that this is communicated to or understood by the FGB or the staff team.

The performance management and staff development processes are well developed for support staff but owing to issues around the substantive Headteacher have not been fully developed or communicated with teaching staff until the acting Headteacher was appointed,

subsequently performance management is undeveloped and not fully supporting the development of the work force.

Quality of teaching

(RI)

Where teaching was good the pupils were getting accurate and timely feedback as to how to improve their work and as such made rapid progress. Marking was thorough and progress data and assessment indicated that the pupils were making very rapid progress and the majority of the class were on track to achieve above age related expectations (ARE). In EYFS Yr3 and Yr4 evidence of good and outstanding teaching was to be found. The lesson observed in Yr5 and 6 was a good lesson sadly both children and Acting Headteacher reported that this was not typical, and evidence in the books would support that viewpoint

Where teaching was less effective the progress was slower and in some cases there was insufficient progress even regression.

In four year groups there was little evidence of the school making adequate provision for the most able children and much of the evidence suggests that as opposed to challenge the children are just asked to do more of the same.

Assessment and feedback is crucial in understanding where the child is at in their learning journey and providing guidance as to the next steps a child needs to take to continue on that journey of improvement, across the school this was patchy and needs to be improved, where it was well done children made rapid progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

(Good)

Pupils were proud of their school and wanted to do the best that they could, they were confident and articulated their views and feelings about the school well. The pupils were respectful of each other and of the adults who were there to help them.

Behaviour was observed in class, at break in assembly and at lunch and the behaviour was excellent. One child who was finding behaviour an issue followed the schools policy and removed himself to the "blue" bench whereupon he was counselled by a very thoughtful member of staff, before successfully reintegrating. There have been no exclusions, behaviour management was consistently well managed. Dinner hall behaviour was superb and children provided feedback on their meals.

Pupils reported that incidents of bullying were rare but if there was anything that they were unhappy about the staff were very quick to respond and resolve which they appreciated. They also said very clearly that they felt very safe in the school and that they were lucky to be at such a caring school.

The schools use of interactive displays, prayer spaces and reflection areas is commendable, there is a strong thread of spiritual moral and cultural development running through the school which underpins and promotes the schools Christian character and pride in British values.

The assembly using British Sign Language was a good example where the children were making a positive contribution to the core values of the school.

Outcomes for pupils

(RI plus)

The school's data suggests that children in the Early Years, Yr3 Yr4 and Yr6 are making good progress, however there has not been sufficient analysis of Yr1 Yr2 and Yr5 where the picture is less secure especially in writing. The school is confident that the Yr6 results will be an improvement on the 2015 dip and reverse the current downward trend as opposed to the national and LA upward trends. Attainment is below the LA and national values, progress from KS1 is below LA and National in both reading and maths but higher in writing.

From the book scrutiny and lesson observations, English and Maths are better taught and more consistently covered than other subjects, though it is only in EYFS, Yr3 Yr4 and Yr6 where sufficiently strong progress was noted and only in EYFS Yr3 and Yr4 good progress across the whole curriculum. (In fairness to all teachers the weak curriculum doesn't help them achieve a consistent and high quality coverage.)

Early Years

(Good plus)

The provision being made in the early years was very good and as such the majority of pupils make very rapid progress. The children noted as not making such rapid progress are children who have either recently joined the class or have significant SEN, the school has made good and appropriate provision for these children and as such those identified as having SEN are narrowing the gap.

The EYFS staff clearly are highly ambitious for the children and have set high standards which the children aspire to, evaluations are timely and appropriate in setting next step targets for the children, as a result of this high quality teaching children make rapid progress.

The learning activities and opportunities are very well planned and well prepared and the children were very clear on the next steps they needed to take. The adult support in the classroom was very well directed and as such was having a positive impact on the progress that the children were making.

Personal development was a notable strength with the children responding well to the moral challenges being presented to them. The children enjoyed their learning and looked forward to coming to school. The learning was relevant to the children's needs and their stage of development, but moreover it was well structured preparing the children for the next stage of learning and enabling them to move on and grow at a rapid pace.

The children were enthusiastic and cooperated with each other and the adults extremely well. We observed well developed social behaviours where the children actively cared for each other. The children were highly independent and were able to make sensible decisions around their learning.