

Middlesbrough Achievement Team



Easterside Primary Academy Review: 15th November 2016

Review Team: Margaret Colley Head of Achievement, Angela Downing Senior Adviser.

The review notes incorporate information gathered from the joint lesson observation carried out with LA during the past fortnight. The review day consisted of joint learning walks with HT & DHT, discussion about systems and processes, data, the SEF and SIP with HT & DHT, a book scrutiny with all of SLT, a discussion with school council, discussion with Discovery Alliance Chair of RAP Board and a meeting with a group of parents.

This is an outstanding school with a strong staff team, positive ethos and a commitment to giving children the very best start in education and preparing them for the move into secondary school.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- The headteacher and all staff are passionate about creating a learning community which is purposeful, positive and caring. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' skills across the curriculum to become confident and resilient learners who are well-prepared for secondary school.
- Senior and middle leaders work as an exceptionally strong and cohesive team. All aspects of the school are well led. There are high expectations about the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and behaviour which are understood by all and are consistent across the whole school.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and all staff understand the key priorities for improvement. The school's data, assessment and tracking systems are effective in identifying where pupils are not making sufficient progress and where improvements in specific subjects can be achieved. The performance targets of staff are strongly linked to the school priorities and there are excellent systems in place for developing staff at all levels to achieve excellence across the whole school.
- Pupils' make excellent progress from very low starting points because work is closely matched to pupils' needs, there are consistent approaches throughout school and pupils are challenged.
- The school is outward looking and works closely with schools in the Discovery Alliance but also across other schools and LAs in order to share ideas and work with other colleagues to continue to develop the school's practice further. The headteacher has been proactive and sought mutual partnership with an NLE from a neighbouring LA who is now the SIP. The SLT also identify external support to work alongside them in order to validate their work.
- The school provide support across the LA with 4 members of staff being LA moderators covering the 3 key stages. There are also 2 SLEs who provide support and training in their areas of specialism and schools have been impressed with the impact of their work.
- The school involves itself in a wide variety of special projects to really engage pupils and ensure a range of contexts for developing pupils' skills. The school provides a range of ways to enrich the curriculum including visits and visitors that will offer further opportunities for pupils to have first hand experiences.
- The outdoor classrooms have developed over the last couple of years and this has enhanced learning and really engaged pupils who particularly enjoy telling visitors about the chickens.
- Leaders and staff work well with parents and parental engagement has grown over the past few years due to the SLT identifying it as a priority on the school improvement plan. There

are regular opportunities for parents to come into school to share pupils' work and achievements. The 'Marvellous Me' app was praised by parents who really enjoy hearing what their child has done well at school and they can then talk to them about it at home. Stay and Play sessions in EYFS provide a great opportunity for the school to build strong partnerships with parents which continue through school.

- Excellent induction procedures are in place for new staff and staff taking on new responsibilities to ensure that the very high expectations of the school are adhered to and that staff develop their own skills.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- This is a very happy school where staff enjoy working as part of a caring and cohesive team. All teachers and support staff are very well supported by coherent teaching, learning and assessment systems and the support of senior and middle leaders. There is a strong ethos of sharing practice and developing as reflective professionals who are always ready to support others and take on new ideas and approaches to impact positively on pupil progress.
- Teachers and support staff have excellent subject knowledge and use this to probe and extend pupils' learning. Lessons are well organised using a range of practical resources and strategies to enhance learning. Pupils are encouraged and supported to become independent learners.
- There are clear procedures and processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching learning and assessment and to induct new staff. Inexperienced staff are very well supported allowing them to visit other classes in school but also across the Discovery Alliance and further afield. Where staff visit other classes or schools they complete an evaluation proforma and highlight any practice they have seen which they will then incorporate into their lessons, this enables SLT to monitor and evaluate the quality of the CPD.
- In many lessons the support staff are of such high quality that there is a split input which allows for smaller groups and enables all children to be fully involved with high quality adult/child interactions. The inputs are extremely well planned with high quality modelling and questioning by all staff.
- Teachers' link learning across subjects and every opportunity is used to develop and reinforce pupils' basic skills. Pupils are encouraged to learn from each other and work collaboratively. Pupils evaluate their own work and use a self-assessment process as they work so that adults know how they are doing. When pupils feel they need more support they display a yellow cup and if they are really struggling a red cup. An example of where this worked really well was in a Year 2 lesson where a child put the yellow cup on top and before an adult intervened another child on the table asked them what they couldn't do and explained. The child then moved to a green cup and carried on working confidently.
- Pupil progress meetings are rigorous and all pupil groups and individual pupils are tracked carefully to ensure interventions are targeted and have impact. Learning is personalised to ensure every pupil has their current needs met.
- Classroom learning environments are high quality and provide stimulation and support for learning but also to celebrate pupils' work.
- The staff team work extremely well together and are alert to how well pupils are learning during lessons. Misconceptions are quickly used as teaching points and every opportunity is used to support learning or give further challenge.
- There is a strong emphasis on making learning fun and finding opportunities for pupils to investigate and explore both indoors and outdoors. Pupils are extremely attentive during lessons and become engrossed in their learning.
- Continuity and progression is clearly evident across the school and the non-negotiables that

were agreed by all staff are very clear in all classrooms. All adults have high expectations of themselves and their pupils and the pupils live up to expectations in both behaviour and their work.

- Phonics is well taught across EYFS and Key Stage One and children apply their skills consistently in both reading and writing with adults reminding them of certain tricky words and use of the toolkits on tables.
- The development of maths and writing is consistent across the school with progression evident in each year group.
- There is a strong focus on reading, particularly for enjoyment and there are opportunities for pupils who do not get opportunities to read to an adult at home do get opportunities in school and there is a homework club to support pupils too. Pupils talk about the Reading around Middlesbrough initiative and the types of books or authors they prefer.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- There is a strong sense of community throughout the school where all members of the community are respected and very thoughtful about the needs of others and a willingness to help one another.
- Parents are very positive about the high level of support, care and guidance their children receive. Parental engagement in the school community is high and parents speak highly of the opportunities for them to come into school and work alongside their children e.g. Stay and play sessions and open days.
- The school council and ambassadors take their roles very seriously and know that they are listened to and have the opportunity to make a difference in their school. Older pupils also have opportunities to apply for roles within school, be interviewed and have clear induction for their roles this process enables pupils to grow in confidence and feel that they have really earned a position.
- The work of the care team is outstanding in providing support for all pupils and families when it is most needed. The whole staff are very aware of needing to support pupils' emotional needs and support is very effective in ensuring every child's needs are met.
- Systems for communicating with parents are excellent and parents particularly like the 'Marvellous Me' application which enables teachers to inform them when their child has done something really well in school. They find all staff very approachable and appreciate the wide range of systems eg newsletters, texts, website etc which keep them in touch with everything that is happening in school.
- The standard of behaviour both in lessons and around the school during transitions and break times is outstanding.
- The well embedded behaviour management systems are effective in supporting all children both in and out of lesson time.
- Pupils are polite, welcoming, kind and considerate. They listen attentively to others and they actively celebrate the successes of others e.g. During a Year 1 lesson pupils nominated others for 'Marvellous Me' awards and explained why they thought it was deserved.
- Attendance is improving and the school have very strong systems in place to ensure this continues. Despite the improvements attendance is still a sharp focus for the school and a determination to make it even better.

Outcomes for pupils

- At the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (2016 unvalidated) outcomes are in line or

above national except in writing. Maths and combined is significantly above national.

- Children enter nursery with the majority of children significantly below stages of development expected for their age and make good progress across EYFS even though they are well below national at the end of Reception.
- Progress in phonics has risen every year apart from 2016 where there was a dip in performance for the phonics check. This has been strongly addressed this year and current progress in phonics is at least good.
- Pupils make excellent progress and progress data from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is well above national.
- Progress tracking for all pupil groups is rigorous and ensures that all pupil groups make good progress across the school.
- Leaders and staff are very ambitious for all pupils and constantly strive to ensure challenge for all groups and individuals.
- Evidence from lessons and in books would indicate that most pupils are making good progress. The quality of handwriting and presentation is very good and shows that pupils take a pride in their work.
- An art teacher works with staff and children to develop a range of high quality opportunities to develop skills and be creative with a range of media. Displays around the school and the artwork in the school hall is a celebration of pupils' achievements.
- The quality of work seen across the curriculum is high and evident even where an external person has been brought in e.g. Pupils listened attentively and were totally engaged during a lesson in street dance from 'Urban Kaos'.
- In all sessions visited during the review pupils were fully involved and totally engrossed in their work. They describe their learning and know how they can improve. The self-assessment system is developing well and used effectively.

Early years provision

- Provision in Nursery and Reception classes is outstanding. Adults know the children extremely well, are responsive to their needs and there are high levels of care.
- The learning environment both indoors and outdoors is very well planned to enable children to make links in their learning, investigate and explore and to be independent in their learning enabling strong progress from low starting points to be made.
- Well-planned split inputs allow for skills to be developed and practised in small groups enabling children to develop their personal, social and emotional skills and their language skills. Adults questioning allows children to explain their thinking and also extends and checks understanding of vocabulary.
- There are very clear routines in place which means children feel secure. The planning boards where children select activities work effectively right from nursery and high quality adult child interactions enable every opportunity to be used effectively to move learning forward.
- Observational assessment is embedded and all adults use their knowledge of the curriculum and child development to plan activities and also intervene in children's play in order to move learning forward.
- There is a strong EYFS leader who is also a Specialist Leader in Education and a LA moderator for EYFSP. She leads a strong team and CPD enables all staff to raise their knowledge and skills further. Assessment data is known by all and used effectively by the leader to further develop provision and practice and ensure it is closely tailored to children's needs.

- Speech, language and communication has a strong focus and all adults are adept at promoting conversation and involvement. The work developed on 'Talk for Writing' has enabled children with limited communication skills to develop rapidly and forms the basis for development as readers and writers.
- Children see themselves as writers and there are opportunities for mark-making in all areas of provision. Children from Nursery eagerly talk about their 'writing' and some are beginning to make letter shapes. In Reception children use their phonic knowledge to write for a range of purposes.
- In Reception children independently access phonic mats and tricky words cards in order to support their writing. They are excited about completing writing challenges and use phonic knowledge to attempt difficult words. Children do discuss how to write words with each other and independently count phonemes before they start to write. When asked how many phonemes in 'knees' a little boy confidently said, '3' and then proceeded to write.
- Behaviour is excellent and children care about each other and play together well sharing their ideas and resources. Any minor disagreements are quickly addressed by calm and caring adults who support children in finding a solution.

Development points to consider

- Increase the percentage of pupils working at greater depth with a focus on staff PD self-reflection and evaluation of their teaching in collaborative groups.
- Continue to develop the use of IT so that it has an impact on pupils' learning – some really good examples were seen but this needs to be embedded and evaluated for impact.
- Increase rates of progress in reading to impact on reading attainment.