

Matching Green CE Primary School.

Additional notes from the visit of 7.6.16

Leadership and management.

The revised leadership in the school sets high expectations of both pupils and staff, they clearly lead by example and are creating a positive culture of respect and tolerance across the whole school and towards all members of the school community. The positive relationships that exist throughout the school are reflected in the positive way in which the children respond to adults and each other around the school. There is a strong positive ambition for pupils to do well in the school and this was evident in the conversations with pupils and staff, unfortunately some of the teaching was not always striving for excellence. Although the weaknesses have been identified there has not yet been sufficient time to see how the school's leadership's actions to address the deficiencies have had an impact on the outcomes for pupils. The data implies that children who are disadvantaged are making progress, but this needs further unpicking to understand better how they may close the gap more rapidly.

The school now has a robust system of performance management that is linked to the professional development of staff, the process is only in its infancy and has been well picked up by the current leadership team, it will need time to be properly bedded in, there is some evidence of good practice being shared across the school and in the wider educational community. What isn't clear is whether this is impacting on the outcomes for pupils and because the quality of teaching is so inconsistent across the school. The leadership is starting to confidently use assessment data to plan actions for improvement, however this again isn't yet embedded into the practice of all class teachers, evidence in the early years is that this is well embedded and as a consequence children make rapid progress.

Governance appears strong with school leaders being held to account, the establishment of an improvement board (IB) between Governors, LA and Diocese is a very strong feature of the positive way in which leaders are working together to improve the school further.

Pupil Premium and SEN funding are well used and through effective LSA support these pupils appear to make good progress, again the school leaders would do well to understand the data around these groups of children and although the practitioners were well able to articulate the progress and areas for further development this was an area that needed far greater clarity.

Leaders are very aware of the short comings in the school curriculum and as such sound plans are in place to address this. However where the curriculum is being well taught there is evidence of a good range and breadth, though more understanding of the progress being made by the pupils is necessary. The children were particularly praising of the way in which the staff manage and deal with antisocial behaviour and the school makes it clear that it will not tolerate abusive, radical or prejudicial behaviour. The school is looking at ways it can educate the predominantly white British children of life in an ethnically diverse society but it is promoting the notion of British values exceptionally well. A greater understanding of the performance of different groups and how the school can target resources to effectively close the gap on disadvantage would underpin a strong core ethos of Christian values that helps define this school. Leaders safeguard and protect the pupils well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare.

The pupils are very confident and self-assured, they are well turned out and take a pride in their appearance and in their work, they really value their school and with such positive attitudes where teaching is good progress is rapid. If teaching was consistently good or better across the school then combined with the positive attitudes towards aspects of their learning pupils would have significantly improved opportunity to make good or indeed very good progress. The attitudes for learning are reasonably well developed but when asked not many could relate their work to the prompts and displays in the classroom, however where marking and feedback was good the children could articulate very well what they needed to do to improve and children could tell you what they took pride in.

The staff provide valuable opportunities for the pupils to develop their understanding and tolerance for others views, beliefs and disabilities, the school is orderly and well managed, children responded swiftly to adult direction and at lunchtime behaviour was noted as very good and many children supported others during the lunch hour. The midday staff provided excellent support and timely intervention to ensure children learnt how to make the right decision in their own self-management.

During the day there were no incidents of low level disruption observed, however the school has strong systems in place to effectively manage poor behaviour, what was particularly impressive was the way in which the children are being developed to manage their own behaviours effectively. The children explained that they felt very well cared for and where an issue arose the staff team were quick to support and resolve the situation.

There was strong evidence around the school and in the attitudes of the pupils that demonstrated the strength of a strong Christian ethos. The promotion of British values was again evident and the children could articulate well how their personal development and actions contributed to being good citizens. The British Sign Language used in assembly was an outstanding feature and underlined the schools positive approach to inclusion.

Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching across the school promoted inclusion, however more work would need to be done around promoting the equality of opportunity, as in too many cases a one size fits all approach to meeting the learning needs of individuals was evident.

Planning in maths and English appears to be fairly comprehensive, however there appears to be a lack of consistency for other subjects and without doubt this is a consequence of a very weak curriculum.

Where teaching is good there is evidence to show that pupils make rapid progress, these teachers develop, consolidate and deepen the pupil's knowledge, skills and understanding, these teachers have well founded strategies to support pupils who find the work difficult and through their interventions have ensured the gaps are closed. It may be an opportunity for these teachers to work alongside others who struggle to provide the same level of guidance and direction, in order that all can grow and develop. Again where teaching was good there was strong evidence to show that their

was good provision being made for the most able children and this was also evident in some classes where teaching was requiring improvement, however this was more haphazard and suggested fortunate happening as opposed to well-planned challenge.

There is evidence of effective assessment and feedback however it is not consistent across the school and in some cases doesn't fit with the schools assessment and feedback policy, this would be an area of concern and would need to be addressed. On the plus side when pupils are given the appropriate feedback they respond appropriately and too good effect. There was evidence in classes where teaching was good that the resilience of children was being strengthened. It was a strength of the school that the majority of children were willing and excited to explore new areas of learning and were inquisitive about the world and their place in it. It was especially notable that in most year groups in the school children were learning from their mistakes and didn't see a mistake as a barrier to learning but as an opportunity for further understanding and enquiry.

Phonics are well taught, and pupils gain the necessary skills to improve their reading skills. To further develop this a diagnostic record system could be kept.

Outcomes for pupils

Children make good progress in the acquisition of phonic skills.

Children read widely and often, they showed age appropriate comprehension skills and fluency however reading levels are by the age of 11 lower than the LA or National norm, progress from KS1 reflects this and again is lower than the LA and national values. The same picture exists for maths although writing shows an upward trend and is significantly improved when compared with LA and National values. For children achieving the combined age appropriate level at age 11 the school was well below both the national and LA values and only 2 points above the floor values. If the school was to be compared with similar schools nationally or even within a 50 mile radius it would certainly open up the debate as to what else needs to be done to ensure our children are getting as good or better provision than those in similar schools.

Whilst data (2015) may be explained in terms of cohort dynamics or other external factors there was no analysis so it was difficult for leaders to make judgements based on evidence and hard fact as opposed to judgements based on opinion and hearsay. The school is rightly optimistic for good results from the 2016 testing and this would be supported by stronger evidence in the pupils work books.

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds appear to be closing the gap, but it would be difficult to prove this based on the anecdotal evidence discussed, it would benefit the school if more analysis of the different groups and range of needs across the school could be done, this would allow the leaders and leaders of learning to focus their efforts at the areas identified as falling behind or where the gap was widening.

Early Years

This is a significant area of strength. The leaders have a clear understanding of the need to develop outstanding practice in the early years learning. There is a rigour and drive to achieve outstanding levels of development for all the pupils the current leadership of the Early Years and the school have an uncompromising desire to ensure that outstanding provision will result in outstanding outcomes for the children, unfortunately progress earlier in the year has meant that there isn't a consistent good level of progress. The new team that has been put in place has made a significant impact and as such the gap between actual and expected levels of development is being well and truly closed.

The needs of the individual learners are very well met and as such all children are in the EY are making very good progress.

The children in the Early Years benefit from a highly stimulating, exceptionally well organised and well-resourced environment, where teachers and adult helpers have very clear expectation and outstanding knowledge on which they base their planning for the next steps. The children are highly motivated and join in all activities with great maturity and enthusiasm. From the short time that we spent with these children and from observing them around the school and how they interact and engage with other children and adults it is clear that these children are being extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education, what was wonderful to see was that any gaps between areas of learning are closing as are the gaps for children with additional needs including disadvantaged backgrounds and it was being done in a purposeful supportive way. It would be well worth the school looking at ways some of the excellent practice here could be shared throughout the school.