



Friday 24 January 2020

Good afternoon

Learning and teaching update

It's been an incredibly busy first two terms, since September. Our teaching staff have worked together to secure our school Curriculum Offer. This is a statement for parents, families and colleagues which sets out and describes our mission. This was tested against our practice, and was validated in its draft form by Kent County Council (KCC) in May, and more recently in its final form by Leigh Academies Trust (LAT) in December. Together, their notes and reports confirm the smooth transition our academy has gone through, in terms of maintaining and improving high quality learning and teaching experiences and opportunities.

KCC observed:

"Provision is at least good and in many cases outstanding. Teaching is consistent across the school; leaders are well aware of any minor inconsistencies. These minor differences are in the context of good and exemplary provision. In Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) some exemplary provision was observed. Writing opportunities, outside-learning, independence and maths were particular strengths. The outside area has been transformed and pupils now have independent access to a wide range of engaging resources, as a result they are able to make choices about their learning.

In Key Stage 1 (KS1), high levels of pitch and expectation were observed in writing books. A range of wider curriculum tasks were observed.

In KS2, there are examples of exemplary provision across the wider curriculum. In lower KS2, curriculum maps are clearly displayed and progression of skills and knowledge from one year group to the next is explicit. In upper KS2 there is evidence that pupils apply their learning to their own research projects; this is backed up by key knowledge teaching around a theme.

In French, exemplary provision was observed. French teaching is linked closely to the wider curriculum, strong examples were where technical vocabulary, skills and knowledge in geography were being taught in French, or where the work on Anglo Saxons in history was used to compare and contrast a similar timeframe in France. Expectations in French align with those in literacy. The French specialists are an asset to the school.

Outdoor learning has been a key focus for the year. The new outdoor learning leader has worked hard to provide a range of scaffolded learning activities for staff to develop with their classes. Where possible she has made explicit links to the wider curriculum themes e.g. through archery, orienteering and residential trips.

In music, every child has the opportunity to learn an instrument. The school uses funding well to support disadvantaged pupils in accessing wider curriculum opportunities.

Class environments are strong and a cause for celebration. They reflect the breadth of provision and celebrate learning, expectations and values.

Leaders are clear of the strengths and weaknesses of provision and hold staff to account for any inconsistencies. The school plan is focused on the right priorities. The Headteacher and his team are clearly passionate about the school and work tirelessly to drive consistency of provision."

G2G (on behalf of LAT) noted:

"Paddock Wood is a successful school, but it could be doing even better. Pupils enjoy learning and behave well. They like their teachers and feel valued and cared for. Teachers are capable, dedicated, enthusiastic and supportive of one another. The buildings are spacious, inviting and well maintained. Children get off to a good start in early years and, overall, pupils are doing well. It looks like a school that should be outstanding. There have been clear improvements in the academy's performance.

The academy aspires to deliver an exceptional curriculum. Currently, the curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced and includes activities that enrich the National Curriculum, such as a wide range of trips and visits and lunchtime and after-school clubs. In addition, each class enjoys a six-week programme of outside learning led by an experienced specialist teacher. The curricula for reading, writing and maths are well established. The academy's current focus is on improving provision for reading and writing.

Teachers have established very good relationships with their pupils. Pupils enjoy their learning, settle to work promptly and behave well. They are self-motivated and feel safe, confident and able to learn.

Academy leaders have created a welcoming and caring environment. The appearance of the academy is first rate. They have developed a supportive learning environment, which celebrates pupils' work, displays information and shares current learning. Teachers' morale is high. They feel that leaders listen to them and take account of their work/life balance when considering demands on teachers' time, such as assessment procedures. Leaders show great trust in the teaching staff and their ability to meet the needs of pupils in their classes, but this has led to inconsistency in some aspects of teaching, for example, the quality of feedback and provision for more able pupils."

Paddock Wood Primary Academy (PWPA) self-evaluation measures (endorsed by LAT and KCC):

Quality of Education	Behaviour and Attitudes	Personal Development	Leadership and Management	Early Years Foundation Stage	Overall Effectiveness
Good with Outstanding features (2+)	Outstanding (1)	Good with Outstanding features (2+)	Good with Outstanding features (2+)	Outstanding (1)	Good with Outstanding features (2+)

Our teachers' high quality teaching and pupils' high quality learning are confirmed in our published outcome data (December 2019):

Key Stage 1 Phonics (Year 1)

School	97.4%
National	81.8%
School v. National	+15.6%
3-year Average	+11.7%

Key Stage 1 Expected Standard (Year 2)

	Reading	Writing	Maths
School	78.9%	74.4%	77.8%
National	74.9%	69.2%	75.6%
School v. National	+4.0%	+5.2%	+2.2%
3-year Average	+8.4%	+8.1%	+6.4%

Key Stage 1 Greater Depth (Year 2)

	Reading	Writing	Maths
School	30.0%	15.6%	26.7%
National	25.0%	14.8%	21.7%
School v. National	+5.0%	+0.8%	+5.0%
3-year Average	+8.2%	+3.7%	+8.5%

### Key Stage 2 Expected Standard (Year 6)

	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Maths</b>	<b>Combined</b>
School	81.4%	81.4%	80.2%	75.6%
National	73.1%	78.4%	78.6%	64.8%
School v. National	+8.3%	+3.0%	+1.6%	+10.8%
Av. Scaled Score	105.9		106.1	
Progress Score	+0.3		+0.21	

### Key Stage 2 Greater Depth (Year 6)

	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Maths</b>
School	30.2%	15.1%	32.6%
National	27.0%	20.1%	26.6%
School v. National	+3.2%	-5.0%	+6.0%

In light of our own self-evaluation and reviewers' recommendations, we have set ourselves a number of (higher level) improvement targets, which lay a foundation for our practice moving forwards. These include reviewing and developing the ways in which we promote greatest depth learning, especially in writing, and how we monitor and assess the work of our school, to continue to drive meaningful, constructive improvement.

I am pleased to confirm that we have retained all of our teacher positions and increased our Teaching Assistant (TA) count by two since September.

#### Training and development

It has been really exciting (in this context) to reintroduce professional training and development opportunities for colleagues. To date, this has included curriculum opportunities in English, maths, science, modern languages, PE and the International Baccalaureate, leadership opportunities and pastoral care and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) training.

With best wishes

Scott Opstad