

School Report

School: Cuddington and Dinton VA Primary School

Visit date: 2.2.2017

Adviser :

Karen Metcalfe, Schools Link Adviser, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education

Information about this visit

- KM plus HT or DHT visited every class to observe learning.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff members, two governors and school council.
- KM scrutinised a range of documentation, including plans for the school's improvement, SEF, website and information about how well pupils are achieving.
- KM looked at pupils' books and other pieces of work to see how well they were doing whilst visiting classes and work on display around the school on both sites.
- KM and HT/DHT listened to pupils talk about their work.

KEY FINDINGS:

Effectiveness of Leadership and Management

School self - evaluation clearly addresses progress since the last inspection. Consistency is evident in books and approaches to teaching and learning. All staff, regardless of their role, are fully committed to playing their part in pupils' academic and personal success.

Senior leaders lead by example, insisting on the highest standards in all areas of the school. Their expertise is used very well across the partnership as a result of close working relationship with other schools and groups. The head teacher supported local school 1/2 day a week, mentoring a new head and DHT has worked with inner city school in Milton Keynes to transform their approach to teaching, learning and assessment.

Opportunities to strengthen leadership are maximised. The newly developed post of Assistant Head on the infant site ensures that the SLT will continue to improve the Good teaching in KS1/EYFS. This was observed during the visit in a Y2 writing lesson where the Chilli Challenge and Growth Mindset (Go for it Giraffe) approach were used to good effect.

Staff are highly motivated and feel well supported to try new ideas to further improve pupils' progress. Recently qualified teachers are full of praise for the quality of support and training they receive. Middle leaders describe the school as a *“great place to work where reflective practice is encouraged alongside individuality and creativity. It is a*

nurturing place- not just for the children”

The school has a strong learning culture. Every pupil is given the support required to achieve as well as they can. Pupils learn confidently and enthusiastically.

The school’s ethos, based on its values of ‘Respect, Love, Resilience, Trust, Integrity and Belief’, provides a strong spiritual, moral and social code which pupils exemplify in their learning and behaviour. Pupils’ everyday life in the school is built upon British values: they demonstrate a genuine interest and respect for each other and everyone they meet; they experience democracy in the election of school council representatives.

Governors have ensured the school’s continuous development by asking leaders challenging questions, which are based on their secure knowledge of the school. Governors ensure that they are well informed about the school’s performance by overseeing the analysis of achievement information. They question why things are as they are and what can be done to improve things further. The EYFS governor is fully aware of the schools priority to improve provision in Reception particularly with reference to the outdoor environment. Their insights are rooted in their close monitoring of the school’s improvement plan. Contributions are evaluated and summarised in the school self-evaluation: *“Saw evidence of the Chilli challenge in all Junior classrooms and books (Growth Mindset, Autumn 2016)*

Pupils evaluating work in red pen to indicate achievement / completion of task (Autumn 2016) Each child knew what they needed to do to achieve (Autumn 2016)”

The curriculum weaves different subjects, such as history and geography, into different themes and topics over the school year. Pupils are taught to research different aspects using books and electronic media. Rich displays of pupils’ art and designs are seen throughout the school, homework is used creatively to support different topics as observed in Y3/4 learning logs.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Over the past three years, the strong focus on improving learning has meant that pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have achieved at a consistently high level.

Very effective teaching, with a focus on making sure each pupil is developed, nurtured and challenged has meant pupils achieve very well across a range of subjects.

Assessment approaches successfully enable teachers and pupils to identify the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to achieve highly. Teachers manage their own assessment information and present it at pupil progress meetings.

There is a very high degree of consistency in the use of agreed approaches to teaching to ensure learning is sufficiently challenging. Of note is the focus placed on providing pupils with the chance to apply their skills and gain a deep understanding of the subject matter as possible. This is very effectively underpinned by the school's approach to assessment and feedback. In a Y6 science lesson pupils carried out an investigation to extract DNA from different fruits linked to their work on Inheritance and Evolution. Pupils use scientific language and illustrations to communicate their scientific ideas effectively. They also self assess using the "learning pit approach". One pupil explained the different stages of thinking that had enabled her to move her lego figure out of the pit. "I have climbed out of the pit and I am further up the mountain".

In the vast majority of lessons, across a range of subjects, pupils make strong progress. This is because they are taught to choose the most appropriate tasks, from the three their teachers suggest, two of which usually require levels of skill and knowledge that are well above what might be expected for their age. Teachers carefully check that pupils' selections are appropriate and provide support, which enables them to access the hardest task of which they are capable. This serves all pupils very well, especially the most able.

Pupils' mathematics books show that the work is pitched to challenge even the most able mathematicians. This was observed in a lesson where younger pupils were sharing objects to solve division problems and using the symbol for division. They do sometimes get the hard calculations and problems they are set wrong, but teachers' careful guidance helps pupils learn from their mistakes.

Relationships are extremely positive between adults and pupils. Teaching assistants are well trained and provide a high level of support for all pupils.

During a Y2 phonics session the TA supported pupils to write sentences, applying their phonic skills to understand and spell a number of complex words. Clear expectations ensured time was used well and pupils worked hard.

Pupils behave, and care for each other, exceptionally well. Some have leadership roles that enable them to make a positive contribution to school life. “I want to have responsibility and look after people, ” said one school councillor. They appreciate all that the school provides from school trips to keeping them safe. “It is a friendly, inclusive school”. They talk about a range of subjects they enjoy and agree that attitudes to learning are good. “Mostly people listen but sometimes they turn around and distract others, but we just get on with our work.”

Pupils present their work very well and are committed to academic endeavour, often displaying high levels of resilience. This means that although pupils sometimes get things wrong and make mistakes, they are clear that their mistakes help them learn well.

Outcomes for pupils

Results in both key stages have been well above average for the last three years. In 2016 tests and assessments pupils make strong progress, in many cases exceeding national expectations, even from average starting points, particularly in reading.

Pupils do well in key stage 1. There has been a three-year trend of significantly above average achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Outcomes are especially strong in reading. In 2015, 88% pupils reached the expected standard in the phonics test; and in 2016, 81% achieved the standard, in line with national.

The proportion of children reaching a good level of development in EYFS in 2014 and 2015 was above national. In 2016 outcomes were very slightly below national. Outcomes for boys was below national and the gap between outcomes for boys and girls was significant in writing.

Effectiveness of the Early Years provision

The early years is well led by an NQT who was previously a trainee teacher and TA at the school. Opportunities for different types of learning, including through play, are effectively planned to ensure children leave the setting ready for the challenges of key stage 1.

Staff provide children with a very wide range of exciting and stimulating activities that challenge and develop their understanding of the world. Children can talk about their learning and what they have achieved. The topic on Space has clearly inspired them and is reflected in the quality of the work displayed in the classroom. “There is no gravitee on the moon” is written on the white board. Two children discuss explain

what gravity means and asked if I knew that “Stars are hot gas”.

Children respond to routines quickly and enjoy the organised and well resourced indoor learning environment. Plans for the refurbishment of the outdoor learning environment are well under way. It is recognised that whilst the reception children have access to other outdoor areas such as outside the Y1 classroom they do not have direct access to a stimulating, outdoor space which covers all areas of learning.

Next steps discussed during feedback with HT, DHT and Assistant Head:

- Revisit descriptors in Ofsted CIF and evaluate effectiveness in meeting the criteria for outstanding
- Develop the outdoor learning environment to raise standards in EYFS

KM 15.2.2017