



Thurgoland CE Primary School

School Teaching and Learning Review 17th/18th November 2015

The school underwent a Teaching and Learning Review on 17th – 18th November. This took the form of a mock Ofsted inspection performed by Andrew Clark.

Mr Clark has worked with schools, academies and local authorities for the last 18 years and has vast experience as a lead inspector, school reviewer, performance management evaluator and school improvement advisor. He has inspected over 500 schools.

The purpose of the review was to get an objective perspective of the schools strengths and weaknesses to support the school improvement process and to prepare for any forthcoming Ofsted inspection.

Mr Clark spent two days in the school observing lessons, looking at books, talking to staff, children, governors and parents.

The judgements of this review:

Leadership and Management:	Good towards Outstanding
Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Good towards Outstanding
Personal Development, Welfare and Behaviour	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good towards Outstanding
Early Years	Outstanding

The review

During the review the headteacher and reviewer observed teaching and learning throughout the school and visited all classes. Pupils' work was scrutinised and discussions held with groups of pupils including members of the school council. Discussions were held with the headteacher and members of senior and middle leadership including in the Early Years. Discussions were also held with members of the governing body. A wide range of leadership, safeguarding, teaching and assessment documents, including the school's website, were analysed.

Leadership and management are at least good and increasingly close to outstanding.

The **headteacher** provides excellent and reflective leadership. She sets an extremely good example to senior and middle leaders. She has taken **prompt and rigorous action** to ensure the good quality of teaching is built on and any inconsistencies addressed.

Since her appointment the headteacher has built a **strong senior and middle leadership team**. Leadership is now very effectively delegated and the staff has an **increasingly strong first-hand knowledge of strengths and weaknesses** in their areas of responsibility.

Leaders make very good use of a wide range of strategies, including analysis of data, teachers' planning, book reviews and pupil discussions to improve outcomes. **Developments are carefully planned** and based on well-founded research and lesson studies. This has contributed to largely above average standards in both key stages and good and better progress overall.

The school responded very quickly and vigorously to a dip in standards and progress in reading reflected in national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2015. Detailed analysis of tests and assessments led to carefully monitored changes to the teaching of reading. The evidence of the review shows this has had a **significant impact on rapidly accelerating pupils'** progress throughout Key Stage 2 and current Year 6 pupils are working at much higher levels. The leadership of English and mathematics has an **inspirational impact** on the quality of teaching and learning.

The school is making very **rigorous use of new assessment procedures** at all stages to inform planning and future development. It is becoming increasingly refined to identify variations in learning of individuals and different groups. Consequently, there are few significant gaps in the achievement of different groups of pupils. Staff set challenging targets for pupils in all subjects

The curriculum is **extremely well planned** to provide exciting learning opportunities, promote enquiry and independence, and help pupils develop mastery of their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, pupils have been strongly motivated to produce high quality work in English, history, science, mathematics and religious education. Pupils' **highly effective collaborative and independent learning skills** underpin their increasingly strong progress and prepare them well for the next stage in their learning.

Procedures for safeguarding are effective. The headteacher and the safeguarding member of the governing body are rigorous in ensuring staff are appropriately vetted and trained. Policies and procedures are fully up to date and readily accessible to parents and others through the website.

The governing body is **extremely effective**. They provide robust support and challenge to the leadership. This is evident in the minutes of meetings and the wide range of monitoring activities they undertake. They have a **well-planned role in evaluating all aspects** of school improvement planning. They are extremely reflective and make very good use of a wide range of skills to efficiently fulfil their responsibilities.

The **leadership of the early years is excellent**. The curriculum is extremely well developed to engage and challenge all groups of children. There are very precise and well-informed action plans to further improve the provision.

The school has **excellent relationships** with parents and with other local education providers. Parents are actively involved in supporting pupils' learning and **express very positive views** in questionnaires and discussions.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The quality of teaching is good and **improving strongly**. There have been several staff changes since the previous inspection. The headteacher sets very clear and precise expectations for many aspects of teaching and behaviour management that form a secure basis for pupils' learning. **Lessons are planned well** with a consistent emphasis on enabling pupils to develop independent learning skills. For example, pupils take different roles and responsibilities in group work to develop their skills in working together in both key stages. Pupils make increasingly good use of reference material such as learning walls, punctuation and grammar cards.

Assessments are accurate and based on a good knowledge of expectations for all ages and abilities. The assessments are used well to set appropriate but challenging expectations in a range of subjects.

The targets are beyond national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. They are largely rigorously and effectively pursued.

Teachers **question pupils deeply and consistently**. They expect and receive clear and well-thought-out answers in response. Pupils' **reasoning skills and ability** to solve problems, especially in mathematics and science, are increasingly well developed as a consequence.

Lessons are **imaginative and stimulating**. They make good use of a wide range of stimulating resources. Problem solving and science investigations are strongly based on real-life situations. For example, pupils in Year 5 investigate how to devise a questionnaire to plan their biscuit-based enterprise project. Year 6 study rationing in the Second World War by creating menus using accurate food portions. The school library is well used and well equipped.

New procedures for teaching reading are contributing to a **rapid development of pupils' comprehension skills**. This is building on earlier learning and addressing any historical gaps in the achievement of older pupils.

Teachers' expectations are high. Work is very largely well presented by pupils of all abilities. The new marking procedures are consistently applied and enthusiastically responded to by the pupils.

Teaching assistants make an invaluable contribution to pupils' learning throughout the school. They work in close partnership with teachers and have a good understanding of pupils' needs. Pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, benefit from the quality of support and challenge they receive.

The school makes very good use of staff with **specialist teaching and coaching skill**. As a result, pupils' achievement in sport and creative subjects is high.

Above all, the quality of teaching leads to learning which is highly engaging and appropriately challenging for all groups of learners including those with a disability or special educational needs. Teachers successfully prepare children in the early years and older pupils for the next stage of their education in a reflective Christian ethos.

Personal Development, Welfare and Behaviour

Pupils' attendance is **above average** for all groups of learners. The school has extremely high expectations for punctuality and attendance which are shared with parents. Teachers ensure that every moment of the day is stimulating and engaging.

Pupils' **attitudes to learning** are **excellent**. They contribute to their own progress and personal development. They aim high and take a pride in their work. There are many examples of reflective and thoughtful comments about their own and others work. For example, Year 2 pupils organise themselves into highly efficient teams who plan and organise their excellent research reports on snakes.

Pupils' **behaviour is outstanding**. Teachers give them credit for their success and help them to recognise strengths in their behaviour and attitudes. Children from the early years on take significant responsibility for their own behaviour and recognise right from wrong. This is evident in the displays of work on aims and values and the contribution they can make to society. **Bullying is extremely rare** and pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. Children in the early years settle in extremely quickly and learn to play and work safely together. **Rigorous risk assessment** procedures helped to make the environment safe and exciting.

The school has made excellent use of funding for sports to ensure pupils have plenty to do at breaks and after school. Staff make outstanding use of the large and varied outdoor space to strongly promote many aspects of pupils' health and well being.

Pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent** and evident throughout the curriculum. Pupils take an extremely wide range of responsibilities very seriously. **Peer mediators** ensure that playtime disagreements are very rare and speedily resolved. The School Council makes a significant contribution to the exciting school environment. Many well-planned activities encourage pupils to appreciate the world around them and to be tolerant and respectful of others views and needs. They take significant responsibilities for supporting and leading each other, such as team captains, and contributing to school rules.

Above all, **staff treat pupils with immense respect** and the pupils respond in kind. Pupils feel very confident to speak to adults and their peers in many different situations. This is a key factor in pupils' highly positive learning skills.

Outcomes for Pupils

On entry to the early years children's skills and knowledge have been below typically expected levels overall for the past few years. They are often particularly so in speaking and personal, social and emotional development. Children of all abilities make **excellent** progress through the early years to start Year 1 with standards that are above average and rising. Children are highly inquisitive and extremely eager to learn.

Pupils make good progress in their phonic skills. In 2015, 90 percent of pupils attained the expected level in the national checks at Year 1. This is well above average. They show a consistent trend of improvement but always above average. By the end of Year 2, 97 percent of pupils are working at or above expected levels. The data for current pupils suggests this trend is set to continue.

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are **largely above average by the end of Year 2**. They are closer to average in mathematics. The current pupils in Year 2 reflect an increasing trend with a good proportion on course for above expected levels.

By the end of Year 6 standards are slightly above average in national tests for reading, writing and mathematics overtime. Pupils progress **compares favourably** with the national picture overall, but dipped in 2015 particularly in reading. The radical review of the teaching of reading and the development of mathematics teaching are having a significant impact on current pupils' learning and restoring standards to their previous high levels. The school has set **challenging targets** which pupils are on course to achieve.

The small proportion of disadvantaged pupils make at least good progress overall. There are too few to make reliable comparisons with the national picture but the school's own data suggests that any gaps in achievement are strongly addressed.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least good progress. New leadership has made significant improvements to procedures to ensure pupils and parents are clear and involved in raising standards and narrowing gaps with other pupils.

There are many examples of **high quality work** in several subjects. Teachers make very good use of the local environment and many visits to support work in geography, history, religious education and science.

Key recommendations of this review

Build on the good quality of teaching in order to further increase pupils' progress by:

- ensuring that all groups of pupils, particularly those at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, fulfil their potential and achieve the appropriate and challenging targets they have been set in reading, writing mathematics and SPAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar)
- continue to build on the new assessment procedures to even more precisely pinpoint pupils attainment, progress and depth of learning throughout the school year.