

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT VISIT REPORT

School: (2087) College Town Primary School

LA: Bracknell Forest

Date: 29/07/2021, 09:30

Adviser: Caroline Morgan

Focus: Standards & Effectiveness Partner Report
Summer 2021

Reference:

Advisers:

Attendees: Trudi Sammons - Headteacher

Issues arising

Priorities for the academic year 2021/22

Quality of education

- To further develop phonics and early reading, so that pupils continue to develop their love of reading and use their skills to access the wider curriculum.
- To enhance writing at key stage 2 so that pupils can write effectively in all subjects.
- To support nursery and reception pupils so that they quickly develop their learning routines.
- To support staff's mathematical understanding so that they plan, scaffold and model effectively their knowledge to develop pupils skills.

Personal Development

- Re-establish some pupil leadership roles, for example, digital leaders, so that pupils take on additional responsibility across the school.

Leadership and management

- To implement the new EYFS framework and ensure that all staff are confident to track and monitor pupils progress against this process.
- To further develop middle leaders, so that their curriculum support roles and wider subject leadership responsibilities, continue to be very effective and enable pupils to make progress and staff to improve provision for all.
- Revisit teaching pedagogy and strategies with staff. For example, revisiting how staff use assessment for learning and adapt learning activities for pupils as needed.
- Plan, implement and mentor all NQTs/ECTs on the Early Careers Framework Programme.

Curriculum Development 2020/2021

Leaders have worked tirelessly to support pupils throughout this last academic year. The curriculum provision remained broad and balanced while staff, pupils and parents responded very well to remote, blended and face to face learning throughout the academic year. Leaders diligently reviewed and evaluated the progress of pupils, including those who are vulnerable, pupil premium or SEND. This helped leaders to identify and plan for those pupils who needed additional help, including those in the bottom 20%.

During this academic year, covid-19 has impacted on the taught curriculum during the spring term. Teaching staff adjusted the curriculum so that more challenging topics were postponed until pupils returned to school. Most pupils and teaching staff were working remotely from home. Daily online lessons focused on the core subjects, of English and mathematics as well as foundation subjects. This provided a well-balanced suite of subjects for the pupils to study. It also provided flexibility for parents who may also be trying to work as well as home school their children. Staff stayed in regular contact with all pupils on daily teams calls and pupils were expected to send their completed work to their teacher via email. All pupils were expected to take a very proactive approach to their studies. Fun Friday was also introduced. This directed pupils to get outside and encouraged them to spend time being creative.

Following the full return to school on the 9th March, the school timetable was reinstated. Since 2018/19 foundation subjects, where possible are taught in blocks of time. These are carefully mapped across the academic year and enables pupils to build on from their knowledge so that their recall from lesson to lesson is easily retrieved. This enables the pupil to develop deeper understanding. Time therefore is used more efficiently in lessons to build on from prior learning. Staff analyse summative assessments at the end of all units and review outcomes against the objectives set. Results are

recorded per pupil on target tracker.

All year group teams have reviewed the school curriculum for this academic year and have identified which aspects of the curriculum had to be paused as well as where pupils skills and knowledge may be weaker due to remote learning. These transition documents along with class assessments have been shared with next years staff, to enable them to understand where pre-teaching activities need to be included in their plans or wider adjustments need to be made to the curriculum to teach missing key concepts, knowledge and skills.

Throughout the last academic year, quality assurance opportunities have had to been refined, limiting leaders observations to the back of the room. Leaders analysis of the progress made by pupils made during this spring term lockdown, identified that those pupils in school tended to produce stronger examples of their core learning than those learning at home. Conversely, some pupils invested greatly in their topic-based curriculum for example, Egyptians.

During the summer term, the school team have continued to review and assess their pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have targeted support in reception and key stage 1 to enable pupils to fill some of the gaps created as a result of the spring term lockdown. Leaders are confident that this approach has secured pupils' application and knowledge of phonics. As a result, outcomes in phonics testing remains at 82%.

PE, art and design curriculums were most affected this academic year as a result of the pandemic. Some gymnastics and swimming activities have had to be paused. Opportunities for art and design technology have also been less available due to managing the risk of covid-19. However, leaders have taken advantage of some of the good lessons through BBC bitesize and the Oak Academy.

Year 2 pupils early reading, number and fine motor skills, has been negatively impacted as a result of lockdowns. In addition they have had limited opportunity to socialise with others in some settings. Consequently adjustments have been made to the curriculum for year 3 to provide additional opportunity for those with weaker academic skills to catch-up, through additional support from senior leaders.

Reading across the school has remained the biggest priority for all pupils as this provides the gateway to the broader curriculum. Pupils developing their early reading were most impacted over lockdown because families found this area very difficult to support. Consequently, some pupils' development of vocabulary, use of phonics and drawing inference, has been the main focus through the summer term.

The staff have all used the ready to progress criteria, from NCTEM/DfE/White Rose to ensure that pupils curriculum path is appropriate and key concepts are secure. Year 4 have recently taken part in their multiplications test trials and 76% have scored greater than 70%.

Year 5 are a bright year group and have been taught this academic year by two newly qualified teachers. This year group has been adversely affected by the closure of class bubbles. Pupils responded well to a blended approach to their learning. However, some of the in-class, face to face activities, for example, assessment for learning through effective questioning, are not as effective on line. Subsequently, the key concepts taught remotely have been identified and shared with year 6 teams, so that pre-teaching techniques can be used to revisit these in the next academic year. This year group have also been identified as needing to work in groups. Working from home has negatively impacted on their social skills when working in groups. Consequently, to support this new year 6 group in 2021/22 pupils will be taught how to manage their self-control and build resilience so that they will be able to learn in larger secondary classes from September 2022.

The New EYFS Framework has been planned for and adjustments made so that the curriculum is ready for the autumn term. To support their development, additional outside provision has been made available so that pupils can learn creatively. Many of these pupils have missed these opportunities in nursery through these last two academic years. Consequently, to aid this transition, activities will be slightly shorter to enable pupils to develop routines and establish working in this reception year. Nursery pupils will spend more time learning in outside spaces, such as the Forest School or the new Gazebo. The new EYFS baseline tests have been looked at by leaders and staff are realistic what this will tell them about pupils' starting points. Leaders are expecting 84 pupils, some with high needs to start in reception in September 2021.

During the next academic year, the core curriculum will continue to be taught in the morning, while the foundation subjects will be taught in the afternoon.

The new sex and relationships curriculum in year 5 and 6 has been taught to these pupils. Pupils continue to be taught about

differences in relationships and leaders are happy with the Jigsaw resources which support the PSHE curriculum.

Evaluation of Leadership and Management

The dedicated senior team have diligently adapted to government guidance and managed the logistics of the pandemic in school very successfully. They have resourced provision for face to face, blended and remote learning and continued their focus on ensuring effective curriculum provision throughout this school year. Leaders have provided appropriate CPD training for staff and support for families, which has enabled the curriculum provision to remain broad and balanced throughout the academic year. Consequently, parents, pupils and staff have felt well supported and pupils have continued to engage very well in lessons and have made good progress throughout this academic year.

Leaders routinely visit lessons, in line with their school's risk assessment, to review first hand the progress made by different groups of pupils in class. They analyse and evaluate assessments to identify any gaps in pupils learning and discuss with subject leaders and class teams what adaptations need to be made to the curriculum to improve pupils' knowledge. Leaders are acutely aware of the negative impact learning remotely has had on some pupils' social, emotional and academic developments. Subsequently, their plans for the summer term and coming academic year are bespoke for each year group and reflect the varying needs for all. Leaders were swift to act and a variety of different pupils grouping were arranged to support pupils with their phonics, reading and writing in reception, and mathematics in year 4. This enabled pupils to rapidly catch-up during the summer term.

Leaders have invested their catch-up funding in a school team of experts in English, mathematics and humanities. This senior staff team, who are also subject leaders, will be used to aid pupils who have fallen behind. This experienced team will use their curriculum knowledge to identify gaps in pupils learning and quickly fill them, as well as develop staff by using coaching and effective feedback.

Reading has been a key focus for all pupils since the 9th March 2021. Leaders have reviewed the class reads, trackers, reading for pleasure books and are checking the phonics sounds link with the pupils' reading books. Staff have identified that some parents have stopped listening to their children read at home. Leaders are acutely aware that this partnership working needs to be revisited so that all work collectively to enable pupils to read well.

Leaders quickly challenge weak practice providing additional CPD for developing teachers. Consequently, provision is now much stronger. There are a few NQT/ECT teachers joining the school in September 2021 and the Early Careers Framework Programme will be delivered on-site to support those new members of the staff team. Leaders are conscious that staff have had to work in a variety of different ways during the last year. They also recognise that some assessment practices may have been marginalised during the last academic year. As a result, leaders are planning a bespoke CPD offer to staff, revisiting effective teaching pedagogy and strategies.

Leaders have invested in Cpoms during the last year. This allows leaders to streamline how senior leaders triage, record actions taken and professional discussions, for pupils with child protection/safeguarding concerns. The training on how this system will be used with staff teams is being planned for during the next academic year.

Leaders LA safeguarding light touch visit, during the summer term, found that safeguarding is effective at College Town Primary School.

Governors continue to meet remotely with senior leaders during this academic year. Physical visits to the school by governors have been prohibited in order to reduce the risk of covid-19 infection for all.

School Self Evaluation

The headteacher and senior team are very clear of all of the many strengths as well as the areas which need further development.

Quality of education

Leaders have a very strong understanding of the effectiveness of their curriculum. Their detailed analysis of curriculum developments clearly identifies the key areas of focus for each year group, and groups of pupils from September 2021. Adaptations have been made for 2021/22 to strengthen provision and regular discussions with subject leaders are enabling staff to plan more effectively, such that, pupils use their prior knowledge to accelerate their understanding.

During the last academic year, pupils have had less opportunities to access cultural experiences through trips and visits. Leaders are looking forward to reintroducing more of these opportunities from September 2021.

Behaviour and attitudes

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and pupils are quickly taught to be respectful and mindful of themselves and others at school. Pupils attendance remains high, 97%. This is because pupils really enjoy coming to school.

Pupils responses in a recent questionnaire indicate that they have very high expectations of both themselves and others behaviour. Leaders analysis and evaluation of incidents of poor behaviour indicates that there are few incidents across the school and where present these are dealt with immediately. Pupils recent questionnaires indicate that, 96% say they feel very safe and that bullying is rare and dealt with swiftly by staff, should it occur in school.

Personal development

Leaders have introduced the PSHE scheme, Jigsaw, in 2019/20. Leaders have taken time to map the progression of knowledge and skills for this subject and have a clear understanding of how the learning is sequenced so that pupils develop their understanding. Staff are happy with both the content and subject material and feedback from pupils indicates that they are developing a strong understanding of how to stay healthy, safe and build positive respectful relationships with all. Leaders recognise that many of these learning activities are completed in class discussion and capturing best practice evidence of impact, in the classroom, will provide further examples of how well pupils are developing.

EYFS

The senior team have spent a great deal of time focusing on the early years this academic year. They have adjusted teaching practices to strengthen provision in reception. They have planned for the Early Years Framework and have a strong understanding of the differences in the baseline data. Alterations to staffing have strengthened provision and these changes continue to be closely monitored by the team. Leaders evaluation of early reading indicates that all pupils are making progress including those who are EAL.

Leadership and management

Leaders are acutely aware that while teaching strategies have been broadened during this last academic year, they recognise that some formative assessment approaches, for example, the use of questioning, are key areas to be revisited in the next academic year. There is a bespoke CPD programme being developed for all staff so that those new to teaching, NQTs/ECTs are supported through the early career framework while those more established can revisit effective teaching pedagogy.

Established subject leaders have a much stronger understanding of their curriculum journey and the impact this has on pupils' knowledge and understanding. There are a number of new subject leaders taking on roles from September 2021. Leaders will be using curriculum development time to help these leaders develop the same levels of understanding of their curriculum, intent, implementation and impact.

Governors meetings have continued throughout this pandemic but school visits have been prohibited. The headteacher provides extensive information for governors for each meeting. Governors are keen to ensure that the constructive challenge provided by the board within meetings is clearly captured within the minutes.

School Self Evaluation

1 2 3 4

The Quality of Education	X
Behaviour & Attitudes	X
Personal Development	X
Leadership & Management	X
Early Years Provision	X
Overall Effectiveness	X

LA Evaluation (based on evidence provided by the school)

The LA STEP adviser agrees with senior leaders self-evaluation.

Due to covid-19 restrictions, visits to the school by the LA STEP have focused specifically on, evaluating the provision in EYFS and year 4, curriculum development and reviewing safeguarding.

During a visit to the school in late spring, the curriculum leader clearly articulated how the curriculum had been developed and adapted. This curriculum leader has a very thorough understanding of the curriculum intent across year groups. She is also very much aware of why certain topics could not be taught remotely and how key concepts will be revisited in the future. In addition, she shared how summative assessment information and target tracker are used to evaluate the impact of the curriculum on pupils' understanding.

All senior leaders have very high expectations and instil high aspirations in their pupils. The senior team are child focused and are continually discussing ways to further support individuals or groups of pupils. They regularly monitor learning in class, talk to pupils and evaluate assessments. They all have a very clear understanding of the strengths within their curriculum model and it's impact on their pupils.

While some quality assurance work has had to be paused, it is clear that all senior staff have continued to evaluate the progress that pupils are making by carrying out lesson visits and book scrutiny. Leaders have taken time to discuss with staff which pupils are making strong progress over time and where there are gaps in individual pupils knowledge. Immediate adjustments to fill the gaps in the core curriculum subjects have been made in the summer term. This is helping pupils and staff to identify misconceptions and reinforce understanding. Consequently, leaders have continued to stay very much on top of where pupils are and what they need to do to further improve. This is ensuring that all pupils make the gains and meet leaders' high expectations. Leaders have captured pupils and staff thoughts through surveys. These clearly show that pupils are enjoying learning, feel safe and are enjoying the challenge in lessons. The staff survey notes that, staff feel supported and they, like their LA STEP, recognise how effective the school is led and managed effectively.

During visits to the school in the spring and summer terms, pupils across the school were engaged and confidently explained their learning activities. Breaktimes were well managed and pupils played happily and respectfully with others. Pupils shared that they enjoy being part of College Town Primary School. They are taught how to stay safe on line, for example, that they should not befriend someone they do not know. They spoke about how staff encourage them to do well and how their successes are celebrated. They explained that they are taught to respect others from different cultures or religions.

LA Evaluation

	1	2	3	4
The Quality of Education		X		
Behaviour & Attitudes	X			
Personal Development		X		
Leadership & Management	X			
Early Years Provision	X			
Overall Effectiveness		X		

Key Priorities for the next academic year

School priorities are recorded on the front of this document.

Indicative Ofsted category

College Town Primary School was judged as good by Ofsted as good in July 2016. This school continues to be a good school.

LA Category

College Town Primary School is an LA category 2 school. This is a school with strong senior leadership and has good capacity to improve.

Summary of LA support and impact

Leaders and governors have appreciated the advice and guidance provided by the LA throughout the covid-19 pandemic. They would like to say a special thanks to Kellie Williams and Debbie Smith who each provided immediate support when needed, on bubble closures etc.

Leaders were also very grateful for the help provided by Sharon Jones, legal and HR support over a specific parental concern. Leaders found the regular discussions with their LA Step and external validation of practices at the school useful.

College Town Primary School, continues to have high mobility, as service families move into and out of the area. The school team work very hard to ensure that all pupils are very well supported when they arrive. However, some pupils with very high needs, are not always assessed for support, prior to arrival. In some cases, these families are known to social care and additional help should be made available to support these pupils transition to primary, rather than being provided retrospectively.

The headteacher and senior team are solution focused. The recovery group provided a great platform to share positive ways forward with managing the curriculum, SEND and sharing resources. The headteacher is looking forward to this group's relaunch, where the focus will be on developing and sharing effective practice, across the LA.

Leaders continue to work with the LA SEND team to identify ways to support pupils with SEND needs. However, leaders are acutely aware there is limited local provision to support some of their high needs pupils, who could benefit from special provision. The restrictions of covid-19 on the behaviour support team, meant they were unable to visit. Consequently, their advice has been too generic and the help needed has not been forthcoming. There are no College Town Primary School pupils attending alternative provision currently.