

# SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT VISIT REPORT

**School:** (2087) College Town Primary School

**LA:** Bracknell Forest

**Date:** 22/12/2021, 09:30

**Adviser:** Caroline Morgan

**Focus:** Standards & Effectiveness Autumn 2021  
Report

**Reference:**

**Advisers:**

**Attendees:** Trudi Sammons - Headteacher

## Actions

### Personal Development

Continue to minimise the impact of Covid on pupil wellbeing and enhance emotional health.

Ensure EYFS pupils have an increased opportunity to develop their personal, social and emotional development.

Increase staff awareness of how strategies provided by outside school agencies can be used in the classroom, for example, SALT.

**Assignee** Headteacher

**Due Date** 31/03/2022

**Status**

Incomplete

### Quality of Education

Continue to identify any further gaps in pupils' understanding and adjust the curriculum appropriately in order to improve learning.

Continue to support staff so that pupils' experience strong teaching and improve their knowledge accordingly.

Continue to develop pupils' reading and writing.

Further support the teaching of mathematics so that pupils are appropriately challenged.

**Assignee** Headteacher

**Due Date** 31/03/2022

**Status**

Incomplete

## Summary of School Context Autumn 2021

### Current context

The school team are working well. In order to improve pupils ability leaders have used the autumn term to focus all staff on further developing teaching and recognising learning. Whole school inset and staff meetings have been used to revisit effective teaching practices, as well as looking at the profile and needs of pupils within each class. There have been a number of staff changes which include new teams in some year groups. Additional training support is in place to support those new to College Town Primary School and develop their understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

The school context continues to be one of high mobility. Consequently, the profile and needs of each year group alters regularly. Given the negative impact of Covid on pupils' continuity of learning, leaders recognise that many of these new to College Town Primary School have had less support. As a result, leaders are ensuring that all pupils develop the basic skills so that they, read well, write effectively and use mathematics across a range of disciplines. The wider school curriculum, in line with the National Curriculum, continues to be taught. However some key concepts or knowledge have had to be revisited or pre-taught to reconnect the learning for pupils, across the foundation subjects.

Catch-up funding has been used to create two associate senior leaders, subject leaders for English and mathematics. Their leadership time is being used to work with staff and pupils in need of help and guidance. Class sizes have been reduced in Reception and Key Stage 1, to give staff additional time with their pupils. In addition, a small group of year 3 and 4 pupils, who have developed significant gaps in their learning during lock down, are being provided with bespoke support.

Leaders continue to be mindful of the risk of Covid outbreaks by adjusting contingency plans, and risk assessments, in line with changes in LA advice and government policy.

# Priorities for 2021/22 academic year and effectiveness of the School

## Improvement Plan:

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### Key priorities for this academic year

Leaders have thought carefully about how they measure the impact of this year's SDP plan with both pupils, parents and staff. Leaders' plans address Covid recovery, as well as continuing to strive for excellence.

### Quality of Education.

Identify gaps in pupils learning.

Teaching and learning to be at least 'good'.

Further develop pupils writing and reading.

### Behaviour and Attitudes

Develop consistency in the application of the behaviour policy.

Review break and lunchtime systems in light of Covid to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to engage in physical and social activities.

Continue to develop pupil support and the pastoral team to ensure consistency and effective safeguarding at all times.

### Personal Development

Minimise the impact of Covid on pupil wellbeing and enhance emotional health.

Ensure EYFS pupils have an increased opportunity to develop their personal, social and emotional development.

Increase staff awareness of how strategies provided by outside school agencies can be used in the classroom, for example, SALT.

Relaunch the school council, digital leaders and eco schools.

### Leadership and Management

Keep College Town Primary School Covid safe, by ensuring quality first teaching, ensuring the environment is safe, manage staff absence and continue to support pupil and staff welfare.

Re-establish the new normal.

Support new staff through targeted CPD, so that they become highly effective members of the College Town Primary School team.

Develop EYFS and carry out baseline assessments.

Support NQTs +1 in their second year of teaching.

Develop the ECT programme of support in light of the Early Careers Framework.

Ensure CPD is highly effective and addresses the needs identified by both the SLT and staff.

Ensure a rigorous self assessment process is maintained.

Review and strengthen the home school partnership.

Review staffing structure.

Set a budget for 2022/23.

Review provision for SEND pupils and ensure that curriculum and wider school experiences are fully accessible.

Further develop subject leadership, ensuring that QA processes across the school enable foundation leaders to develop a stronger understanding of the implementation and impact of the curriculum.

## Quality of Education – Overview & Outcomes of Evaluative Activity

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### Summary of activities

During my autumn term visit I met with:

- The Headteacher, Trudi Sammons to discuss the current context, the key priorities for improvement and the school development plan.
- The subject leaders who shared the adjustments made to their curriculum,
- The curriculum leader who explained how CPD had been used to support staff development as well as, how leaders had relaunched a range of quality assurance activities for foundation subject leaders.
- The subject leader for mathematics, to discuss the changes and alterations made to help pupils improve and develop

their reading across the school.

In addition I looked at:

- The learning environments across the school, as leaders have developed a whole school strategy, ensuring that displays for learning in classrooms are helpful and are used in lessons to support pupils' development.
- EYFS newly refurbished learning space. This helped to understand how the EYFS framework is being taught through a range of activities this academic year.

### **Reception – Addressing the new EYFS framework**

Leaders have invested in a newly redesigned and refurbished reception area. This provides a broad range of opportunities for the children to investigate and explore learning. This well organised and rich learning environment includes additional outdoor areas, where pupils can develop an interest in reading in their new Reading Hub. Pupils know when and how they can join different learning groups and they abide by this routine when joining activities which have space. To support the development of this new team, the Headteacher quality assures planning and looks at pupils' development. This approach works very well.

The three reception teachers plan their lessons together. Teachers' plans include how TAs will help all pupils, including those with SEND in class. Staff teams provide high quality lessons for pupils to develop their phonics and number skills. Additional questions have been created to link the learning activities from the day, with the free flow activities for staff. Some staff are more confident than others with questioning pupils. The Forest School is enabling pupils in EYFS to learn through and with nature.

### **Recommendations**

- Develop TAs so that they use the WALT questions with pupils, in the free flow activities.
- Think about how the pupils use number during the course of the day. If the teacher wants the pupils to use yesterday's learning, then these can be included in the free flow activities. However, if the teacher wants the pupils to learn today's number, then the teaching will need to precede the free flow activities.

### **Discussion and learning walk with the subject leader for mathematics**

The subject leader explained that he regularly checks on teachers' mathematical planning and has recently carried out a learning walk with the teaching and learning assistant headteacher, Anne Duncan. We discussed an example of the feedback provided to staff and that this needs to be more specific, so that staff understand how to improve their learning sequences and lesson plans. A learning walk revealed some inconsistencies in planning, teaching, teacher expectation, use of TAs and consequently, the impact this has on the pupils' progress. This leader must provide clear instruction to staff to help them to improve.

### **Recommendations**

1. Explain to staff that they must plan for the differing mathematical abilities of pupils that they teach. This should include sufficient challenge for high prior attainers.
2. Be explicit so that staff know exactly what to do. Stick with *www* and *ebis* for example:
  - use 'paired mathematics talk' as a strategy to help pupils to articulate their understanding, which the team needs to plan for this in their lessons
  - use their mathematical learning/working wall, then this needs to be present in the planning and used in lessons
  - use their flip charts to record the objectives
  - use their number lines, then ensure the teacher points to the number they are starting with and count to the solution if working with EYFS.
3. Currently there doesn't appear to be sufficient planning for questioning, which means that this needs to be addressed.
4. Think through the key concepts and decide how the staff team are going to explain these to their pupils, for example the inequalities signs. Currently there is too much variation, and the staff team are using a variety of approaches which means

that as the pupils move from one year group to another, they have a mixed understanding of the same concept. Think carefully about the approaches that as the subject leader, the team should use, the language they should be use and share this in a CPD session. Help them to identify with it by calling it, College Town's approach. Challenge staff who don't follow this. For example, no more crocodiles!

5. Some staff have planned their resources well, based on their pupils' prior abilities. Others are overusing manipulatives with pupils who have already grasped the concepts. Consequently these staff have too low expectations of what they can achieve. This is due to poor planning and not recognising that the pupils in the class have already grasped these concepts. These staff need to understand that this isn't a good approach and that they are capping the progression of their class
6. Develop the flash back 4 to a 6 and include at least 2 additional questions based on the teacher's understanding of what the pupils struggled with the day before. This will help to fill any gaps in pupils knowledge. Make sure that the teacher can model the solution and scaffold the learning for those who are still struggling.
7. Review and evaluate the data. Print it out and discuss the analysis with the SLT team. Explain specific actions which need to be taken as a result of the analysis to improve pupils mathematics at school. Be specific not generic.
8. Explain to the staff team that they must plan what and how their TAs are to support specific pupils in their classes. It would be helpful if this was included on the planning sheets, so that TAs could refer to this should they need to during the lesson.
9. Run CPD for TAs to improve their mathematical understanding.

### **English subject leader**

The development of reading so that pupils read well and for pleasure is rightly a whole school priority. Leaders recognise that pupils who read often, develop their vocabulary and build confidence in language. These skills enable pupils to access the wider curriculum. Staff use a variety of approaches to develop reading. Guided reading(R2), class reads(years 3 6), book corners and recommended reads, are available across the school in each classroom. Pupils are encouraged to look beyond the title and enticed to sit down and read for pleasure. New staff have been trained so that they question a pupil's, inference, understanding of new vocabulary, and thoughts on what might happen next in a story. This approach is helping all staff to have the same high expectations of what their pupils can or will be able to do. In addition, leaders have invested in new stories or texts which link the topics being learnt within the foundation subjects.

The libraries in each phase (EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2) have been replenished and pupils are spending time in their school library choosing reading books or researching. These areas are notably well kept, fresh and encourage pupils to come in and find a new book to read. Staff continue to be provided with pupils reading ages and development records so that they can identify those who read below age related expectations. These pupils are identified as priority readers and staff teams check how well they are improving by listening to them read on a daily basis. The rest of the class read at least once a week to a member of staff. Book bands are used to ensure that pupils read books which are linked to their prior ability. Leaders regularly look at how well pupils read and routinely evaluate the progress of different groups. Staff use VIPERS as an approach to question and check a pupils understanding of a text and to structure writing. (Vocabulary, infer, predict, explain, retrieve, summarise)

Leaders have reflected on the Reading Framework issued by the DfE in July 2021 and have taken a series of steps to further enhance reading across the school. These include

- Ensuring that pupils take a book home to read, which is matched to their letters and sounds in EYFS.
- Pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 choose age appropriate reading books for their daily home reading homework.
- Reading logs record what a pupil has read, key vocabulary and predict what comes next in the story.
- Books are crisp and new.
- Story time is used to reinforce phonics in EYFS.
- Parents have been encouraged read to their child for pleasure.
- Support has been provided from leaders, so that parents can use phonics effectively to help pupils blend words at home.
- A newsletter identifying new books and how to check pupils understanding is provided to parents in a termly newsletter.

## School Self Evaluation

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The LA STEP agrees with leaders self-evaluation and key priorities for the current academic year.

### Quality of Education

The senior team are very reflective leaders. They visit all classes daily, to look at the effectiveness of provision. In addition, leaders provide CPD for those who need additional guidance. As a result:

- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Subject leaders have appropriately sequenced their curriculum to help develop pupils knowledge and understanding.
- Staff know their pupils well, including those with SEND.
- Support is targeted to help weaker learners catch-up.
- Leaders have high expectations of what their pupils can do and this drives curriculum ambition.
- Pupils with SEND are well supported and their needs are met.
- The school culture enables pupils to adopt a positive attitude to learning.
- Leaders regularly check that teachers plan for the ability profile of all their pupils and teach effectively.
- Staff who are less skilled practitioners are challenged to improve and are well supported.
- Reading is a whole school priority.
- The new EYFS framework is in place and the baseline assessments have taken place.
- The new reception area which provides the right opportunities for pupils to learn in a variety of ways.
- Funding has been used appropriately to create smaller year 1 classes, enabling teacher time to be more explicitly used.

### Behaviour and Attitudes

- Pupils are polite and respectful to all that they meet.
- Pupils attend regularly.
- Pupils are expected to have good conduct, consequently this is the norm.
- There are very few exclusions.
- Learning is valued by pupils and they have excellent attitudes to learning.
- Bullying is rare and is dealt with swiftly should it occur.
- Pupils are taught to recognise inappropriate behaviour, for example, homophobic.
- Pupils are taught to respect others.

### Personal Development

- PSHE scheme, Jigsaw is taught effectively to pupils so they have a strong understanding of PSHE, SMSC, BV.
- Pupils feel safe at school and school surveys indicate that they know how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils are confident and happy to share their ideas through class discussion.
- RSE education is in place in appropriate year groups.
- Pupils are encouraged to work together and build positive relationships.
- Pupils are taught that families can be different to their own.
- Pupils are taught about what makes effective relationships.
- Pupils are taught about resilience, respect, equality and dignity.
- BV and school values are well known by pupils at College Town Primary School.
- Pupils are taught to try new things and not to be frightened if they fail.
- Pupils are secondary ready.

### EYFS

- New framework is in place.
- Experienced teachers and staff leading nursery. Nursery teaching team understand the journey the pupils will need to take because they have taught in year 1.
- Development Matters is the EYFS adopted path.
- Reception has been re-designed to help pupils learn creatively.

- Outside space is designed to encourage pupils to explore and learn by doing.
- Staff are encouraged to ask pupils specific questions based on their discovery.
- Early reading and number are taught explicitly, in three separate groups.
- Planning is shared with TAs so that support can be targeted.
- The learning walls are used as a teaching aid for pupils to refer to.

## Leadership and Management

- Driven ambitious headteacher who has a senior team focused on doing the very best for each and every pupil in their school.
- Leaders who put their pupils first.
- Safeguarding and the welfare of pupils remain a whole school priority.
- Leaders have high expectations of all, (staff and pupils) who work and learn in school.
- Subject leaders are in place and are continuing to develop their curriculum.
- Leaders who always support their staff's improvement.
- Balance workload for staff.
- Provide a programme of support and CPD including an ECT programme for those new to the profession.
- Support is targeted for those relatively new to teaching.
- Governors routinely meet with the Headteacher.

## 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 upon evidence provided by the school

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The LA STEP agrees with leaders' self-evaluation and whole school priorities. Leaders continue to reflect and evaluate on the quality of education at College Town Primary School and how well it impacts on pupils. Where weaknesses in provision arrive, leaders are solution focused and look for the best option available, to support pupils' provision.

### 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		

## Targets 2021

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Leaders collect data periodically through target tracker. This is evaluated and discussed with staff in each year group. Progress meetings with class teachers have helped to highlight where support is needed. This system is rightly helping all leaders identify and discuss how intervention is having a positive impact on pupils.

The most recent data is currently being reviewed and leaders will use this to create targets in the spring term for pupils at the end of Key Stage.

## Key Actions with agreed Success Criteria to be reviewed at the Spring Visit:

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Please see the front of this document.

## Indicative Ofsted Category

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

## LA Category

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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 & impact

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Leaders were very appreciative of the support from Kellie Williams and Debbie Smith regarding managing Covid outbreaks and how to communicate these to the parent community.

Leaders were thankful for the continued support from HR and occupational health.

Leaders felt that some of the messages from the LA central team could be streamlined to aid with communication. However, the LA strategy on how to best to support SEND pupils locally, was well received by leaders at College Town Primary School. Leaders are now looking forward to these plans being actioned during the spring term so that pupils with SEND can be better supported. A few pupils at College Town Primary School have received some excellent support by their attached Educational Psychologist.

Leaders are happy with the level of challenge from their STEP.