

Mr Wayne Leeming and Mrs Jenny Cox  
Melcombe Primary School  
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### **Quality Mark**

Dear Wayne and Jenny,

It was a pleasure to meet you last week at your Achievement for All Quality Mark accreditation. Based on your application, and evidence presented during my visit to your school (see summary below), I am delighted to confirm that you have fully met the criteria and have been awarded Quality Mark status.

#### **Leadership:-**

- Leaders are highly focused on children's needs and interests, constantly reflecting on what works and what needs to change. They actively seek honest feedback and are genuinely interested in what all stakeholders (and visitors) have to say!
- OFSTED (2013) recognise this as an outstanding school. The Headteacher's 'ambition' and vision is driven consistently across the school and the champion provides clear direction for AfA. Development priorities are designed to have the greatest impact for their individual context with leaders adapting practices questioning 'what will make the biggest difference for us?'. Leaders talked about 'putting the jigsaw together' to achieve success.
- The school champion received much praise from the Head, staff, a governor and parents during the visit which recognised her passion, drive, commitment in creating opportunities for children. She has the ability to challenge effectively and is highly respected in terms of her experience and evidence based approach. She gets 'stuck in' and is driven by the school's mantra that all children are made welcome and regarded as being advantaged. As a result of her leadership, staff felt that AfA had given them a focus and they enjoyed being part of the programme.
- Leaders value their staff. Expectations are high with focused, tailored CPD to meet their current needs. For example a middle leaders development programme was developed and supported by coach using Bubble materials which built capacity and confidence of the teachers involved. Teachers were pro-actively engaged and genuinely interested in the theory and research underpinning the principles of effective leadership which they sought to develop in their own practice #bemored! This has led to staff being promoted and meeting threshold expectations.

#### **Teaching and Learning:-**

- Children come into school with a low EYFS baseline, with a high percentage of children with EAL and speech, language and communication needs. Teachers have high

expectations and promote the ethos that every child is advantaged, genuinely believing that they can all achieve. Provision is carefully tailored and targeted to meet children's needs, providing inspiring and memorable experiences for children, focused on their interests and needs, which engage and motivate them to learn. Interventions are focused with particularly effective support for SLCN led by a champion. As a result, children make outstanding progress. This has been recognised by the DFE recently with the school in the top 2% of schools nationally for progress KS1-2.

- Staff have worked with the coach on developing effective feedback and questioning. Children talked openly about practices in the classroom which they found useful. Children ask their own questions which is valued as a way to allow them to be successful.
- The Melcome model of learning is consistently embedded; based on a range of strategies for how children learn best. Brain based 'visible' learning provides the opportunity for children to learn about the brain and how it works as well to support readiness for learning and develop their happiness and stability as learners, i.e. being mindful and relaxing! Children talk about their learning with confidence.
- The curriculum values the arts and creative learning with opportunities for drama well resourced. A range of clubs and sports coaching is also provided to enrich children's learning.

### Wider Outcomes:-

- Core values are celebrated based on the school's 'BASICS' acronym. Honesty is explicitly valued with clear systems and strategies in place to develop effective behaviours for learning. Children's views are collated in an online questionnaire, their answers analysed and responses used to inform ongoing practices. During the visit the children discussed their perceptions and it was evident that they had very high expectations!
- The schools seeks to accommodate and include all children in their community. Children with health care plans for medical needs are positively welcomed with appropriate training provided for staff to ensure their needs are met, including mental health.
- Relationships between staff and children are strong. Children are listened to and they feel their ideas are highly valued and regarded. Children said that they felt everyone was welcome at their school and had a right to be respected, to be listened to and to be treated with kindness. There is a strong sense of community and children said that everyone is 'in this together' and they all try their hardest. They are encouraged to think independently and during the visit talked about 'figuring things out' for themselves. Representatives from a variety of focused pupil groups across the school and ambassadors in each class have clear purpose and a genuine voice. For example the children are democratically elected to school council and they are in charge of running meetings, not the teachers! Children have the confidence to question adults and one another when they are unclear in open and honest dialogues. One of the children explained that "Children know children better than the teachers!" and that are encouraged to talk honestly to review learning experiences, enjoyment and rate how well they are treated by their teachers in terms of how they care for them. Children are asked

to identify ways things could be improved. Children enjoy school, sharing positive experiences of their learning.

Parental Engagement:-

- Structured conversations are in place. Teachers feel confident about leading these meetings and have refined their questioning over time to improve the experience. Parents expressed their confidence in the school and feel that they are listened to with teachers acknowledging the need to hear what they are really saying. Parents met during the visit feel well informed about standards and expectations for children's attainment and progress. Teachers reflected that these meetings give parents the opportunity to talk or in their words 'open up', to build relationships, to share the little things which help them empathise and understand their needs so they know how to support children and their families. Teachers provide resources to enable parents to help their children. They recognised that something good comes out of the process.
- Workshops with a variety of different themes are offered to parents on a weekly basis based to "pass on information" about what parents need. The school value parents as partners in supporting children's learning and seek to skill them up and build their confidence. For example parents are given question prompts ahead of parents evening to support them in getting the most from the meeting.
- Parents feel that homework is enjoyable for children and not just a pen and paper exercise. The mathematics programme has proved popular.
- Close links to children's centres are nurtured to support parents in the wider community.
- One parent reflected that her child was more motivated at home, had a positive mindset and had a new drive to learn. Her academic progress improved as well as her confidence. The parent reflected that she felt part of something special in AfA and it gave her the opportunity to talk about learning and feel more secure in her parenting.

Congratulations on your achievement and we hope that you will be able to continue to work in partnership with Achievement for All.

Yours sincerely

Emma Longley  
Deputy Regional Lead (East)