

Review report and Action Sheet – Peer review held at Melcombe Primary School on 5-7 March 2018

Context: The Peer review process invites schools to choose a strength and an area for development for reviewers from other schools to evaluate. The process is validated by an external consultant.

Key focus for Peer review: Pupil Voice

Background to Student voice at Melcombe school

There are six vibrant committees, a Learning Ambassadors group and a proactive school council. The committees are as follows: Eco Warriors; Enterprisers; the Fair Traders; Junior Road Safety Officers; the Rights Respectors and the International Ambassadors. They are open to pupils in Years 4-6 and members are elected through a democratic process. The School Council is also elected by the class and comprises of children from Years 1-6. The Learning Ambassadors are selected by the school and comprise of children from Years 1-6. Meetings are held regularly, usually once a half term. Each meeting has a defined agenda.

Each committee has a different remit as follows:

Eco Warriors encourage green issues and sustainable development as part of the life and ethos of the school;

Enterprisers encourage better financial capability and business understanding;

Fair Traders encourage the understanding of the importance of Fairtrade on a micro and macro scale;

International Ambassadors encourage international understanding and friendship through links and the love of MFL;

Junior Road Safety officers encourage the safe use of roads;

Rights Respectors encourage pupils to understand their rights and responsibilities.

There is also a clear prefect system with a head girl and a head boy. These children have defined roles focussed on helping the school to run smoothly. There is a pupil mentoring system as well to ensure that older pupils know to look after younger pupils when there is a need.

Evaluation

The children say: ‘Our school cares for us as individuals; listens to us when we have a point of view or when we want things to change!’

The external consultant commented that this is the finest example of student voice she has ever seen. ‘The headteacher, governors and the school community are rightly proud of this impressive aspect of school life.’

All students spoke with great clarity and confidence. There is a huge wealth of imaginative and positive actions undertaken by students. Here are a few examples: the Eco Warriors are focussing on air pollution; they pick up rubbish and ensure that energy such as electric lighting is conserved in school. The Fair traders sell fair trade such as geo bars and fruit in their tuckshop and they promote the importance of fair trade in assemblies; the Junior Road Safety officers have requested that engines are turned off outside school; the International Ambassadors have raised funds to support a child, living in a South African township, to have a good education and for the summer term, they have organised an International Day of different foods and entertainments, representing a wide range of countries. The Rights Respectors are currently supporting a food bank and have worked on showing respect for

school property and playground equipment. The Enterprisers have raised money both for charities and the school through profit making enterprises, which utilises their maths skills.

Points that emerged during the pupil focus group discussions.

Representatives from the committees met with reviewers and discussed the benefits of their involvement in the pupil committees. These pupils impressed everyone with their passionate and articulate explanations of their achievements to date. One International ambassador said that being involved in his committee makes members work as a team and that they covered for each other's weaknesses! Pupils said the committee work developed their confidence to speak to the rest of their classes about their work. They said their activities make them empathise with others who are perhaps not as fortunate as themselves. They have learned about democratic processes including how to get their voices heard. One school councillor said, 'if there are problems we discuss them and raise them with a school governor.' Pupils spoke highly of the work of the school council. This academic year, the school council has had a positive impact on improving the cleaning of the school toilets and the quality of school lunches. Their next agenda includes improving the range of equipment on the playground.

A recent addition to the school's committees is the introduction of the learning ambassadors this year. The chance to tell teachers about their learning and the quality of teaching they experience has been welcomed very much by the school community. Pupils say that the best thing about it 'is that no answer is right.' Recent improvements, as a consequence of pupils' evaluations of the quality of teaching include the insistence on a swift start to lessons. The children had complained that a handful of teachers were sometime slow to start their lessons. Pupils say they like their teachers to take the time to prepare and plan a lesson well. 'Learning should be interesting', they say. Some of the more able pupils explained how they would prefer to start their work independently, as they sometimes feel a lack of challenge in the teachers' introductions. It was striking how this group of children felt no fear about airing their views about their teachers' lesson delivery.

An important benefit of so many dynamic opportunities for pupil voice has resulted in an impressive community of eloquent, reflective and caring individuals who share excellent British values of tolerance and respect for others.

It is recommended that this outstanding aspect of school life at Melcombe Primary School is shown more widely throughout Hammersmith & Fulham and beyond.

Comments:

Consider checking that the committees are fully inclusive and that there is a good representation of different pupil groups, including disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the Pupil premium funding as well as those pupils with low prior attainment.

Key focus for Peer review: EYFS**To focus on:**

- Writing
- Children's voice
- Vulnerable groups

The EYFS reviewer sampled identified children's work and observed them in writing activities in Nursery and Reception. She met with EYFS leaders and the Leader for Year 1 to look at provision and writing progress outcomes.

Strengths:

- Strong leadership & management of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders demonstrate a strong understanding of issues – for example the current focus on transition from Reception to Year 1 which has identified the importance of tracking of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding but also an understanding of children's needs. Consequently, the quality of transition is developing very well.
- The development of children's speaking and listening skills is a strength.
- The respect for the voice of the child is evident across the EYFS. Underpinning this is a strength and respect for parental involvement.
- The organisation and structure of the EYFS day where play is balanced effectively with teaching writing.

Areas to develop:

- The use of additional adults in the room especially with regard to the focus on independent writing with a low level of scaffolding. (Some pupils are currently receiving too much scaffolding support either from modelling or more importantly from TAs.)
- Increase helping children to self - assess

What next ?:

- Identify the Reception children who need careful preparation for transition to Year 1 in the summer term. These children are likely to be those with middle or low prior attainment.
- Adapt the Year 1 curriculum (Autumn term) to meet the identified children's needs,
- Monitor the impact of these new practices.
- Include more independent writing across Reception to Year 1 with a focus on emergent writing for children with low prior attainment and check on the quality of writing for the other ability groups. It will be important to run writing sample checks on the identified pupils during the autumn term.
- The high quality of speaking and listening across EYFS should be built on in Year 1.

Comments:

- The EYFS management team already have a strong understanding of issues surrounding the Y1 curriculum and access for disadvantaged, EAL learners. The pedagogical approach of 'planned, purposeful play' is already being developed to support this learning need. It is underpinned by the teaching of very effective communication and language skills.

Key focus for Peer review: Vulnerable Group Writing

To focus on Progress in Writing for individual pupils selected by the school.

Context:

The reviewers focussed on three children, with different prior attainment, in every class. The school ensured that there was an even range of pupils, with different contextual backgrounds, including pupils with SEN/D, EAL and DA pupils and children looked after, in the sample. One child in every group of three was said to be making slower progress than the others. Reviewers spoke with the selected children and talked about their learning and progress with pupils' writing books in front of them. Meetings were held with the leaders for assessment and literacy, as well as the school's SENco.

Strengths:

- Strong leadership of writing across the school, including early years is leading to above average progress by the end of Year 6. Both the assessment and literacy leaders are 'writing moderators' for the borough, so they bring a wealth of experience and understanding of writing to the school.
- The quality of teaching is strong and supports pupils' exemplary attitudes to learning. Consequently, pupils show stamina with their extended writing.
- A supportive, reflective culture pervades the school at every level. The literacy leader knows what is working well and where improvements are needed, for example, there is a plan to produce more child friendly writing targets in Year 1. The literacy lead is currently exploring why the termly, creative piece of writing is sometimes of a higher quality than weekly independent writing for those with the highest prior attainment.
- Pupils know what helps them to improve and say that the 'word bank' and the 'tool kit' help them with their composition.
- Some effective examples of differentiated success criteria, to move the most able children's writing on, were found in a few classes and these examples of good practice should be embedded across the school.
- Modelling the features of different types of writing before pupils are asked to write independently is an effective strategy and is embedded across the school.

Areas to develop:

- Reviewers found that the teaching strategies employed were most effective for those pupils with middle prior attainment who are making above average progress. In some classes the differentiated activities favoured the most able and at other times the least able.
- Ensure that the TAs are well briefed to support the different groups of ability and that there is a consistent approach to 'scaffolded support.' So that pupils' 'independent' writing provides good evidence of what they can do on their own.

What next ?:

- Provide staff with opportunities to look at pupils' progress in books across different classes and, according to their prior attainment, to explore why some pupils with low or high prior attainment are not making as much progress as others.
- Provide training and professional development for support staff, so that they meet the national TA standards to ensure consistency of approach.

Comments:

- Explore whether the school's monitoring systems are responsive enough for highlighting differences in progress outcomes for different groups of children sufficiently quickly, particularly in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5. Consider adding in more regular checks to establish whether actions recommended at the progress reviews are followed through robustly enough to secure impact quickly.

Key focus for Peer review: Attendance

The external consultant met with the staff who lead on attendance including the attendance officer.

The school has identified attendance as an area to improve because the attendance is lower than that seen nationally, and persistent absence is higher than national.

Strengths:

- Robust systems are in place for monitoring and tracking attendance.
- The school works hard with families and outside agencies to ensure that pupils attend school.
- The school strikes a good balance between caring, nurture and firm lines in relation to managing attendance.
- The school knows the reasons why some pupils' attendance is lower than it should be and works hard, in a firm way, to address barriers to good attendance.
- The punctuality and attendance policy is clear and where parents are clearly at fault, penalties including fines have been enforced.
- Incentives such as certificates for 100% attendance and invitations to attend the early breakfast club free have had some success.
- One pupil who fell behind in her work was helped to catch up with pre-teaching before her lessons.

What next?

- Promote the school's drive to secure good attendance by celebrating any successes with improving attendance, via the newsletter and school website.
- Celebrate individuals' attendance successes with the wider school community.
- Consider increased 'catch up' for pupils who are falling behind because of their attendance.

Comments:

- n/a

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