

REPORT ON LIGHT TOUCH REVIEW – FINSTALL FIRST SCHOOL

Leadership and Management – Thursday 18th May 2017

Report by Caroline Spencer and Andy George

A meeting was held with the Head Teacher, Stuart Evans on Thursday 18th May to discuss the progress made towards areas for development identified from the Governors' Self-evaluation Summary.

- **Ambitious vision/High expectations** – Leaders set high expectations of pupils and Staff and they lead by example to create a culture of respect and tolerance. The positive relationships between leaders, Staff and pupils support the progress of all pupils at the School.

The Staff's high expectations of pupils is noted consistently during observations, learning walks, scrutiny of work and pupil/Staff interviews are the excellent relationships that exist between Staff and pupils. Policies and procedures are consistently applied in relation to reading, writing and mathematics. Further significant progress has also been made with the development of the marking policy and in developing a greater degree of consistency in relation to some elements of the teaching, learning and assessment of English – phonics, handwriting, guided reading, spelling and writing. An informal system of appraisal for Teaching Assistants was currently being developed through greater distribution of leadership and management roles and linking the appraisal process more closely to CPD opportunities.

- **Continuous improvement through self-evaluation** – Leaders and Governors focus on continually improving outcomes for all pupils and especially for disadvantaged pupils. The School's actions have consistently achieved improvement in disadvantaged pupils' progress which is rising, including in English and Mathematics as evident from Raise Online and Target Tracker. Assessment information is used to inform planning and Staff to identify pupils who require additional interventions and support. Both Leaders and Governors also have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of education at the School which helps them plan, monitor and refine actions to improve in all key aspects of the School's work.

- **Improving Teaching through Performance Management/CPD** – Effective and rigorous systems are in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Monitoring systems and an effective performance management process ensure that Staff are well supported and receive high quality continuous professional development, so supporting Teachers' improvement. Under-performance is tackled quickly and effectively. There is a strong link between the performance management and appraisal and salary progression. An appraisal process for Teaching Assistants is currently being formalised in order to further develop their professional standards as they play a significant role in the education of pupils and will be linked closely to CPD opportunities. Newly Qualified Teachers are well supported through their first year of teaching and statutory training is also provided for all Staff with regard to issues such as safeguarding. Teachers value the continuing professional development provided by the School which is having a positive impact on their teaching and pupils' learning.

Staff are encouraged through the performance management process to take shared responsibility for their own CPD and the programme of CPD is coherent and based on both the needs of the School and the identified needs of Staff at all stages of their careers.

Finstall First School works very effectively in partnership with other School's in the district with Staff meeting with Staff from other School's both at Head Teacher, Senior Leader, Teacher and Teaching Assistant levels. The process of transition both into Finstall First School and from Finstall First School to the Middle School is a significant strength of the School.

- **Governance** - Excellent systems are in place to monitor and check on the School's effectiveness and to identify School priorities and Governors are fully involved in this process and have a good understanding of the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the School, together with a secure understanding of performance data so that they are fully aware of how well pupils are achieving. As a result, Governors hold Senior Leader's stringently to account for all aspects of the School's performance including the use of Pupil Premium, the Primary PE and Sport Premium and Special Educational Needs funding and ensuring that the skilful deployment of Staff and resources delivers good or improving outcomes for all pupils. Governors are ready to challenge leaders with variations in outcomes for pupil groups and between disadvantaged and other pupils.

Governors are kept updated on current educational and School issues through both external and in-house training and the work of Governors is now communicated more clearly to parents through a Governor section on the School website. Governors can now also locate important documents and reports on the School website through their own personal log-ons.

Governors ensure that the School's finances are properly managed and receive detailed and clear financial reports termly which are discussed at both Sub-Committee and Full Governing Body Meetings.

- **Curriculum** - Finstall First School are continually developing the curriculum so that it is broad and balanced and meets the needs, aptitudes and interest of all pupils, also promoting high levels of achievement, excellent behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. The curriculum provides a range of subjects and courses to help pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspect of their education including the humanities and linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, social, physical and artistic learning. This supports pupils' good progress.
- **SMSC and British Values** - The curriculum contributes well to pupil's behaviour and welfare – their physical, mental and personal well-being, safety, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and Leaders continually promote fundamental British values.
- **Equality of opportunity and diversity** - A positive School culture is promoted in equality of opportunity and diversity and both Staff and pupils work together to prevent any form of direct or indirect discriminatory or prejudiced behaviour.
- **Safeguarding** - Both School leaders and Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures meet the statutory requirements and are both robust and effective. All Staff and Governors receive a high level of training to support safeguarding. Leaders and Staff take appropriate action to identify pupils who may be at risk of neglect, abuse or sexual exploitation. Pupils are listened to and feel safe.
- **Prevent** - The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have both received accreditations to provide whole School training in Safeguarding and the Prevent Strategy and all Staff have received up-to-date 'Safeguarding' and Prevent' training so to ensure that they are aware of how to keep pupils safe from the dangers of abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. British values are taught through the curriculum and through Assemblies on how important it is to respect other people's views, beliefs, cultures and in making up their own minds in having their own opinions to issues such as faith, religion, politics, etc. – the difference between fact and opinion.
- **Development and distribution of leadership throughout the School** - The profile and role of the Senior Leadership Team, which includes the Middle Leaders, has been raised. Meeting each week it has involved the Middle Leaders in 'leading' more actively.

The Headteacher has completed his training as an Ofsted Inspector and is now contracted to Ofsted for a set number of days per year. The School will continue to benefit from his experience of Inspection. The Deputy Headteacher has taken on additional leadership responsibilities and consequently his teaching commitment has been reduced.

The quality of middle leadership throughout the School has been developed through the creation of two TLR 3 roles to focus on a specific area of School Improvement – our marking policy and procedures; the member of Staff who has the other TLR 2 position has been working through the NPQ for Senior Leadership training. This member of Staff and our Senco have taken on more advanced Senior Leadership roles to assist the Deputy Headteacher when the Headteacher has been out on Inspections. Staff are continually made more explicitly aware of their leadership and management roles when they take responsibility for subject areas. These roles to be developed further through a formal Learning Partnership with other Schools in the Town.

The Staffing structure has been amended to create new leadership roles in other parts of the School with an experienced TA appointed to lead and manage the interventions and actions identified and implemented to support those pupils with disadvantaged special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils who are eligible to receive pupil premium funding. The TA also assists the Senco in monitoring and measuring the impact of such actions.

- **Supporting School Improvement beyond the School** - Finstall First School has contributed significantly towards School improvement in the local area and have led the development of the very successful transition process from First to Middle School throughout Bromsgrove. Finstall First School has also led a project with the Schools in Bromsgrove to agree a common set of manageable criteria for use when moderating work in Reading, Writing and Maths for Years 1 – 5. Our School Leaders have been influential in establishing the Bromsgrove Learning Network and in how groups of Schools can work together for continual improvement within this structure. A local data-base has been established of effective practice, incorporating aspects of particularly strong practice that Schools in Bromsgrove are willing to share with each other.
- **To improve further:-**
 - ***To further develop and improve the quality of teaching and learning***
 - ❖ By providing each member of Staff with an Action Plan that is updated after each monitoring exercise.
 - ❖ Through further developing the distribution of leadership throughout the School and establishing clear accountability measures at different levels, especially in relation to subject leaders (those responsible for core subjects).
 - ❖ Through the development of a more formal Learning Partnership with other local Schools as part of the 'Bromsgrove Learning Network'.
 - ***To develop the professional standards of our Teaching Assistants***
 - ❖ Through greater distribution of leadership and management roles
 - ❖ By developing a more systematic appraisal process
 - ❖ By linking the appraisal process more closely to CPD opportunities.

➤ ***To further develop the role of Governors***

- ❖ By ensuring that they are well informed, making use of the Governor section of the School website and so better equipped to challenge Staff and hold the School to account for its work, especially in relation to the School's use of the Pupil Premium, the Primary PE and Sports Premium, SEN funding and any variations in outcomes for pupil groups, especially between disadvantaged and other pupils.
- ❖ By enabling Governors to network with other Governors through our Learning Partnership with other local Schools as part of the 'Bromsgrove Learning Network'.