

Exemplar School 4 - Self-evaluation Summary Paper

Context of the school

Exemplar School 4 is a non-denominational and co-educational primary school. The school is a modern, semi-open plan building. The catchment area extends consists of local authority and private housing. The school has a newly appointed Senior Management Team. The rest of the school staff includes, 12.5 full time permanent teachers, 2 probationers, a NST 0.3 FTE, 0.1 music instructor, 8 learning assistants, 3 clerical assistants, a janitor, part-time ICT technician, catering and cleaning staff.

How well do young people learn and achieve?

Existing Strengths

The introduction of standardised testing allows staff to track individual attainment and compare attainment to national averages. In reading, spelling and writing most children have made very good progress from previous levels of attainment and next steps in learning have been clearly identified. In Maths many children are attaining the national average or above, and next steps in learning for all children have been identified. As a direct result of improvements to the school's staged intervention procedures, individual's and groups are benefiting from effective support plans leading to higher achievement especially for those pupils at risk of missing out and more able pupils. There are opportunities for all learners to develop personal and wider achievement by involvement in the life of the school, through the House System, Focus Weeks, International links, School Councils, participation in sporting events and community initiatives. Further opportunities are developed in a wide range of after school activities, such as animation, cheer leading, sport, and gardening. Our Primary 7 pupils will be given the opportunity to develop the four capacities through a residential experience with Outdoor Education. The school improvement plan has been instrumental in bringing about a collegiate approach to whole school improvement. This can be evidenced across the school and has brought about improved learning and teaching. All learners are encouraged and given opportunity to be actively involved in their own learning. Personalisation and choice is facilitated in our approaches to interdisciplinary learning, allowing all learners to contribute their ideas at the planning stages and in responsive planning throughout topics. Approaches to Assessment is for Learning allow for a sharing of success criteria with learners, encourage learners to set their own success criteria and be involved in self/peer assessment. Assessment information is used to plan next steps in learning. Pupil councils, questionnaires and involving pupils in monitoring activities are all ways in which we seek the views of our learners. These views are acted upon and impact on whole school improvement. A whole school focus on health and well being in term 4 has ensured that all learners have a greater understanding of what it means to feel safe, nurtured, active, healthy, included respected and responsible. All learners are treated with respect, are cared for and encouraged to be responsible. Our learners are motivated by the learning experiences we provide and want to achieve well.

Priorities for future development

Consistent use across the school of summative assessment results to identify whole school trends and areas for development. Ensuring that all learners achieve success within the 4 capacities and their achievements are recognised. A commitment and involvement by all staff to implementing the school improvement plan next session.

Regular and systematic approaches to seeking the views of all learners especially those who are reluctant to be involved. Ensure that learners regularly receive high quality feedback on their learning, identifying achievements and next steps.

How well does the school support young people to develop and learn?

Existing Strengths

Our curriculum planning continues to take into account the principles of curriculum design. With increasing confidence and knowledge in Curriculum for Excellence staff are delivering high quality learning experiences. All staff have been involved in reviewing our curriculum. We have clearly identified areas for improvements, acted upon these and improved our practice. Staff take a collegiate approach to planning and are taking greater account of experiences and outcomes. Our approaches to interdisciplinary learning allow for stimulating and challenging activities and for our teachers to be creative and innovative in their approaches to learning and teaching. Focus weeks and house days allow for mixed stage working, collaborative planning and encourage our learners to grow as citizens. All children benefit from two hours of quality PE a week. There are very effective transition programmes in place with the local Nursery and, our cluster primaries and local High School. The collegiate approach to our transition programmes has resulted in a greater continuity, progress and success for our learners. Our staff have also benefited greatly from opportunities share practice and engage in professional dialogue. We work effectively with partners to ensure high quality learning experiences. Teachers plan activities to meet the needs of all learners, and provide appropriate challenge. This is done by taking into consideration prior learning and assessment information. Our staged intervention procedures are well managed, systematic and effective. IEPs and staged plans are informed by robust assessment information. We have responded timely and effectively to the information gained from the primary 3 screening. More able learners have been identified at primary 3 and given appropriate support. We have taken proactive steps to support learners through our leadership programme. Our learning assistants are highly skilled in supporting the needs of our learners. Their timetables are designed to support the needs of our learners. Parents, learners and partner agencies are involved in our collaborative planning. We work well with our partner agencies to ensure that appropriate and specialist support is available to our learners. We are sensitive to individual circumstances, nurturing supporting and caring relationships with families. Staff have received training on current legislation.

Priorities for future development

Continue to ensure that our curriculum is in line with Curriculum for Excellence, particularly focusing on mathematics and numeracy and language and literacy. Ensure that Interdisciplinary learning topics are clearly focused on identified experiences and outcomes and these continue to be tracked. Our transition calendar needs to involve our other partner nurseries. Increased consultation with all relevant staff, parents, partners and learners. Ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities to all learners. Ensure that we are using assessment information to ensure this appropriate support and challenge for all learners. Continue to identify more able pupils throughout the school and support them accordingly.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

Existing Strengths

A whole school audit has been carried out of the work of the school against the principles of curriculum for excellence. Information gained has informed whole school improvement. There is a shared understanding amongst the staff of their role in self evaluation. We have gathered the views of staff, learners and parents. We have responded to these views which are leading to whole school improvement. There is a comprehensive monitoring calendar in place, which is systematic, rigorous and shared with all staff. Staff are given regular feedback on their practice. All staff have benefited from a more focused approach to Professional Review and Development. All staff now evaluate their practice against quality indicators and have shared good practice through peer visits. This session our school improvement plan has raised the standard of learning and teaching throughout the school. Our improvement plan for next session has taken account of the extensive information gathered through self evaluation. It takes account of the views of staff, learners and parents. Our improvement plan will raise achievement for all learners and improve the whole school community.

Priorities for future development

New SMT to create, share and lead a vision that will guide effective change. Take account of the views of partnership agencies. Through professional dialogue and effective self evaluation of classroom practice teachers will become more reflective practitioners.

How do you ensure equality and inclusion and promote diversity across the school?

At Exemplar School 4 all our learners and parents are treated with fairness and respect. We are proactive in developing positive and supportive relationships with parents especially those parents who are experiencing challenging circumstances. Our pupil and family support worker is supporting a number of vulnerable learners and families, both in and outside of school. To ensure the inclusion of all learners

there have been specific adaptations to the building and mobility training. Our school has policies on positive behaviour, bullying, health education and equal opportunities. Every classroom promotes equal opportunities and fairness by enabling every child to develop the 4 capacities. At assembly we recognise individual achievement of the 4 capacities and the input from our ministers is themed on the 4 capacities. We are developing strong links with our neighbouring denominational school.

What would you suggest as possible areas for focused attention by the inspection team?

- Interdisciplinary Learning
- Self-evaluation
- Active Learning
- Learners' Experiences