

CAST Pupil Premium review

School visit 4

School: St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Exmouth – Central area

Date: 16th March 2017

Focus:

-raising the achievement of disadvantaged children in CAST schools including the extent and effectiveness of multi-academy trust support and challenge

Work carried out:

-study of school's pupil premium strategy as seen on the school website

-study of most recent Ofsted inspection documentation (11- 12th October 2016)

-discussions with the acting headteacher (Nicola Taylor Bashford), governors, members of teaching and support staff and pupils who attract pupil premium funding

Context:

-201 pupils on roll

-16 pupils currently attract Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) funding

-school received a total of £26976 additional funding

-proportion of disadvantaged pupils (8%) is significantly less than the national average (26%)

-outcomes for more able disadvantaged pupils are a particular cause for concern according to Ofsted (Oct. 2016):

- Different groups of pupils, particularly the most able, the most able disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are not making the progress of which they are capable.

-the overall rating for the school is R.I. (3), with all aspects requiring improvement with the exception of Early Years which is good (2).

Attainment

2. Current attainment		
	Pupils eligible for PP	Pupils not eligible for PP
Phonics	100%	83%
KS1 % achieving reading	50%	64%
KS1 % achieving writing	0	56%
KS1 % achieving maths	100%	64%
KS2 % achieving R,W,M	0	45.2%
KS2 % progress in reading	0	86.7%
KS2 % progress in writing	100%	70%
KS2 % progress in maths	100%	70%
Attendance	94%	96%

Strengths:

The school now has a clearly written pupil premium strategy document for 2016-17 which is compliant with the legal requirement for what schools need to publish on their website. Internal and external barriers to learning are clearly identified.

The CAST Pupil Premium strategy document for 2016-17 is also available on the school's website alongside its own documentation for the pupil premium.

School leaders are putting robust plans in place to ensure wise spending of PPG funding. They are clear about the outcomes they wish to achieve and how they will know if they have succeeded. This marks a shift in culture that had already begun by the time of the Ofsted inspection in October 2016 but which was then still in its infancy. The acting headteacher (supported by the executive headteacher) has worked very hard since then to establish an ethos of attainment for all which is now beginning to take hold across the school.

Middle leaders and other staff are encouraged to play an active role in raising the achievement of disadvantaged children at this school. There is now a much stronger 'buy-in' from most teaching and support staff which is resulting in higher expectations and a more dynamic 'whatever-it-takes' approach to school improvement in general.

Staff at all levels are being encouraged to review every aspect of their practice and provision and are beginning to welcome challenges from leaders and governors. One staff member talked enthusiastically about the changes that have come about over the last six months. *We are really honest now about things that need to be improved. We are not insular or defensive.*

The governors are exceptionally knowledgeable and have a good understanding of the objectives of the school's pupil premium strategy. They have compiled their own comprehensive guidance document with links to the latest research from EEF and NFER. They are prepared to hold the school to account for the outcomes of this group of pupils by comparing the attainment and progress of disadvantaged children at the school with others nationally. Their questions and challenges are recorded in the minutes of meetings. Governors were keen to emphasise their shared responsibility for holding the school to account: We scrapped committees. *Everyone needs to be on the case when it comes to Pupil premium. Honesty has to be the name of the game.*

Quality first teaching is now firmly at the core of the school's efforts to raise the achievement of groups of pupils as can be seen in the rewritten SIP and SEF documentation. The school leaders have high expectations and have begun to reinvigorate discussions about the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Governors and most staff now accept that a bland 'one-size-fits-all' approach is unacceptable. Governors are aware that poorer children of all abilities are disproportionately disadvantaged by mediocre teaching.

The school has now started to provide social and emotional support for its disadvantaged children which is helping to build confidence and self-esteem. This is a new development in 2016-17 which reflects the school's emphasis on developing the whole child and meeting individual needs.

The school makes effective use of its hard-working and skilled support staff. Teaching assistants are well trained and carefully deployed. They appreciate the quality and choice of professional development opportunities that come their way. They feel highly valued and empowered. They talk with pride about the different types of support they are able to offer pupils including bereavement support.

The headteacher and her team are working hard to secure strong relationships with parents and carers of disadvantaged children. The team recognise that each family is different and that parents' needs are diverse. This sensitive approach is helping the school to win the trust of families who have sometimes struggled to engage with their child's learning in the past.

The school has a breakfast club which is regularly attended by disadvantaged pupils. Pupils say that attending breakfast club helps them to be better organised for school.

Disadvantaged pupils have opportunities to go on school visits and residential experiences. For example, on the day of my visit to the school, a group of pupils had visited a nearby historic house and experienced what it was like to be a servant in Victorian times.

Pupils appreciate what their school does to support their learning and well-being. They are proud of their school and their achievements. Socially, children talked about the ways in which they are helped to resolve disagreements. Academically, children talked about how marking and feedback is helping them to identify next steps and independently improve their work.

Areas for development

1. Complete the self-evaluation matrix for raising the achievement of disadvantaged children in order to highlight those aspects of your provision and practice that require further development over time. Involve the governors in this process.
2. Continue to frequently monitor the impact of strategies funded by PPG, particularly the newly introduced strategies brought in to support pupils' social and emotional needs. Adapt your plans accordingly if you discover that things are not having the desired impact.
3. Continue to develop teaching and learning by exploring the potential of metacognition and self-regulation, i.e. approaches that enable children to develop *as* learners and thinkers. This might include looking at the research of Carol Dweck (Mindsets), Angela Duckworth (Grit), Roy Leighton (Learning lines and learning choices) and Paul Tough (Character). The question that needs to be addressed is: *What does it mean to be a successful, independent learner and how can we help our pupils to articulate this?*

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/school-themes/developing-independent-learning/>

4. Ensure that all pupils, including more able disadvantaged pupils, receive plenty of opportunities to think very hard in lots of different ways each school day. Get all staff talking about questioning strategies that promote various forms of higher order thinking. Explore ways of exploiting the potential of Bloom's taxonomy, SOLO taxonomy, De Bono's hats, cognitive dissonance and Philosophy for Children. See the link below for details of how Philosophy for

Children sessions have been shown to boost progress of disadvantaged pupils in reading and mathematics.

https://v1.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/Philosophy_for_Children.pdf

5. Develop a systematic approach to reducing gaps in cultural capital. Some children may be being held back by the narrowness of their experience when compared to others. Think about the access children have to theatre, museum, library and gallery visits. The school might consider adapting an approach such as The National Trust's *50 Things every child should have done by age...*

<https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-views/20-things-do-youre-12-search-a-balanced-education>

6. Continue to engage with research about 'what works', particularly the EEF Sutton Trust Toolkit. Explore the new Early Years Toolkit and see what it says about the most effective strategies for early years.

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/early-years-toolkit>

7. Consider visiting other local schools to learn about the strategies that they are using and/or establish a PP Leads network for your local cluster which provides leaders with an opportunity to share ideas and reflect upon the impact of their chosen strategies. (The network is something that you may wish to discuss with your MAT Area Advisor.)

8. Give further thought to ways in which you can improve the attendance of pupil premium children. (How might you go about incentivising good attendance patterns? For example, would giving parents and carers a say in how PP funding is spent on their child in return for high attendance make a difference?)

Additional comments

Thank you for making me so welcome at your school, Nicola.

I hope the summary above does justice to the very wide-ranging discussions we had on the afternoon of 16th March.

The areas for development outlined above will, I trust, help you to plan ahead in ways that ultimately result in better outcomes for all disadvantaged pupils at your school, including more able disadvantaged pupils.

Please thank everyone who gave up valuable time to meet with me on a very busy school day.