



Governors Monitoring Visit – 2021/22

Focus Monitoring Area: Quality of Education – Disadvantaged Children

Name of Governor: Emily MacKenzie and Debbie Innes-Turnill

Names of Staff and Student Council member (if applicable): Luisa Potter and Amy Pugh

Date of Visit: 4th February 2022

Focus Area for this visit: Discussion with the Deputy Head, Luisa Potter, and Assistant Head, Amy Pugh, along with evidence from recent data.

Reference to School Operational Plan or subject/aspect improvement plan priorities: Priority 1 (bullet point 1): *To mitigate against the impact of school closures on our disadvantaged children, particularly in reading, writing and communication and interaction in EYFS; standards in phonics and the % reaching expected standards in R, W & M.*

Documents looked at to prepare for this visit: School Operational Plan and Pupil Premium Education Outcomes and Intervention visit (Dec 21/Jan 22) report.

Follow up points from last monitoring visit:

This is the first visit focussing especially on Disadvantaged Children (as distinct from Pupil Premium children)

Initial Planned Questions for this visit:

- 1: What provision is in place?
- 2: How do we know it is working?
- 3: Do we access best practice elsewhere?

Findings and Evidence seen:

Luisa and Amy shared the school's definition of disadvantaged children as, those on Free School Meals (FSM), Looked After Children and Service Children – which is 231 pupils currently enrolled at the school. We have a far larger number of pupils considered 'TLC' – those who could be classed as disadvantaged with just a small change in circumstance. Luisa said: 'the majority of the school needs scooping up' a phrase which encapsulates the school's concern for all its pupils and the care teachers take to understand the particular needs of each pupil.

Before the pandemic the school was making great progress at closing the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged children with their peers, but sadly the pandemic (especially school closures) has had the most detrimental effects on disadvantaged children. The work required to close this gap is recognised in the first aim of the 21/22 Operational Plan. Luisa and Amy shared in-depth data across each year group taken at AP2 which the teaching team are comparing against the most aspirational data taken before the pandemic. As at AP2, 70% of disadvantaged children are 'back on track' (20% exceeding), with 30% behind.

Provision in place – and is it working?

Luisa and Amy described where resources are being directed to improve reading, writing and maths attainment for disadvantaged pupils. For example, an Academic Mentor (Dorothy) is employed 4 days a week to work on reading with Yr2 last year where 89% exceeded targets by the year end. Dorothy is now targeting Yr1 with 1:1 sessions with PP children. Teachers know where to focus the effort for greatest effect – such as particular phonic difficulties experienced by children who missed out on lessons.

Data from each Assessment Point is evaluated by MLT and SLT where trends and concerns are noted and which leads to actions plans to target support for children. Luisa described this process as 'twist or stick' meaning that by constantly evaluating data it is possible to see fairly quickly which interventions work, and which don't. Luisa has also provided additional training for TAs so that they can contribute further to the targeted support.

Attendance

The school recognises that poor attendance has a directly negative impact on attainment. In the 2018/19 year attendance for Pupil Premium children (many of whom are classed as disadvantaged) was 93%, but for the year 20/21 this dropped to 85%. The school recognises that improving attendance is key to improving outcomes for children and has many resources invested in this, including an officer, Tracy who focuses on this area (a full time member of staff is to be recruited to provide additional impact). Attendance by the Traveller community was especially poor during the pandemic years.

Best practice

Luisa is part of the LA and National Pupil Premium groups and forums where data, information and activities are shared, which has been of some benefit to the school. The evidence-based reports published by the Education Endowment Fund are also very useful tools.

Evidence of Christian Distinctiveness:

It was clear from the visit that each child is treated as unique and precious meaning there is a desire from the staff team that all children, regardless of background, should reach the highest of standards.

Questions/follow-up points for discussion with headteacher and for future visits:

What is the plan for enacting the suggested actions from the recent Pupil Premium Education Outcomes and Intervention visit report, that relate specifically to disadvantaged children?

Date for next visit: tbc