

Self Evaluation Report

Agreed



Abbey Meads Community Primary School

URN: 146073

School Context

BRIEF SUMMARY

Context of school, including reference to previous OFSTED report.

Abbey Meads Community Primary School (AMCPS) is a typically sized 2 form entry school with 14 classes, plus those in the Nursery.

Our integral Nursery takes children the term after their third birthday and offers both 15 and 30 hour options. We run both Breakfast and After School Club facilities, caring for around 50 children before school and 75 after school.

We are situated in the northern sector of Swindon and serve a diverse community with the majority of children attending from the Abbey Meads and St Andrew's Ridge areas and approximately 20% coming from Penhill, a recognised area of deprivation. *Geodemographic Profile 2023 = 31% of current Year 2 group living in 30% most deprived post codes in England (5% >Nat Ave).*

In January 2019 we converted to academy status joining, The Blue Kite Academy Trust at the same time.

The Headteacher, Mr Buckley, is the Deputy Chief Executive Officer for the Trust and there has been a careful transition of some key governors to Director roles and induction/training of new local governors to replace them.

As a Blue Kite School, we are actively involved in Initial Teacher Training through our CPD provision called Inspire and we access a complex suite of early help provision through Blue Kite's Lighthouse service. The Trust is acknowledged as a local provider of Initial Teacher Training through Ambition as well as delivering the Early Careers Framework for teachers in Swindon and Wiltshire.

We work collaboratively both within the Trust through our Blue Kite Bricks (Learning Networks) and with other schools locally maintaining an outward facing approach to benefit all schools and children within Swindon.

Current contextual figures in September 2023:

18.8% FSM, 18.1% PPG, 19.5% EAL, 11.8% SEND including 12 EHCPs (2.9% of school) and 3 LAC (0.7% of children).

Quality of Education

JUDGEMENT



At AMCPS we have a creative and thematic curriculum approach which is led by Government policy including the National Curriculum, EYFS, RE and R&SE guidance. As our Mission Statement states, we are interested in developing our citizens of the future, who are caring, resilient to change and skilled both academically and socially. In its simplest terms, we aim to develop conscientious, free thinking children with a love of learning. Continuity and progression is planned for from Nursery to Year 6. The curriculum is broad, balanced and has appropriate depth. This includes the teaching of generic learning skills including critical aspects of Metacognition and critical thinking.

Our curriculum has always been deemed impressive (successive Ofsted inspections). The delivery of this 'impressive curriculum' constantly considers the needs and learning styles of all pupils, including those regarded as disadvantaged or with SEND. It provides all children with the essential learning needed to be well rounded, educated citizens for the 21st Century.

The quality of teaching across the school is at least good, with good subject knowledge demonstrated through planning, pupil outcomes and observations by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). All new staff members, regardless of their experience, receive support from a teaching partner familiar with our expectations and procedures. We play an integral role in the Initial Teacher Training provided by The Blue Kite Trust and apply this knowledge of the Teaching Standards to support students and those new to the profession.

We have a skills based curriculum, which enables key aspects to be revisited through the learning process. Each year group builds on the key aspects of knowledge and places this knowledge and skill acquisition in an ever increasing wider context. Since the last inspection we have undergone two cycles of review and revise to ensure children have progression in their learning and remember more of what they have learned.

Where we consider aspects of the curriculum to require specialist expertise (based on Staff Audit) partnerships are established with outside specialists, eg Prime Theatre, Swindon Music, European Space Agency, Swindon Dance, Poetry & Talk, to provide continuing professional development for staff and specialist teaching for pupils.

Teachers check children's understanding on a daily basis through use of targeted questioning, relating to clear learning objectives and success criteria. Pupils are challenged to take ownership of their own learning and develop skills that enable them to be active participants in this process. The introduction of Double Page Spread 'Celebration Pieces' allow children the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding and knowledge within units of work. Planning adaptations reflect the need to address misconceptions and opportunities for accelerated learning as appropriate.

There are termly moderation and assessment meetings within and across Year Groups and Key Stages, and at least twice a year with colleagues from other schools within The Blue Kite Trust. There are 3 data points throughout the year, which link with formal assessments and pupil progress analysis. Teachers are challenged through Progress Meetings with the SLT where there are robust discussions about next steps for pupils including an awareness of expected progress and attainment targets for individual pupils.

Assessment sheets for Foundation subjects are completed regularly and at least on an annual basis enabling teachers to adapt curriculum planning to ensure positive impact on pupil achievements.

Teachers plan work that will build on prior knowledge and challenge the pupils. Using the schemes of work ensure there is a build-up of skills over a series of lessons. This is monitored by the SLT who carry out regular evidence trails and work scrutiny and who then feedback findings to all staff.

Key Stage 1 Formal Assessments Summer 2023

Reading EXS+ - 71% & GDS -16%

Writing EXS+ - 61% & GDS-7%

Maths EXS+ - 80% & GDS - 16%

Science Teacher Assessment - 77%

It is expected that writing will meet a range of meaningful purposes and this is evidenced in planning. Termly Year Group and Key Stage moderation is used to check for this. Teachers and pupils are challenged to maintain high standards in writing across all curriculum areas. Our mathematics planning is guided by the National Curriculum as interpreted by White Rose. We follow a small steps approach, re-visiting concepts and methods to extend skills and identify gaps. Progress groups provide additional support, via the classroom staff or Intervention Team, for children who have been identified as working behind age-related expectations, or not on track from previous starting points, in an attempt to make accelerated progress. There are procedures for learning and testing number bonds and times tables which allow them to be practised between home and school, backed up by online resources: such as Mathletics, 123 Maths and Times Tables Rockstars.

A love of reading is at the heart of our curriculum beginning with our very youngest children. Throughout the school we run a weekly 'Reading Buddy' programme where each EYFS/KS1 class is paired with one from KS2. Oracy plays an important role in the acquisition of reading skills, with storytelling and rhyme having a high importance within our Early Years. Our partnership with Prime Theatre builds on this throughout FS2, KS1 and Year 3 - focusing on increasing deficits in speech and language ability on entry to the school. 'Talkie Walkies' is another cross-phase activity where each EYFS/KS1 class is paired with one from KS2 developing oracy and vocabulary. There is an expectation that reading is a direct teaching element of skill acquisition and not a passive listening/reading aloud exercise. The StorySack initiative runs within Year 1 to promote family engagement and enjoyment with reading. Throughout the school there is an importance placed on the enjoyment of poetry through termly Poetry and Talk sessions run by an experienced teacher, enthusiast and original contributor to Aiden Chambers' Booktalk. Every class is read a novel appropriate to their age, allowing for challenge, on a daily basis. Our Reading Spine provides a golden thread throughout the school, providing a range of texts, genre and styles which promote diversity and cultural capital.

We use reading schemes initially that match our phonic teaching (Dandelion). All children are heard read regularly in school and parents are encouraged through the Reading Record booklet and Homework Policy to read on a daily basis. There is regular on going assessment to identify gaps, through hearing individual readers, teaching of phonics and whole class teaching of reading comprehension skills. This is supported by question level analysis of formal assessments such as PIRA and end of Key Stage assessments. Phonics teaching in the school is good and this has been reflected in Y1 and Y2 phonics screening data. The school has a systematic phonics programme in place, which incorporates elements of StoryTime Phonics. We monitor the impact of phonics teaching and learning across the school, especially for our lowest 20% of learners.

National Phonics Check 2022

Year 1 - 81% Year 2 - 98%

Every class has a fiction library and children use the non-fiction library situated in the centre of the school. We take children to visit the local library and encourage them to become members.

All staff are challenged to set high standards for their own use of language and receive regular CPD in grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Formal Key Stage Two Assessment Results for Summer 2023 are:

Reading EXS+ -84% & GDS-40% (Ave Scaled 107.3) (VA 2.4)

Writing EXS+ - 74% & GDS - 13% (VA =0)

Maths EXS+ - 89% & GDS 38% (Ave Scaled 107.6) (VA=3.4)

GPS EXS+ - 80% & GDS 45% (Ave Scaled 106.6)

R/W/M Combined EXP+-68% & GDS 9%

Science Teacher Assessment - 78%

The quality of education prepares our pupils well for the next stage, including well-developed attitudes to learning and citizenship. We link closely with local secondary schools including cross phase working on MFL, Science, PE and organised transition projects.

Attainment and Progress Meetings on pupils in all age groups takes place formally 3 x a year, generating clear actions linked to individuals and groups. Actions taken in response to this analysis lead to end of Key Stage outcomes which are regularly in line or above local and national data. Children make good progress from their starting points compared to National and LA data.

We have a close working relationship with local Special Schools and regularly accept children in to mainstream who subsequently transfer successfully into Specialist Provision. There are additional transition arrangements for our SEND pupils on transfer to local secondary school to ensure they have the appropriate level of support required in order to be successful.

In order to improve the quality of education further we need to:

"In a few subjects, assessment does not precisely identify whether pupils secure the knowledge leaders expect them to. Leaders continue to develop assessment procedures to check what pupils know and remember in their subjects and use this information to prepare them for the next steps in their learning.

Behaviour and Attitudes

JUDGEMENT



The behaviour of our pupils is excellent, both in lessons and at transition times. Our children are regularly complemented on their behaviour when on trips. All staff have high expectations and there is regular training to ensure that this is consistently applied. Appropriate routines and sanctions are in place and set out in the school's Behaviour Policy, *which was re-written as part of a project within NPQBC 2022-3*. When there is more challenging behaviour, staff are supported by the Leadership Team and the school makes effective use of external agencies including Lighthouse (our Trust Early Help Team incl. Education Psychology, Play Therapy etc.) and local authority support services (like Autism Outreach/'Project Me' Mental Health etc.) to support both children and staff.

Attendance is monitored by the School Office and the SMT. Interventions are put in place to support and work with families who are experiencing difficulty in ensuring regular attendance.

At AMCPs all staff and pupils work together to ensure it is a place where people want to be and feel safe. Peer Mediators are selected from Year 6 and they support children at playtimes, dealing with low level difficulties. Children know they can share worries or concerns and are given reminders of this through PSHE and assemblies. Children trust the adults in school and report that there are people to whom they can turn. The school places great importance on caring for others and actively promotes building positive relationships across Year groups by running a number of initiatives such as Reading Buddies, Talkie Walkies, Active Life Ambassadors, Peer Mediators and the School Council. Throughout the year AMCPs is also involved in a number of fundraising initiatives such as Food Bank Collection, Children in Need, Santa to a Senior and Red Nose Day as well as a developing partnership through our Trust in developing schools within The Gambia through one of our Governors and Project Gambia.

At AMCPs our Mission Statement, in its simplest terms, is 'we aim to develop conscientious, free thinking children with a love of learning'. We teach our children the skills of Metacognition and critical thinking so that they are resilient and have a greater understanding of how to learn effectively. Personal learning achievements and attitude to learning are recognised by inclusion in the weekly Golden Book Assembly. Emphasis is placed on work being the best that each individual can do and children know that this is the expectation. 'Marvellous Mistakes' are celebrated as an integral part of the learning process.

Attendance is good across the school. Attendance is monitored each half term and those whose attendance has dropped below 90% are followed up; those below 95% are monitored. When there are long term difficulties, the school meets with the parents/carers to see how they can support. This can involve collecting children from home, pairing families up and linking with external agencies such as Parent Support Advisors and Education Welfare Officers.

At AMCPs fixed term and internal exclusions are used appropriately. They are used rarely and as a last resort. Following on from an exclusion there is a reintegration meeting with the Head Teacher, child and parent/carer.

There is a good relationship between staff and pupils at AMCPs. Children report that they feel safe and that there is a trusted adult in school they could talk to. Children feel happy coming to school and they feel welcomed by the staff, commenting on the fact 'we are welcomed by a smile.' Children are respectful of differing beliefs and cultures.

In order to improve behaviour and attitudes further we need to:

- A very small minority of children have challenging behaviours, which we do not allow to impact on the learning of others, but which can affect their own capacity to learn. These behaviours are not common within our school and are closely related to child experiences outside school. We consider it essential that all children have access to high quality education and a school place, so these are an expected outcome of being inclusive. We consider these behaviours to be managed well, following empathetic behaviour management strategies, but there is always room for improvement in order to achieve the best outcomes for this small number of children even if Outstanding.

Personal Development

JUDGEMENT



At AMCPs we aim to produce citizens of the 21st century who are caring towards all and believe in 'paying forward'. We have regular visitors to assemblies to promote spiritual development from the local churches. Through the RE scheme of work children are taught about different faiths and to have respect for the views of others. Our pupils are great ambassadors for the school and are polite and well-mannered to visitors whether in school or out on trips. Places on the School Council are eagerly sought after each year with each candidate producing a manifesto and taking part in hustings before the election is held. There are other opportunities for children to be involved in leadership roles within the school, such as Active Life Ambassadors, Peer Mediators, House Captains and Sports Teams.

Several fundraising events are held throughout the year in order to promote the importance of helping others. Events that the school generally supports include collecting for the Swindon Foodbank, Children in Need and Red Nose Day.

All children from FS2 to Year 3 benefit from working with Prime Theatre in school for two terms. There are also regular performances from theatre groups and the Swindon Music Co-operative Music Roadshows. The school has an active choir who perform in school as well as taking part in both the Swindon Infant and Junior Music Festivals and sing for the residents of a local residential home and carols at the local shopping centre. We regularly take part in the Young Voices Concert at the O2. The next planned participation is 2023. Children in Year 3 train towards the Discovery Arts Award, Year 4 and 5 learn to read music and play the recorder and there are opportunities for other musical instruments to be learnt.

The curriculum is designed to encourage pupils to be confident and resilient. Teaching metacognition and critical thinking enables pupils to analyse what they know and how they can improve. Teachers lead by example demonstrating how to verbalise thought processes for effective learning and the value of 'Marvellous Mistakes'.

At AMCPs children understand the need for eating healthily and having an active lifestyle, both physically and mentally. AMCPs consistently return excellent data for Swindon regarding fitness and lack of obesity; moving from 3% worse than national and local averages on entry to 3% better than these measures by Year 6. All pupils participate in PE lessons each week with swimming being taught in Year 3. Swindon Dance provide two terms of specialist dance provision for every age group and Fortius provide specialist support for our PE Leads and an external provision of participative and competitive experiences for our children. In addition, there are a variety of fitness clubs, catering for a range of abilities, such as football, running, athletics and tag rugby. We have previously been the schools' partner for the Mad March Hare (local 5k/10k event) organising the schools' event for local schools running for fitness and charity. Since this no longer runs, we are now the organisers of The Abbey Meads Amble, a family friendly 5K event in the local community.

Through the Science Curriculum, children are taught about how important healthy eating is and the importance of being active. As part of the curriculum children are taught about being safe, both on and off-line. The school also works closely with the NSPCC who provide information and workshops for both children and parents. Year 6 actively participate in 'Junior Good Citizen' focusing on keeping both themselves and others safe in the community. We are currently working with our Trust to develop our own Blue Kite Good Citizen reaching more children on a more regular basis.

AMCPs provides a wide range of opportunities for all pupils. There are a range of teacher led clubs on offer, ranging from sporting clubs to more creative to Forest Schools. Activities and awards that the children have gained outside of school are celebrated in assemblies so we can share those 'Wow' moments.

The pupils all vote in School Council elections each year, giving them an understanding of the value of democracy. The school population is diverse with a range of cultural, religious, ethnic and socio-economic communities. Children are expected to treat everyone with respect. Whilst 'Golden Rules' are negotiated within classrooms, we have three key rules in school, 'Be kind, Be kind and Be kind.' New children who join the school are welcomed and given a 'buddy' to help them settle in.

Pupils know that there are different views and beliefs within the school and wider community and show respect for the viewpoints of others. At AMCPs the opinions of all are valued. Differences are celebrated. The School holds the Dyslexia

Friendly Award, School Travel Awards and are currently working on the renewal of our Healthy Schools Award.

No pupil is discriminated against and the school works closely with parents and outside agencies in order to ensure reasonable adjustments can be made, so pupils can participate in the wider aspects of school life, including residential trips.

At AMCPs we want to produce caring and responsible citizens who make positive contributions to their locality. The pupils support a variety of charity events over the school year. The School Council also undertakes a project, from encouraging safer parking around the school site to collecting for The Swindon Christmas Toy Appeal. Visitors enhance the children's vision for what they can aspire to be. The School has developed partnerships with STEM Mentors, including INTEL and the European Space Agency.

In order to improve personal development further we need to:

- Whilst the most recent data suggests our actions are having a positive impact on health and obesity this data needs to become consistent over time.
- Children have a real sense of citizenship and understand British Values, but on occasion this is accepted as a way of life and an integral part of our philosophy to Pay Forward and Be Kind. There is always a need to return to the explicit teaching of the term 'British Values'.

Leadership and Management

JUDGEMENT



Leaders of the MAT fulfil their responsibility for ensuring high quality education. Chief Executive Officer, Strategic Education Board and School Leadership Advisors support the school well. Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality education to all pupils. Leaders demonstrate strong, shared values. Coherent policies support consistent best practice, distributed leadership and a strong MAT Leadership Structure.

The school has distributed leadership, with key roles running through all teaching and support staff with regard to senior, middle and curriculum leadership roles.

Teachers' continuing professional development is managed through a robust and effective performance management process, focusing on pupil progress, curriculum development and whole school issues, as well as personal development needs specific to individuals. A clearly defined programme for CPD exists for both teachers and teaching assistants, focusing on areas of development to continually improve and enhance teaching and learning. This includes published staff meeting foci, linked to school development priorities. Regular moderation meetings challenge the use of assessment to ensure appropriate interpretation and identification of strengths and areas for development both of individuals and whole school systems/approaches.

We have a history of welcoming children whose parents report have been rejected by others – including children with SEMH and SEND requirements. We have a high level of adult support and have strong links with the local Special School both for external advice and as a result of our continued commitment to providing the right education at the right time for all children.

We use our Pupil Premium Funding to ensure that there is quality adult support within the classrooms to ensure gaps are identified and closed, as well as providing additional opportunities not normally available to specific pupils such as additional learning opportunities incl. residential trips and visits. Expenditure on PPG activities are evaluated and amended to ensure better value for money. *(EG over time we have developed Omega Club / Metacognition Project and been prepared to cancel projects where we find insufficient impact.)*

SEND funding is used extensively to support those who need individual support as well as more widely through our intervention team. We fund the first £10,000 for the provision of any pupils in receipt of top up funding.

The leadership have a visible profile within the school and local community. The Headteacher is Chair of the local Headteacher Group and a former Chair of Swindon Area Heads. The Deputy is a Lead in the Local Authority for SEND and runs courses and conferences for other schools. The Assistant Headteachers hold national qualification and support others through SLE roles and other leaders are visible within the local community through organising regular Family Learning Events and Community Events.

The Headteacher produces a weekly newsletter to keep the parents informed and holds parent forum meetings throughout the year. Parents also have regular opportunities to attend Open Hours (where they can see their children's work), watch teachers teach, formal opportunities to speak with staff in Parent Consultation Evenings and daily contact in the playground with both teachers and senior leaders. We have close links with services local to the school such as Libraries, PCSOs and opportunities to link with STEM Ambassadors, as well as local businesses where education opportunities exist (EG: trips to local shops, project development with Homebase/Nationwide Community groups).

Parent questionnaires are carried out regularly and Parent View is advertised. Responses are very positive and any potential issues identified are dealt with effectively and in a timely manner.

There is a collegiate approach and shared commitment to achieving excellence for children. This includes careful consideration of the impact on learning and impact on workload when introducing new initiatives and developments. The staff are very well supported by leadership and staff questionnaires demonstrate that they feel supported and protected in their roles.

The Local Governing Body (LGB) links well with the Blue Kite Trustees and has a good understanding of the key issues and priorities for the school. Schools and LGBs are held to account by the Trust to ensure they fulfil their statutory duties and have a high profile for Safeguarding children in all respects. All Governors have completed Safeguarding and Prevent training.

Governors play an active and integral role in School Self-Evaluation and Development Planning and form an excellent link with the local community both through parents and local business links. They are supported extremely well by the Head of Governance at Trust level.

Leadership (including subject leaders) regularly present to the LGB on Teaching and Learning and Pupil Progress. Work across the Trust through our Blue Kite Bricks and further Training (EG Curriculum Leadership 2021-2022) supports the continuing professional development and dialogue both within our school and across those within the Trust. We continue to work closely within our Local Cluster of Headteachers, to develop links between Primary and Secondary Curriculum leaders - the most recent ones being in Geography and History.

Safeguarding underpins all that we do. Whether it be risk assessing the environments within which they work, safely recruiting staff, awareness of indicators related to classification of neglect and specific forms of abuse or being aware of how subject matter may impact children's social emotion and mental health – staff are constantly ensuring children get the support they need. Robust electronic systems (and back up paper systems) exist to ensure rapid response can be made to concerns/disclosures/allegations. The school has an annual audit by the LA and also buys additional Formal External Audit of its Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures from ST Consultancy. The Headteacher represents Swindon Headteachers on the Schools Forum Board for the Local Authority

The school is very inclusive and has a very clear and supportive culture, based around the precepts of Paying Forward and Being Kind. There are clear examples of families being supported at times of crisis and/or with additional needs, including the provision of individual support to parents to enable them to access the school community on an equal basis – or on their own terms if this is more appropriate. EG: Non reading parents, those in financial crisis, parents with medical needs, access to additional support such as Young Carers.

In order to improve leadership and management further we need to:

"In a few subjects, assessment does not precisely identify whether pupils secure the knowledge leaders expect them to." Leaders will continue to develop assessment systems to check what pupils know and remember in their subjects and use this information to prepare them for the next steps in their learning.

The school will address the fluctuating level of attainment in EYFS regarding % at GLD and the reasons for this being out of line with all other measures within the school.

Early Years

JUDGEMENT



We have very experienced staff in our Foundation Stage who are familiar with the aims of the EYFS and ensure these are met through planning lessons and providing an environment that is challenging for all children. Children are deeply engaged, demonstrating high levels of concentration and motivation. The intent, implementation and impact of the EYFS framework is clearly laid out in our own curriculum, responding to the needs of our children. We were proactive in planning for the introduction of the new FS2 baseline assessment and the revised statutory framework for the Early Years 2021, by becoming early adopters of the framework, implementing this a year early, in September 2020. Provision and progression of skills across Foundation stage is clearly mapped out and children's progression and development is carefully planned for.

We identify the needs of the children through baseline assessments and this informs our teaching, planning and any opportunities needed for the most disadvantaged children. This is provided through teacher led activities, continuous provision and any extra-curricular opportunities. The resources and environment support children to develop independence skills. We plan a curriculum full of awe and wonder to provide the children with rich additional experiences. We ensure we focus on the characteristics of effective learning to equip children with the skills they will need to succeed in life. We have a Progression of skills document that all FS staff follow and the continuous provision is constantly reviewed and resourced to ensure it provides opportunities for the children to be working on their next steps. Staff share next steps with Parents and we encourage them to contribute to this assessment and support this work at home through Tapestry.

We identify children with speech and language difficulties on entry and we have this as a focus in our Foundation Stage. We have invested in training from Speech and Language Therapists and in training materials for 'Talkboost' (a speech and language intervention programme) and Wellcomm. We begin this intensive intervention by the end of the induction period, when the children start school. We plan and provide lots of speech and language activities such as, back and forth conversations, modelling/ introducing new vocabulary, circle time, listening to stories and storytelling. We provide rich speech and language provision throughout the foundation stage classrooms, lots of small world activities and we have considered the environment to promote talking opportunities, through furniture, resources, spaces etc. We are also part of the Oracy project and implement many of the recommended activities.

We teach Phase 1 Letters and Sounds, focusing on rhyme and oral blending and segmenting in Nursery. We have introduced 'StoryTime Phonics' to deliver our phonic lessons in Reception. This follows the Letters and Sounds document, however it provides wonderful books to contextualise the phonic teaching. We have the Dandelion books reading scheme in Reception and this is a systematic reading scheme that follows the Letters and Sounds sequence. The children take books home to read that match the sounds they have been learning in class. Daily discrete phonics lessons support children's early reading development.

We work with outside agencies to support the needs of those children with particular SEND needs, ensuring our curriculum is inclusive and the children are supported to be able to access the EYFS or bespoke curriculum. Children identified with SEND have individual plans tailored to meet their specific needs. We are the professionals who often start the process for many children in Nursery who may be identified as working significantly below the age related expectations. 50% of our Reception cohort join from our school nursery. All additional needs have been considered and procedures established to support. Outside agencies are involved at this early stage to ensure EHCPs are in place ready for when the children start school

Nursery rhymes and songs are an integral part of our teaching in the Foundation Stage. We teach a nursery rhyme topic in Nursery and begin each week of our teaching with a focus text/story. We have good quality story sessions every day which includes reading and storytelling. We choose good quality texts which extend and challenge children's understanding and vocabulary. Reception teachers deliver daily big book and poetry sessions. We continue to use StoryTime Phonics in Reception, which introduces every sound with a high quality text. We have created a Reading Spine to ensure the children in our Foundation Stage experience a range of quality picture books by different authors, ranging from classics, traditional tales and other recent publications. We choose a diverse and inclusive range of texts.

Topics are used to interest and engage children. Teachers are skilled in creating strong and effective cross-curricular links whilst ensuring careful progression with subject specific skills and knowledge.

Mathematics is taught well with lots of opportunities for children to practice within the continuous provision to become confident in using and understanding numbers. We ensure the children are secure in counting, recognising numbers and matching quantities. Once secure with these concepts the children will apply these skills to reasoning and problem solving activities. This is assessed by staff and children are identified if they are 'at risk' of falling behind. We are now focussed on providing more opportunities to use maths within our continuous provision in all areas of learning.

We are very proud of our Foundation Stage classrooms that provide a safe, happy environment for our youngest children to thrive. Children are encouraged to be independent and staff are extremely attentive, ensuring their needs are met. All staff treat children with respect and kindness, modelling our 'Do as I do' approach throughout the school. By providing this environment where children feel safe and secure it enables the children to take managed risks and challenges as they play and learn. Many of these risks can be observed in our outside area or forest environment. Children are encouraged to become resilient and be proud of their achievements. We send questionnaires to our nursery parents each year and responses show 100% of children feel happy, secure and safe.

Children are encouraged to be active and develop physically through the use of our outside area, weekly PE sessions, welly walks, forest work, opportunities for the use of the field, track and trim trails throughout the week. The children have access to bikes in the outside area which provides high engagement and a very active/physical session. We promote healthy eating by providing fruit and vegetables for snack time and encouraging healthy lunchboxes for those who attend for 30 hours and in Reception. We ensure the children are taught about oral health as a safeguarding consideration and we provide books and activities to support this, as well as a visit from a local dentist.

We provide parents with continuous feedback through the use of 'Tapestry' our online journal. This enables parents to see some of the activities that have been happening in class and also specific next steps, progress and learning. Parents receive termly topic webs and letters to inform them about the focus for the term. We hold a curriculum briefing meeting/induction evening at the beginning of the year to share information about the school's method of teaching reading and how they can support this at home. We invite parents to attend two formal Parent Evenings and share progress, attainment and next steps during these meetings. We have organised meetings to specifically address speech and language to ensure parents recognise how important this is and the impact this has on the rest of the curriculum.

The percentage of children achieving GLD at the end of FS2 is consistently in line with national and local data. We continue to identify those who are most able, and our percentage of children exceeding in all areas has previously fallen in line with local or national data.

We have high expectations of behaviour and the children are taught to consider and talk about their own feelings and the impact they have on others. We recognise the importance of self-regulation and support the children with their language development and emotions to ensure our children have this skill. They create class rules and understand boundaries, developing a sense of right from wrong. We have a clear behaviour policy and staff are consistent in their management of this. Any patterns are analysed and possible reasons are considered, including safeguarding.

61% GLD in Summer 2023 (A significant number of EAL and Summer Born children make up the bulk of children not attaining GLD, with 3 of these no longer in the group).

In order to improve early years education further we need to:

We need to address the outlying data for FS2 at GLD - as it does not match the rest of our whole school data set (generally inline or above national).

Continue to develop the outside area to enhance even further, learning opportunities through both teacher led and continuous provision.

Overall

JUDGEMENT



This judgement has been made by taking account of the four key judgements, SMSC and the extent to which provision meets the needs of different pupils, including those with SEND.

The quality of education is outstanding, save for a small handful of incidents where long term recall of previous learning is missing for some children, which Ofsted attribute to a need for better systems of checking. (Ofsted 2023)

Safeguarding is effective.

For areas of improvement please see the end of each section.