Teaching and Learning Review – 9th and 12th October 2017

Purpose of the review

It was our aim to provide external evaluation by the London Borough of Southwark of the school’s current performance in order to support its self-evaluation and to identify next steps for the school improvement process.

Additionally we set out to identify how the school has progressed since the last inspection in 2009 and if in our view the school should retain its “Outstanding” Ofsted grading. This was a comprehensive review of Teaching and Learning across the school and involved seven local authority officers working in close collaboration with the senior management team.

Overall Summary

This school strives for continued improvement in order that provision and outcomes are always outstanding. Leaders have established a culture of high expectations where everyone, including pupils, teachers and the wider staff are enabled and seek to excel. Pupils at this school have consistently made excellent progress over many years from very low starting points and this, in conjunction with evidence from lesson observations, pupils’ work and discussions with pupils, teachers, leaders, governors and parents, indicates that this school remains Outstanding.

Key Strengths

1. Leaders and governors consistently focus on improving outcomes for all children. Across the school, leaders have a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for development. Senior leaders involve all levels of leadership in the monitoring and evaluation of the school so that the whole leadership team drives continued improvement.

2. Leaders have created a climate where all staff including teachers and support staff work very hard together to deliver a high quality and rich provision which enables pupils to thrive. As a result teaching seen was never less than good and was sometimes outstanding. This is supported by children’s books where it is evident that the quality of teaching over time is even stronger.

3. Assessment is used rigorously and effectively to evaluate learning and is validated through both internal and external moderation. Data is used effectively to set targets in order to support teaching and careful tracking of groups across the school ensures that no group, including the disadvantaged, falls behind.

4. A climate of consistently high expectations is reflected across the school. It is evident that pupils respond positively to lessons and their work demonstrates a sense of pride and very good progress. Learning is at the core of the school and the whole school environment celebrates and supports continuous development.

5. Behaviour for learning is excellent. Throughout the school children are enthusiastically engaged, personally motivated and strive to do well. They are proud of their achievements and their positive attitudes clearly enable them to make very good progress. This is clearly evident in the pride they take in their work.

6. Provision for all pupils across the school and in the unit is of a very high standard. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with complex special needs. Therefore all groups of children make very good progress across the school.

7. The school instils highly positive attitudes in their pupils. Equality of opportunity and respect for diversity are inherent across the school. Therefore, pupil’s conduct is excellent. They exercise a high degree of self management and self regulation as they move throughout the school and treat each other and adults with confidence and respect. Pupils with complex needs are well managed so that disruptions to the school day are minimised.
Key Recommendations

1. Continue to refine the quality and consistency of teaching so that all teaching is as good as the very best in the school by (See Teaching and Learning section for detailed next steps):

2. Review and refine the school’s approach to the teaching of reading so that all pupils are able to meet the demands of the new curriculum and assessment requirements by deepening children’s understanding of words and phrases so that they recognise shades of meaning and can skilfully make inferences.

3. Further refine the school’s assessment in light of the new ASP.

Teaching and learning:

Where learning is good or better:

1. Pupils make good progress because teachers use their thorough subject knowledge to plan well structured and interesting lessons where learning is well sequenced and developed so that pupils build skills and knowledge throughout the lesson.

2. Effective planning ensures that work is appropriately pitched and sequenced and activities are effectively differentiated and well-matched to pupils' needs, including those of the more able pupils. Activities require pupils to think, make decisions and apply learning independently;

3. Lessons are well paced and teaching strategies are appropriately selected. Key learning points are carefully explained and linked to prior learning. Accurate and appropriate modelling ensures that all pupils are able to access learning and to make good progress throughout the lesson.

4. Assessment for learning is used rigorously to inform teaching and therefore teachers have an excellent understanding of the learning needs of all pupils and adjust work to meet them and to challenge them appropriately. This enables pupils to make rapid progress within lessons.

5. Questioning is effectively used to challenge pupils of all abilities. Teachers exploit opportunities to extend learning by encouraging children to think more deeply by drawing out key points, providing more detailed explanations and justifying their thinking.

6. Marking throughout the school is thorough and systematic. Feedback to children is effectively used to challenge and extend learning. Children respond to their teacher and try hard to move their own learning on. In the best examples, pupils reflect and evaluate their own learning and apply this in their future work.

7. Expectations of all pupils are high and as a result behaviour for learning is excellent. Pupils are confident learners who are self motivated and enthusiastically engaged. They strive to do well. The high standard of presentation in books demonstrates the pride children take in their own learning.

8. Reading, Writing and Maths skills are embedded across the curriculum. Books show the frequent application of writing skills and pupils were observed applying phonics skills in their reading and written work. Phonics application is evident across the curriculum in KS1.

9. The classroom environment and displays of pupils’ work are of a high standard and match the quality of teaching seen. There are good examples of the breadth of the curriculum on display which cover the core curriculum, the foundation curriculum, the arts, PSHE, SMSC and British Values.

Next steps to further strengthen teaching so that an even greater proportion is outstanding and all other teaching is solidly good:

• Provide more opportunities within lessons where the scaffold is reduced so that children can control their own learning and consolidate and deepen their knowledge through more open ended problem solving and investigative activities.
• Further develop opportunities to assess learning through the use of targeted questioning and a range of other assessment measures so that teachers are fully aware of understanding across the whole class and can adjust teaching in order to maximise learning.

• Ensure that children work at the point of challenge in both shared and written work by moving children on more quickly. Use the good practice within the school to develop teachers use of high quality of questions and open ended resources to promote enquiry and deepen thinking. Ensure that teachers always have a clear understanding of more complex success criteria in subjects such as science so that lessons fully address them.

• Further refine the use of next steps marking so that comments are smart and focussed on moving learning forward especially in English. Raise expectations in future work that pupils apply new skills should be applied going forward.

EYFS

Children engage in a very good range of inviting, interesting activities which have challenge and relevance for young children. Resources are carefully prepared creating a very stimulating and well organised learning environment in which children can broaden their experiences. For example, they were particularly engaged in a range of activities including making telephone calls and taking messages, digging up real potatoes, and recreating the bear hunt story through role play. Planning ensures a good breadth and balance across all seven areas of learning of the EYFS curriculum. Adults know their children well and relationships are positive and supportive. Skilful open ended questioning, modelling and interactions help children to make very strong progress. Children’s exemplary behaviour shows that they feel safe and valued. There are opportunities for children to take age appropriate risks and they are able to share, take turns and cooperate with each other. Progress and attainment is effectively captured in most areas of learning through observations and quotes in well presented Learning Journeys. These can now be matched to an assessment sentence to summarise what has been learnt. Many children make outstanding progress and this is clearly shown through an effective system to track achievement.

Next step: Maintain a focus on learning (rather than doing) in assessments as well as in broader provision in the learning environment to ensure rapid progress in all EYFS classes.

Reading

• Pupils of all abilities enjoy and are confident about reading. They are encouraged to read daily at home and at school and have regular opportunities to visit the library. Consequently pupils have access to, and enjoy, reading a range of texts. They could all talk about their preferences of genres and authors.

• Pupils could apply phonics and use a range or decoding skills to work out new words and by the end of KS2 their basic fluency is strong and they demonstrated a good level of control when reading aloud.

• In several instances pupils found higher order comprehension tasks requiring a finer understanding of language and the ability to infer meaning more challenging. The school has already identified this as an area for development and has prioritised this in the SDP. They recognise that overcoming this will require exposure to more complex language, high quality texts and modelling a wider range of vocabulary regularly and throughout their school career. Focussed teaching of comprehension skills with quality modelling and scaffolding would help to overcome some of these issues.

• Guided reading lessons were very well organised, overall, and learning opportunities were well matched to children’s ability levels and the skills they need to develop. Teachers used a high level of questioning in their focussed sessions and drew children back to the text for answers. Leaders have planned a review of the teaching of reading and in particular Guided Reading sessions to ensure that teaching always has the maximum impact. They will use examples of the strongest teaching to develop the few areas where practice was not as strong.
The Language Unit.
The language unit has 23 pupils on roll who all have EHCPs and a diagnosis of developmental language disorder or impairment.

Most pupils enter the provision in Key stage 1. Attainment on entry is low; in all cases below age-related expectations. Progress from these start points is excellent. The majority of pupils who enter Key Stage 1 did not achieve a Good Level of Development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and most are working at P levels. The majority of pupils over the past 3 years have achieved age-related expectations in reading and maths by the end of Key Stage II in 2015 and 2016 transferred to mainstream secondary schools. At the end of 2017 4/5 year six pupils were assessed as being able to access an age-appropriate curriculum in year seven but parents expressed a preference for special education.

The language unit makes very good provision for pupil’s personal development well-being. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and warm. Staff expectations of pupils learning behaviours are high and because of this, pupils persevere with their learning and they sustain their efforts to complete tasks in class. Language unit pupils are generally well integrated with their peers at break and lunchtimes.

Standards for these pupils are high because the leadership of the provision is strong. Staff have a good understanding of pupils' learning needs which are diverse given wide the range of abilities and the very specific nature of the pupils' learning difficulties. Additional adults are well used to provide focused teaching in small groups and individually. Pupils make rapid progress when teachers combine well-matched communication strategies and multisensory learning support materials with good subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned and sequenced.

The assessment of pupils learning and other special educational needs is rigorous. Baselining is considered; taking into account prior achievement, parental information and specialist assessments combined with teacher observation and assessment over the first term in the provision. This gives a secure start point from which to judge progress and achievement.

Next Steps
• Provide new and less experienced staff with modelling and CPD opportunities to develop all teaching in line with the best practice in the unit

SEND in the school.
Pupils identified as SEND make excellent progress because inclusion is at the heart of all that the school does. All staff have high expectations of pupils achievement and of their behaviour and the provision made to support pupils experiencing barriers to learning enables them to learn well and participate fully in all aspects of the life of the school. The average progress score for reading writing and maths SEN support pupils was above the national average in 2017.

The identification and assessment of pupils with Special Needs is very precise. There is a good understanding of the difference between underachievement and Special Educational needs. Teachers take effective action when pupils do not make expected progress in lessons. They implement additional resourcing and targeted teaching strategies and skilfully match tasks to the next steps in pupils learning. Consequently the majority of pupils make good progress and have the opportunities to revisit and address misconceptions. This means that the identification of pupils with additional needs is secure and support can be well targeted. As a result the proportion of pupils identified as SEN support is below the borough average although the school has relatively high levels of social deprivation.

SEN is very well led. The SENCO has established exemplary systems that ensure that the teaching of pupils with SEND is characterised by teamwork. Support from Teaching Assistants is clearly focussed on learning. Modelling and teaching is of a high standard. TAs have access to high quality CPD and this clearly impacts on practice. They have a good understanding of the interventions that they deliver. They are knowledgeable about children’s needs and are fully involved with planning and assessment with the teacher. This ensures that they are genuine partners in learning able to
John Ruskin Primary School and Language Unit,

effectively support during lessons, adapting and making resources and enabling their pupils to make good progress. The SENCO is now planning to develop specialisms within the team.

The range of provision is very good and the school makes thoughtful and effective use of external professional and agencies to ensure that needs are fully met. Interventions address Speech and language, Literacy and Numeracy and the team can also offer TEACH provision.

Next steps:
- Ensure the learning and progress of all groups of SEND and the impact of all interventions is as good as the best. This will be helped by specific analysis of the achievement and outcomes of pupils with SL&C/SALT and disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Develop a broader range of measures to evidence the social and emotional learning for children for whom this is a priority possibly using the emotional regulation scale developed by Bethlem and Maudsley.

Assessment:
The school has good systems in place for assessment which are used rigorously to track progress across the school and to ensure that children do well. The school makes good use of nationally and locally produced data sources such as Raise online, ASP and Southwark’s Super Profile. Leaders are fully aware of the implications of the language unit on their data and therefore commission a Super School Profile with data from the main school only in order to make comparisons.

Internally the school use APS to track Typical and Rapid progress. Any underachieving group is quickly identified and leaders take steps to address those, e.g. reading groups for children who are 1 step below. Groups are also thoroughly tracked and the school takes particular note of Pupil premium, Gender, EAL and SEN. Consequently there are no groups underperforming.

On-entry assessment is carried out promptly (within 2 weeks) and confirms the very low starting points of children at this school. This enables the school to target provision within the Early Years and pupils make very good progress. With the exception of this year’s reading test outcomes at the end of KS2, outcomes consistently exceed both national and local averages.

The school are well aware of the need to verify and validate assessments and, therefore, they not only take part in LA and cross school moderation, but also act as a hub school for KS1 moderation. The school are active participants in the LA Assessment leaders group. Internally, assessments are first verified with the year group partner and then moderated in teams. Class teachers are held to account through Pupil Progress meetings where termly comparisons are made about individual pupils to ensure no one is left behind. Data is collated across the whole school and used to inform the School Improvement plan.

Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare

Across the school pupils' display positive attitudes towards each other. They are courteous, welcoming to visitors, respectful of others and work well together. Relationships between pupils and the adults working in the school are very positive but purposeful. There is a climate of trust and children clearly feel safe.

There is a high level of self regulation as pupils move around the school and in the playground. The review team did not see any examples of poor behaviour. As a result pupils enter their classrooms quickly and calmly and are ready to learn.

Parents were overwhelmingly positive about the school. Leaders and staff are respected and trusted and parents were confident that they could approach the school to discuss any worries or concerns. All of the parents spoken to reported that their children were happy at school. They all felt that behaviour was good and that their children were given good amounts of homework. One parent particularly praised the school’s approach to diversity which she felt was very important in this local community.

Displays around the school and assemblies made good links to SMSC. In particular there were strong positive messages about equalities with reference to Black History, and to racism and sexism. In addition healthy eating had a high profile as did expectations about behaviour.
Leadership and Management:

Leadership across the school is very strong. There is an unwavering commitment to high expectations in all respects. Therefore standards of learning and behaviour are very high. Despite very low starting points, children do consistently well at this school and this is reflected in the confidence parents put in the school and the staff who work here.

Leaders know and understand the school very well. They are fully aware of the strengths of the school and of the areas for development. The SLT are quick to use this information to bring about improvement and this commitment is shared across the school. This is exemplified by the rapid response to disappointing reading results at KS2. Leaders quickly undertook careful analysis and unpicked cohort driven issues and those which suggest a need for development in the way reading is taught. Plans are now in place to monitor and develop the teaching of reading across the school.

This is a school where everyone learns and there is a culture of everyone doing their very best. The Middle Leadership team are enthusiastic about their role in improving the school. They are well informed about school priorities and have a good grasp of the School Improvement Plan. They all plan for their areas and know how their work contributes to the whole school picture. Middle leaders have a good understanding of the monitoring, evaluation and development cycle. They use opportunities to monitor their own areas and know how to access information from SLT monitoring. This information is used to inform their development work. Middle leaders have actively engaged in a variety of CPD to support their roles but in particular spoke of the valuable opportunities they had to take part in monitoring with the SLT through observations and book scrutinies. With a few middle leaders new to post, Senior leaders are now focusing on their development so that they become as strong as the others.

Governors are highly committed to the school and to the SLT. They know the school well and have access to detailed performance information. They have a good understanding of the community and issues relating to safeguarding. They have a good overview of safeguarding systems and processes and have been updated about the status of training across the school. Governors know the key performance and use them to support and challenge leaders.

Overall Judgement: Outstanding
Appendix:

Review Process:

Review team:
Bernadette Oates, Senior Advisor / School Link Advisor
Ian Morris SEN and Senior Advisor
Richard Hunter, Senior Adviser
Terry Segarly, Head of Standards 0-19
Dany Thomas, Senior Adviser
Nikki Tilson, Senior Advisor
Cara Cahill, NQT Advisor

Process:

- A total of 29 observations were undertaken in all classes and 2 interventions. These were jointly carried out with an LA Advisor and senior leader from the school. The SEN Advisor also observed in the Language Unit. Observers also looked at pupils books to look at learning over time.

- Additional review activities included interviews with a range of leadership groups and governors, discussion with parents and Learning Walks focussing on the Environment and Behaviour.