



Basic Skills Quality Mark Programme – Visit Feedback Report

School name	EYs at Meadows First School EYQM/10512		
Head Teacher	Mrs Sue Hewitt		
Deputy	Mrs Wendy Dwyer		
School and/or HT email	wd35@meadows.worcs.sch.uk	Tel no	01527 872508
Alliance QM Assessor	Lynda Townsend	Visit date	28/3/2018

Purpose of Visit	Renewal
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The Assessor spoke with the following people

Head Teacher & Deputy Head YES	Early Years Leader YES	Numeracy Subject Leader YES	Assessment Manager/EY Leader YES
SENCo NO	Pupils YES	Governor representative(s) YES	Parent representative YES

'Learning Walk' completed? YES	Relevant evidence-base reviewed? YES
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The visit started with a meeting with Mrs Sue Hewitt, Head Teacher and Mrs Wendy Dwyer, Deputy Head Teacher and Early Years Leader, who presented an overview of the school and an update of the progress the school. Ofsted visited only last week and carried out a Section 8 Visit as a good school. The school is waiting for the report. Mrs Dwyer had prepared a great deal of documentation for the meeting, which was greatly appreciated and ensured I was given an accurate picture of how Early Years is continuing to meet the Early Years Quality Mark.

As a consequence, it is clear to see that the school is very forward thinking and is continually re-evaluating its practice in the light of current developments in education. Mrs Dwyer took me on a Learning Walk in Reception and Nursery, both indoors and out. Mrs Dwyer pointed out the quality practice that takes place regarding the teaching of the prime areas and basic skills so that I was able to triangulate the evidence presented against the EYQM standards. I met with parents, a parent governor and the class teachers from both Nursery and Reception.

There is such a happy atmosphere in the school and I was made to feel extremely welcome by everyone. Thank you so much.

The areas for development from the previous Interim and Support Review have all been achieved.

Suggested areas for development in preparation for the next Quality Mark visit:

- To continue to develop strategies to support speech and language development.
- To continue the impact of professional development on Early Years practice.

'Good practice' identified in relation to the 10 Elements of the Quality Mark:

Congratulations to the school as it continues to meet all the standards in the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The school continues to show marked strengths and is well placed for continuing development towards Renewal in March 2021 with an Interim Support and Review visit in September 2019.

'Good practice' identified in relation to the 10 Elements of the Quality Mark:

Elements 1,2,3,10 (relating to Assessment, Expectations, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating impact)

- The School Improvement Plan is focused on developing pupils' speech and language, increasing the progress of disadvantaged children, improving girls' writing, improving pupils' progress in reading and raising the profile of reading and improving gross motor skills particularly for children in Nursery.
- The Early Years Leader and staff clearly know the strengths and areas for development. The action plan for Early Years is based on self-evaluation derived from monitoring and evaluation and an ongoing analysis of assessment information. Monitoring includes: lesson observations, work trawls, scrutiny of Learning Journeys and learning walks. Actions are regularly reviewed and updated.
- The Early years' policy is in line with statutory framework and the Ofsted report on Reception - 'Bold Beginnings'.
- Reports on data and improvements in provision are presented to Governors on a termly basis.
- The Early Years Leader meets regularly with the Early Years governor, who is extremely well informed.
- Early Years policies are in line with national requirements and states inclusion and equal opportunities. There is a high proportion of SEN children within the school and particularly within the Reception cohort (with 2 EHCPs and 3 pending EHCP).
- Pupil progress meetings are held regularly and include discussions on how to improve outcomes for pupils.
- Classroom audits ensure provision matches the needs of the children in the cohort.
- Timetables are reviewed to ensure that the cohorts needs are provided for to ensure the best outcomes (e.g. heavy boy cohort last year led to a change in playtimes and use of Y3/4 playground as well as further outside areas being developed).
- There is clear evidence of moderating of assessments taking place, ensuring assessments are robust. These include: internal moderation across year groups - regular, external

moderation by head teachers (yearly). The Early Years Leader coordinates moderations across 14 schools where staff meet to discuss evidence in the Learning Journals.

- Validation of the school's self-evaluation is backed up by: County's School Improvement Advisor (SIA), recent local school head teacher's validation, OFSTED validation of the effectiveness of EY (20th March 2018).
- Baseline assessments show children enter at 22-36 months or below/ some children start at 30-50 months. The range of starting points are taken into consideration when planning, along with identified needs or 'schemas' that staff are aware of.
- All staff in reception are trained in EYFS statutory framework and are aware that children develop in different ways. Staff are aware of 'schemas' and can plan to help children develop skills by looking at individual interests - learning is planned for in multisensory ways to ensure that preferred learning styles are met.
- 'High expectations for all' is the mantra with all children.
- GLD has an upward trend and is well above national at 75%. GLD for disadvantaged pupils is also improving
- Next steps are planned from Tapestry as well as ongoing formative assessments.
- Daily focussed activities - formative assessment is immediate with the children, in the form of dialogue, discussions and support in the classrooms.
- Daily focus sheets are created for activities planned according to specific needs of pupils; these have clear expectations for individual pupils/groups.
- Early assessments are based on Learning Journeys sent from preschools & discussion with nursery staff.
- Initial visits are made to preschools/ nurseries in summer term by teachers.
- Home visits started (2017) for Teacher and TA to visit home. Parents are also asked to fill in an 'All About me' sheet with the child.
- Summer term visits by children enable staff to observe children in all Areas of learning to give a 'snapshot' of the child.
- Children are involved in the assessment process, as appropriate to their age and stage of development through 'All About Me' initial discussions, Target Tigers - children select which activities are planned for the next few weeks. Ongoing assessment and discussions with the children leads into their planning - and enhances the provision.
- The Early Years Leader is a moderator for the LA.

Elements 4,5, (relating to the provision made for all young children)

- The environment in Early Years is very literacy rich. The children have a rich supply of high quality books. Most topic themes are based on a book from which the learning develops. The development of children's speech, language and vocabulary is a key focus of all the learning taking place facilitated through the many activities and experiences provided.
- Planning involves all practitioners in Early Years and builds on prior learning, interests or identified needs of the children.
- Staff are all aware of the characteristics of learning and know how to support children in a positive and encouraging way.
- Focus groups have work differentiated to support their age and stage of development.
- 18% of the current reception cohort have been identified as having SEN.
- 2 children with EHCP (3%) and a further 3 children are pending EHCP (total 8%)
- provision maps/ interventions/ early support tracking.

- Extra staff have been employed to further support the additional needs of the cohort in order to plan and support the children.
- The school works closely with outside agencies to develop programmes to support interventions (such as S&L).
- The SENDco reviews and monitors the intervention planning and meets with parents to discuss individual needs and requirements. If needed, some children are referred to the Umbrella Pathways for further agency involvement and to support their needs.
- The Early Years team meets regularly to discuss any issues arising in reception.
- The team works closely with outside agencies (SLCN, Chadsgrove, CCN, Physio) to review progress.
- There is an 'Open door' policy where parents and staff can communicate daily,
- Formal parent teacher evenings are held every term and at the end of the year, parents have a full written report on the stages of development of their child.
- Effective systems are in place to support transition arrangements and good use is made of information from parents and other settings, such as, children are offered 3 visits to their new classroom. In the summer the school also hosts a 'teddy bears picnic' for pre-school and parents.

Elements 6,7,8, (relating to practitioner skills; learning activities; use of resources & environments)

- The Early Years Leader is the Deputy Head of school. She is a County moderator. She has recently undertaken an extra qualification in Early Years childhood studies (PGCE) and she is a specialist leader in education.
- All EYFS staff are given the opportunity to have regular CPD. Paediatric First aid is a requirement within the school when employing new staff.
- A Reception class teacher has been trained as Level 3 Forest School Leader.
- All volunteers are given induction training especially safeguarding processes.
- Additional adults employed recently to support 1 to 1 and SEN have robust induction and needs identified and supported through CPD (paediatric training, scaffolding the learning)
- New Nursery teacher has also had CPD training by visiting other Nurseries.
- Training offered by the LA is identified for staff.
- All teachers in Reception attend LA moderation meetings.
- Other sources for CPD are also used to maximise the quality of CPD to staff.
- Staff attend Early Excellence CPD training awareness (re baseline).
- Early Years Leader attends cross LA moderation meeting with Early Excellence.
- Responsive CPD is organised (e.g. Outside Area training, Speech and Language, Thrive.
- Teaching assistants are very much included in all training opportunities.
- Staff say 'they are very proud of the way that Early Years has moved forward. They feel so lucky that the headteacher and deputy headteacher are so knowledgeable about Early Years. This is because they come into Early Years regularly'.
- The class room has defined areas of learning.
- Continuous and enhanced provision promote independent child-initiated learning.
- There is a focus on some aspects of ELG (e.g. writing and maths and reading) - in ALL areas.
- Child Initiated and Adult led activities are developed through common theme (such as 'spiders') where all areas are linked to enable self-exploration and focused adult activities (both inside and outside).

- Areas of learning are supported by a frame displaying the learning objective and supported by a 'talking tin' to enable children to access.
- There is a development of creative areas -particularly outside.
- There are links with other cultures - dragon dance for Chinese New Year.
- Role play areas enhance learning - themes developed by children's ideas.
- I pads are bought to support learning in classroom as well as PC/ Beebot.
- An Ecers audit is carried out of the indoor provision and used to improve the areas of learning within the classroom.
- Outside areas developed in both Nursery and reception including a focus on reading areas, writing in all areas, artificial grass for reception to facilitate all-weather activities.
- Other resources include: fencing and resources for Nursery, new garden, playhouse in Nursery, Mud kitchens developed in both YN and YR, a new outside tap has been built which has greatly impacted on the water play provision. Autonomy and independence are promoted.
- The environment is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers, words, rhymes, books, pictures, music and songs which take into account children's different ages, interests, understandings, home backgrounds and cultures.

Element 9 (relating to partnership working)

- There are clear systems established for communicating with parents and carers.
- Induction ensures that parents know ways to support their child's learning.
- The open-door policy enables staff and parents to communicate daily.
- Weekly stay and play sessions develop relationships and engage parents.
- Phonics and number meetings provide a wealth of resources for parents to take home.
- The staff communicate weekly via a newsletter and via email so that parents are kept up to date with the themes and next steps for learning.
- Challenges are sent home in order that parents can have a go at home too.
- The website keeps parents informed of what is happening.
- Parents' evenings are held termly and also parents have a written report of their child's progress and development.
- The school operates a 'parent text' service to pass on any important information.
- There is a home school reading log into which staff and parents can communicate further.
- WOW moments are given weekly for parents to contribute to their child's learning.
- Tapestry enables parents to contribute to the learning.
- Staff make regularly referrals to the Worcestershire early Help Hub.
- Induction procedures for parents and carers include providing information about how the setting supports and develops learning and seek information about the child's experiences at home and in other current or previous provision; transition between nursery/pre-school provision is well-managed.
- The school holds an open evening presentation by Reception staff on the learning and development philosophy of Early Years, particularly on how the classes follow a play-based learning framework.
- The setting regularly consults parents and carers to seek views about their child's development and progress. Parents contribute by WOW moments and Tapestry, daily chats and informal discussions with parents and carers form the largest part of this process. A parents' questionnaire is sent home to enable staff to improve the current practice.

- There is evidence of effective and collaborative multi-agency working, including where applicable in respect of children with additional needs, close working relationship with a local special school.
- The school has a mainstream autism unit on site (MAB) which also has a sensory room. Some of the children in Reception access this sensory room too.
- All staff are trained at Autism level 2 (January 2015).
- The school also has an onsite family support worker, where parents can be signposted to access support when needed.
- Safeguarding meetings also involve close working of other agencies and support for vulnerable families where needed.

Summary:

Congratulations to Sue Hewitt, Head Teacher, Wendy Dwyer, the Deputy Headteacher, staff, governors and pupils for achieving the renewal of the Early Years Quality Mark and for the good practice identified. This should impact further on raising standards of progress and attainment.