

NAHT ASPIRE Peer Review Report

School:	St Andrew the Apostle Catholic Primary School, Knowsley
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Review dates:	9 & 10 October 2019	Completed by: Tracy Higgins
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Format for this report

This report consists of: a graphical summary of the school against the selected Features from the School Development Rubric, a copy of the School Development Rubric with specific descriptors highlighted to show a current baseline, and by implication some of the next steps, and a summary of school strengths and proposed areas for development.

Strengths and possible next steps for the school

Leadership

St Andrews is a friendly, happy and inclusive school, where the whole school community live out the school's vision to, 'Live like Jesus and open the doors to the world. Dream it! Believe it! Reach it!' During the Review, it was evident that this aspirational vision drives everything at St Andrews and that pupils, staff, governors and parents both appreciate it and are 100% committed to it. Consequently, children make good progress academically, personally, socially and spiritually and can articulate how they enjoy learning and are proud to be part of the 'St Andrew's family'.

Leaders have a clear picture of school strengths and areas for development, based on robust self-evaluation, which directly informs school improvement priorities. Current key priorities for 2019-2020 are to:

- design and implement a unique curriculum to meet National Curriculum aims
- improve reading across the school through initiatives, such as, The Power of Reading, Voice 21 (oracy development) and REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy- engaging parents in early reading).
- develop leadership at all levels, in particular, foundation subject leads
- close the gap for disadvantaged pupils

Leadership is clearly distributed through school and there is a strong culture of collaboration openness and relational trust, with staff and governors appreciating the positive workplace culture that embraces and empowers everyone. Teamwork is effective, productive and inclusive with all members of staff involved in one of four teams focused on various aspects of school life. This results in everyone's voice being heard, valued and influencing school direction. Meetings are well planned with clear agendas and they lead to action.

The SLT are highly organised and plan ahead to ensure the school runs smoothly. Communication is effective. A data, assessment and monitoring cycle is in place for the academic year ahead and timetables, checklists and guidelines are in place to enable staff to manage workload and support their wellbeing.

Leaders manage change well and ensure the school's vision and improvement priorities are central to decision-making and the way new systems and strategies are introduced and implemented. The current focus on adapting and improving the curriculum is providing subject leads with opportunities to reflect on the strengths of their subjects, plan forward and monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching and learning across the school. Providing leadership support for subject leads to enable them to be effective, articulate intent, successes and next steps; and action plan in response, is a key priority.

Teachers feel empowered to adapt learning and are solution focused. Staff engage in high quality professional development, including nationally renowned qualifications, such as NPQH and NPQSL. They work in partnership with the Maths Hub and have received training to support the implementation of key strategies, such as The Power of Reading and Read, Write, Inc. In addition staff work in learning triads visiting each other's classrooms and sharing practice. There is a commitment from leaders to further develop peer learning.

Across the school, teacher knowledge of and adaption for each child to support their individual progress is impressive and has high impact. Emphasis is placed on ensuring the learning environment is designed to promote independence and inspire learning. Teachers work together with support staff to plan, evaluate and ensure the maximum pupil progress. Parental feedback is positive about the way the school educates and cares for their children. They consider the school to be a family and highlighted the personalised education each child receives. Without exception the parents interviewed, highly recommend the school.

The governing body provides strong leadership, sharing the school's vision and values and articulating the school aim for all children to experience success whilst at school and beyond. They have a wide range of skills that serve the school well and support the school in building positive links with Hope University in Liverpool. The committee structure ensures time is used well and meetings are focused. Documentation received from school leaders is clear and informative. Governors have great respect for the Headteacher and whole staff team, support and challenge them appropriately and have a deep understanding of the current strengths and priorities.

Learning Environment

The school's Catholic vision and distinctiveness is evident in the environment and relationships. Leaders, governors, staff and children can articulate the vision and aims that underpin the work of the school. Children recall and understand the School Charter. They feedback it helps them with their learning and behaviour. During the Review, leaders, staff, parents and governors spoke of how the school focused on making 'success for everyone' a reality. SLT indicated that this aspect of the school's intent needs to be more explicit in the wording of the vision and that they will review the school's Vision, Values and Charter to ensure they fully reflect the aspiration and desired success for all the children, clearly and succinctly.

Throughout the Review, it was evident the school has an open door ethos, and the welcome and hospitality received by families and visitors is special. Parents described the 'warm feel' of the school and the children say their teachers are kind and encouraging.

Teamwork is well developed. Staff relationships are positive, they see themselves as role models and lead by example. All staff engage in one of four teams: Well-being, Outdoor, Indoor and Outreach. These teams have autonomy over aspects of school life; a remit to enhance provision, develop community and fundraise, as appropriate. They have implemented a range of initiatives, including after-school yoga, engaging with mental health specialists to spread expertise and the introduction of 'Ishi' – a well-being pebble character, who has become important for staff and children. They have developed the outdoor environment, raised funds and planned and delivered community events. Reflecting on this teamwork, SLT believe it has benefitted the school bringing in funding, supporting staff and pupil wellbeing and developing community engagement. The next step is to link this teamwork more explicitly to the vision.

Learning spaces across the school are purposeful, well designed and used to maximise learning. Displays are high quality, stimulating and consistently reflect the vision and values. The Catholic distinctiveness is apparent through the school, with affirmations, Bible references linked with learning

and action. There is a focus on Reading across the school, with each class having an inviting reading area. Children are encouraged to read for pleasure, through Reading Challenges and are proud (as the display highlights) to be photographed in the Reading Wings!

Corridors are used effectively as a learning resource with an interactive enhanced area for each subject, which includes inviting resources, key questions and subject specific vocabulary. Pupils access these areas in 'guided' time where they complete focused work. Subject Leads ensure guidelines are in place to support learning.

Around school it is evident that there is an emphasis on aspiration, with the Aspirations Wall, Scientist of the Month etc. Pupils take up a wide range of responsibilities, including Y6 Prefects, Eco-Group, Reading Ambassadors, Buddies and Maths Champions. These are in addition to the School Council, with Head Boy and Head Girl.

Learner voice is valued. Children are involved in decision-making and have direct input into school life, such as charitable events and the playgrounds. During the review children articulated what the school does well and gave positive feedback about learning. It was evident they are proud to attend the school and appreciate how the teachers make learning 'interesting and exciting'. Leaders plan to develop the learner voice system, so that it impacts on teacher planning and lesson design.

The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which enhance the curriculum and promote the development of personal and social skills. Pupils benefit from a range of visits and experiences. It was evident through pupil and parent discussion that the broad range of opportunities on offer motivate and engage pupils and enhance their learning.

Pedagogy and Curriculum

Leaders have a determined focus to ensure teaching and learning is as effective as possible and have a good grasp of the elements of effective teaching. The school are focused on developing independence, engagement, ensuring prior learning is built on, tasks are pitched right, and children take pride in their work and are productive and active. There has been an emphasis on linking learning to real life and making it purposeful. Reviewers commented upon the authentic teaching seen and reflected that classroom routines and organisation are well-established and time managed effectively.

Lesson visits highlighted that lessons are well designed and engaging and that the recent introduction of The Power of Reading is having a positive impact on developing reading skills and a passion for books. Embedding the Power of Reading and updating reading books is a focus of this year's SIP.

All staff are involved in observations, every member of the team has observed other members of staff teaching. As a result, staff pick up teaching tips and adapt and improve practice. There is a focus on challenging children to achieve greater depth across a range of subjects. It was evident that questioning is effective in supporting children to deepen their thinking. Questions in the enhanced areas are well designed to engage children in research, thinking and solution planning, and it is an expectation that when work is completed, children will record key learning to present it to their teacher. Subject leaders are providing subject specific guidance to teachers so they are aware of GD standards and can challenge children to achieve them.

Key strategies to support a consistent approach to teaching learning and life skills, are the PSHE curriculum, the Charter and the variety of different strategies and approaches teachers use to help children become better learners, such as, Thinking Hats, Bubble Maps and Learn 2 Learn strategies including learning team roles, like running reporter etc. In discussion with children, parents and governors it is clear that intentionally teaching and developing learning and life skills is important to the school. The next step is to build more consistency in learning to learn skills across all classes and consider the most appropriate way to assess these skills.

It was clear from the book look and dialogue with children that the curriculum covers a range of subjects and inspires a love of learning. However, improving and adapting the curriculum and making more intentional links with reading is underway and it will be difficult to evaluate the impact of the new changes until later in the academic year.

Assessment for Learning

Leaders have an in depth understanding of the performance of cohorts, groups, sub-groups and individual pupils. Data is collected termly and analysed by leaders and teachers prior to pupil progress meetings, where discussions focus on highlighted groups and individual children. Target groups of pupils are carefully monitored throughout the year with teachers ensuring provision enables the learners to make good progress. The system is robust and ensures all children are closely monitored and teaching approaches are adapted to meet need.

The team engage in informal dialogue about children's learning on a regular basis and staff take collective responsibility for the pupils in their care. As a result, all staff know the children well and solution plan together supporting each other with new pedagogical approaches.

Learners enjoy a range of focused feedback to which they respond well. They are clear about what they need to do to improve and can talk with confidence about their progress. When asked to share pieces of work that they were proud of the majority of learners chose pieces which linked to The Power of Reading, showing their high levels of engagement with the new book immersion approach.

The Feedback and Marking Policy is implemented consistently across subjects with the marking code (5 Stars) providing pupils with specific feedback, whilst keeping teacher written comments to a minimum, thus reducing workload. Success criteria and learning objectives are shared with the children in the lesson but not explicitly written in books. Both English and maths books have contracts in the front outlining expectations. As the children keep the previous year's books, progress over time is evident. Children have a range of books, so writing is found in English Books, extended Writing Books and their Independent Books. Additionally, some writing is recorded in Foundation Subject books. As a consequence of the number of books, it was difficult to follow a child's progress in writing. The school note that since the introduction of The Power of Reading, there is some inconsistency about the amount of writing in books during the initial immersion in book phase, which they anticipate will have an implication on moderation. The plan moving forward is to adapt and build in writing opportunities during immersion and to review the feedback and marking policy, making '5 Star' clear and consistent and reviewing best practice in self and peer assessment.

Student and Family Support

Strategies to promote and ensure equality and inclusion are central to all aspects of school life. This was confirmed through pupil, parent, teaching and support staff feedback, as well as in SLT discussions throughout the Peer Review. The SENDCO, Learning Mentor, SLT and whole staff team are passionate about supporting vulnerable children and have extensive subject knowledge. Their dedication to serving children and families was noted and appreciated by the parents and governors interviewed.

Pupil outcomes for vulnerable groups of learners are generally good, including for pupils with SEND. The Inclusion Register includes all children with an additional need and systems are designed to ensure no child falls through the net. Class teachers screen all children in their class, identifying any barriers to learning, and communicating effectively with the Inclusion Team as required.

Both the SENDCO and Learner Mentor provide highly effective leadership, supporting the staff team with professional development and providing tailored support. Groups of children with similar needs receive targeted support to reduce barriers and close gaps in learning. Identification systems are regularly reviewed. Recent data analysis shows pupils entitled to pupil premium funding need to close gaps in learning and the school is committed to further improving outcomes for them. As a result, they are joining the Solution Satellite and comparing the outcomes of the various pupil premium groups i.e. those with SEND or an identified barrier with the 'pure' pupil premium children, to plan personalised learning programmes for identified children.

Teacher ownership of educational accountability for all children is high, leaving the SENDCO to work at a strategic level. Teaching Assistants support identified children in class where EHCPs are in place. However, they are conscious of developing pupil independence, so maintain a balance of support and encouraging independence.

The school works well with external agencies and are determined and persistent in employing specialist support where needed to ensure children have the best opportunities to succeed. They buy in a Half Day per fortnight Peripatetic Teacher, who has a great impact on pupil learning and teacher support. The school reviews the impact of external agencies annually.

Parents spoke with warmth and affection about the school. They appreciate the range of activities on offer and good home-school communication. Attendance at Parents evenings is high. They are held twice a year for all pupils and termly for children with an identified special educational need. Parental consultations for pupils with SEND are hosted by the SENDCO and there is a culture of open dialogue. Children are invited and present at these meetings, but have limited involvement in them. Parents say they appreciate being invited in to take part in learning activities as part of the school's plan to ensure they are as equipped as possible to understand their child's learning experiences, and support them at home. The school are considering how to further improve learner voice within the process.

The parents interviewed appreciate the inclusive ethos, find teachers helpful and approachable, say their children make excellent progress and are delighted their children attend St Andrew's. They spoke of these overwhelmingly positive views being representative of all parents.

Vulnerabilities

Vulnerabilities are defined as likely to cause performance issues that could lead to an RI Ofsted judgement and/or likely to cause significant limitation on further improvement of achievement.

No vulnerabilities were identified from the self-evaluation or peer review process.

Suggested opportunities and strategies for development

1. To build on the learner voice opportunities already established in the school, by establishing more formal learner voice systems ensuring children actively engage and participate in the decision making processes that influence learning provision and the learning environment, resulting in learner voice impacting on teacher planning and lesson design.
2. To embed the new curriculum, ensuring subjects and themes link more authentically and the implementation of the curriculum is effective and impacts on pupil outcomes.
3. Develop leadership at all levels, so subject leadership is more effective and having an impact on learning.
4. Leaders and governors to further develop the vision statement to make more explicit reference to the success they desire for the children, both in school and in life.
5. Review the feedback and marking policy, making 5 Star clear and consistent and reviewing best practice in self and peer assessment.

Tracy Higgins
Lead Reviewer

Summative Review Outcomes

Key to stage of development

	Emerging
	Developing
	Established
	Leading

Leadership		Learning Environment	
Feature	Stage	Feature	Stage
A Vision and values		A Core values	
B Distributed leadership		B Behaviour and relationships	
C A culture of teamwork		C Using spaces to promote learning	
D Leadership structure and the role of the Leadership Team		D Displays for learning	
E Leading teaching and learning		E Learner voice	
F Self-evaluation and development planning		F Learner enrichment	
G Commitment to school improvement priorities			
H Accountability and recognition			
I Change management			
J Teacher development and effectiveness			
K Governance			

Pedagogy & Curriculum		Assessment for Learning	
Feature	Stage	Feature	Stage
A Effective learning and teaching		A Data driven decision making	
B Matching teaching with learning		B Tracking learner progress	
C Teachers' planning for learning		C Teacher teamwork to improve learner progress	

D Teachers' application of subject knowledge, understanding and skills		D Assessment and goal setting	
E Learning and life skills		E Language for learning: objectives and next steps	
F Mathematical and literacy skills		F Self and peer assessment	
G Formative feedback			
H Curriculum entitlement			
I Professional learning			
J Collaborative planning and sharing of best practice			
K Teachers' commitment to reflection and self-improvement			

Student and Family Support	
Feature	Stage
A Planning for the needs of all learners	
B Teamwork to support vulnerable learners	
C Learner support team	
D Learning conversations with vulnerable learners	
E Partnering with external agencies	
F Learner-led meetings with parents	
G Engaging families	