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| School :Dalestorth Primary School | EIA: Phil Drabble |
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| Date of Meeting: 29 th March 2021 | Length of Meeting: 2.5 hours |
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Participants: Education Improvement Adviser, Executive Headteacher and two other members of the SLT, subject leaders for mathematics, computing, reading, DT, RE and music, lead teachers for EYFS and phonics and two new staff members.

Documentation reviewed:
Subject curriculum overviews and progression maps, short term planning, documents produced relating to remote learning, monitoring reports, subject action plans, the school SEF and the School Improvement Plan and documents relating to CPD on pedagogy.

Main Focus of Visit:

- To hold a professional dialogue on Microsoft Teams with leaders:
- To evaluate the progress the school is making towards achieving the March milestones for each of the key priorities in the School Improvement Plan
 - To evaluate the rigour and accuracy of self-evaluation
 - To identify the focus of any future support.

Impact of actions taken by the school to address key priorities in 2020-21 SIP

Priority 1: To improve the quality of subject leadership across the school and Priority 2: Ensure that curriculum coverage is broad and balanced

- Subject leadership and curriculum development have been key priorities for the school for some time and were identified as such prior to the initial lockdown. Subject leaders have received training to enable them to carry out their roles effectively and now have a much clearer understanding across the board of what is expected of them in terms of curriculum development and monitoring and evaluation. Curriculum overviews and progression maps have been revised to ensure that they are aligned with the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and are explicit about the key skills, knowledge and understanding that children can be expected to acquire and when. The school has used commercially produced materials as a starting point to put in place high quality schemes of learning rather than simply start with a blank sheet of paper. This has reduced workload and supported subject leaders in the task of mapping out the key learning objectives. Subject leaders have produced a set of subject expectations which have been shared with all teachers. Knowledge mats have also been introduced which make specific reference to the key vocabulary and 'sticky' knowledge that need to be taught within a given unit of work. Staff have had opportunities to improve their subject knowledge where they have felt this to be lacking and there has been some whole school training in phonics, PE and music. The Executive Headteacher reports that there are displays around the school that show what subject specific progress looks like at given points from EYFS up to Year 6. In spite of the constraints presented by the lockdown a considerable amount of subject monitoring has taken place, notably in maths, English, science, history and geography, RE, PSHE and MFL. Some subject leaders are undertaking quality assurance activities collaboratively and less experienced subject leaders are being coached in how to carry out monitoring activities. The outcomes of monitoring and evaluation activities are systematically recorded on a monitoring sheet which forms the basis of the evidence base for each subject and for which each subject leader is responsible. All subject leaders have produced a subject action plan with autumn, spring and summer milestone targets which are RAG rated in discussion with their line manager. The results of this monitoring have been positive and have shown that teachers' planning is clearer, more objective focused and that the level of challenge in lessons is greater.

There is evidence that there is a greater emphasis on extended writing across the school as a result of the training that teachers have had in this area. The greater allocation of time now afforded to the foundation subjects is allowing teachers to explore topics in greater depth. Governors have received training in how to carry out their subject link roles and have been provided with suggested subject specific questions in order to ensure that their discussions with subject leaders are appropriately focused.

- In spite of the demands presented by the lockdown school leaders have made good progress in bringing about a greater degree of consistency in the quality of subject leadership across the school. While this remains an area that is 'work in progress' it is clear that teachers have valued the subject leadership training that they have had and that this is impacting on their practice. Individually teachers have also been proactive in developing their subject knowledge in those subjects where they are less confident. They have found the subject leader networks that they have accessed through the Flying High Teaching School Alliance to be very useful and feel that the revised and detailed curriculum plans have been a positive development and are helping teachers to plan their lessons more easily and to teach more effectively. They feel that the curriculum plans are particularly helpful where teachers may feel they are lacking in subject knowledge and are helping all teachers to teach with a clear end goal in mind. Subject leaders are working in a mutually supportive way and report that there is a strong team spirit and a considerable amount of sharing of best practice. Wisely, the school has not rushed to seek to engage all subject leaders in a 'deep dive' style conversation as to do might undermine the growing confidence of less experienced subject leaders who as yet have limited evidence on which to base any assertions they might make. Discussion with subject leaders would suggest however that subject leaders now 'own' their subjects, expect to be asked possibly challenging and are becoming increasingly confident in being able to express what they see as being the strengths and areas for improvement in the quality of provision in their subjects.

Priority 3: Ensure teaching pedagogy is of a consistently high quality across the curriculum

- School leaders recognised from the outset that in order to teach effectively to the revised curriculum plans and to meet the implicit expectations in the revised Ofsted Inspection Framework in respect of teaching that it would be necessary to provide staff with some training in a revised pedagogy. To that end staff have received training in lesson structure, the sequencing of learning, challenge, skills progression and in teaching strategies that can be used both to embed and retrieve learning. The work that the school has done has been underpinned by Rosenshine's Principles which emphasise the importance of reviewing learning, presenting new material in small steps, systematic practice and clear and detailed instructions. Timetabling changes have enabled teachers to devote more time to the teaching of the foundation subjects. Curriculum plans are supporting a 'less is more' approach whereby content coverage is less wide but deeper. Curriculum plans are also more explicit than they were hitherto in terms of the key skills, knowledge and skills that pupil needs to acquire within a given timeframe. The school is also developing the use of knowledge mats as an aide-mémoire to revisit and embed prior learning .
- Monitoring and evaluation activities and teacher feedback suggest that teachers are beginning to use the recommended lesson structure as part of their everyday practice, are using the agreed curriculum plans to inform their planning and are drawing on recommended strategies to, for example, systematically revise and embed prior learning. Teachers report that the training they have received has been focused and purposeful and that there are opportunities to revisit ideas that have already been shared. There is evidence that the work that the school has done on the teaching of writing can also be seen in subject other than English through, for example, an increase in the amount of extended writing that is being seen across the school. As the Executive Head acknowledges, as the year progresses there now needs to be a greater focus by all leaders, including subject leaders, on the impact that that changes in pedagogy are having on pupil learning and progress as opposed to teachers' classroom practice.

Priority 4: To improve the quality of provision in FS

- Improvements have been made to the quality of the learning environment in the Foundation Stage and enhanced provision is providing children with more learning opportunities. Teachers now have a better understanding of the learning needs of children within their classes, what the next steps are and plan their lessons accordingly. Improved ongoing assessment is helping to ensure that teachers adapt their teaching as the need arises. The new Foundation Stage lead has ensured that baseline assessments are accurate, that target setting is taking place in all classes and that curriculum coverage is sufficiently broad

across the phase. Monitoring reports suggest that there is a greater degree of consistency of practice than was previously the case and that the overall quality of teaching is improving. Staff have had training in the new EYFS framework and are well prepared for September. The work that LA EIA Sarah Quinn has done through group and one to sessions with teachers has been well received and has had an impact on practice. The new head of the Foundation Stage is gaining in confidence and has a good understanding of what the priorities are. She has also benefitted from her attendance at the EYFS network and from accessing Early Years webinars. Members of the EYFS team are now also meeting on a regular basis.

- Given the previous inconsistency in teaching in the Foundation Stage, the change in personnel and the relatively poor results in 2019 when the percentage of children achieving GLD was well below the national and local authority averages the Executive Head believes that there can be no 'quick fix' in the Foundation Stage. The school had been hoping for a marked improvement in the percentage of children achieving GLD this year but it is likely that the latest lockdown may have derailed this. The overall direction of travel in the Foundation Stage is, however, positive.

Priority 5: Ensure that high quality learning is in place so that every child is not disadvantaged by the Covid 19 pandemic

- Staff received the necessary training to be able to deliver lessons remotely and quickly acquired the necessary skills to do so. Parents were provided with guidance on how to support their children to engage in remote learning. The laptops that were handed out to families which didn't have the necessary technology to access remote learning have been well used. Staff also developed packs of printed resources so that where remote learning for children and their families was problematic children had the necessary materials to continue to learn. Whether children accessed their learning remotely through a learning platform, were taught face to face in school or used hard copies of materials at home lesson content was the same and was informed by the school's revised curriculum plans. Staff have also used some of the strategies on line that they have been trialling in face to face lessons when teaching the new curriculum.(See Priority 3) For children who were learning at home the use of live lessons provided a structure to the day's learning. Remote learning has also been used as a way of gauging children's welfare and sense of well – being and has contributed to a continuing sense of school community. The point of contact offered by assemblies has been maintained. Levels of engagement in remote learning have been high and where it has not been as high as the school would have liked this has been chased up. Parents meetings were done through a written report and an offer of a virtual meeting which some parents wanted.
- The introduction of blended learning was a major challenge to the staff. To deliver lessons remotely was a huge learning curve for the staff. Parental and teacher feedback has been very positive about what has been achieved and the staff have every right to be proud that they were able to maintain children's learning in the face of so many difficulties. The lockdown forced teachers to be creative and it is this, and a lot of hard work, that has helped to ensure that children have been able to continue to learn and feel a part of the school community. The lockdown has also shown that the school can connect with families in a different way.

Evaluative Summary

The school is making good progress in addressing the priorities within the School Improvement Plan. Work on subject leadership is inevitably ongoing and it may take time before all subject leaders a) have the necessary evidence on which to base a secure view of the quality of provision in their subjects b) have the confidence to do so. A similar situation pertains in most schools. The professional development that the subject leaders have received has had a positive impact on their practice and subject leaders are working in a mutually supportive way. Revised curriculum plans are helping to ensure that learning is more sequential and are providing a greater focus on the key skills and knowledge that pupils need to acquire. Teachers are tweaking their practice to better deliver the revised curriculum plans. As the Executive Head recognises, as the summer term progresses monitoring and evaluation activities need to be more focused on the impact of curriculum planning and teaching on pupils' learning. Milestone targets in the subject action plans might also be usefully amended to ensure that the focus is firmly on pupils' learning and progress. In subject action plans the use of the terms intent to mean objectives and implementation to mean actions is potentially confusing given that

Ofsted connotations are different. This is also true of the School Improvement Plan. While the SEF indicates that EYFS is currently the area of the school that is of the most concern, the direction of travel is positive. Parental comments alone clearly show that the school has been very successful in ensuring that all children were able to continue to learn during the periods of lockdown.

The rigour and accuracy of self – evaluation

The SEF

Strengths

- The SEF provides a comprehensive view of the current quality of provision at the school.
- Given the school's historical data and the insight into current provision provided by the progress review an judgement for overall effectiveness as being good would seem appropriate.
- Given that EYFS remains 'work in progress' a judgement of 'requires improvement' would seem appropriate.
- Areas for improvement emerging from analysis within the SEF inform the priorities within the School Improvement Plan.
- The document provides a clear view of the journey that the school has been on and what more needs to be done to ensure that the school is securely good.
- The Executive Headteacher articulates clearly the range of actions that he and others have taken to improve overall provision.
- The SEF shows a clear focus on the bigger picture of school improvement and is not dominated by issues relating to the pandemic, important though they are.

Possible points for consideration

- After 'School Context' create a section entitled 'Curriculum Intent' and make specific reference to the main barriers to learning and to how this has informed vision, values and curriculum development. To do so, will support the Executive Headteacher in his initial discussion with the lead inspector during an Ofsted inspection
- Flesh out the 'Overall Effectiveness' section making specific reference to safeguarding, SMSC and SEND and move the parental quotes into the leadership and management section.
- After 'Why overall effectiveness is not the grade above' add a box 'Key objectives arising from this section' to make a more explicit connection between the SEF and the School Improvement Plan priorities.
- Under 'Quality of Education' create sub-headings Intent, Implementation and Impact to better align the SEF with the Ofsted Section 5 handbook. Do likewise under the Effectiveness of the Quality of Early Years Education.
- Under 'Leadership and Management' make specific reference to PP and catch up funding, engagement with the wider community, safeguarding and NQTs and RQTs.
- Obtain a copy of the LA SEF template and use it as a checklist for even closer alignment with the Ofsted Section 5 handbook.

Evaluative Summary

The Executive Head has a clear view of the current state of provision at the school and there is a good correlation between this and the priorities within the School Improvement Plan.

Identification of any further support needs

Further FS support from Sarah Quinn in the summer term.

Actions resulting from the visit

| Action | Who | By when |
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| Forwarding of the final report to Craig Robertson | Phil Drabble | 19 th April 2021 |

EIA to

- Send copy to: Headteacher and to Chair of Governors (for sharing with the full governing body)
- File on EIS central server.