

# Community Inclusive Trust



## Health Check

**Isaac Newton Primary School**

**16<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

## **Health Check Arrangements:**

The Community Inclusive Trust ensures that each school within the trust, or schools with whom they are providing interim leadership support, has a Health Check on an annual basis. The Health Check forms the basis on which the school's trajectory is measured and is used to assess a range of school activities. This report gives the results of the Health Check at Isaac Newton School on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

### **The Health Check was overseen by:**

Mr Paul Hill	Director of Education – Primary
Stela Plamenova	Headteacher - Sandon School
Helen Hunt	Deputy Headteacher Caythorpe Primary School
Ashley Caress	Deputy Headteacher Ambergate School

The following areas give an overview of the conclusions reached:

#### **Lines of Enquiry:**

Prior to the Health Check the Director of Education primary had visited the school on numerous occasions. The types of visits were mixed with some formally recorded, some for information giving/receiving purposes, some to meet specific members of staff and some to gauge how aspects of the SDP is becoming reality. Based on these visit the lines of enquiry for the Health Check were:

1. Has the breadth of the curriculum expanded during the academic year? How is this being monitored? Do teachers understand the way in which their lesson fits within the curriculum maps and the hierarchy of learning?
2. Can the school demonstrate that teaching is catering for pupils who should be working at greater depth within their year group? How does this break down when comparing those pupils eligible for pupil premium and those who are not?
3. How has the school addressed the overall attendance rates to ensure that pupils are at least in line with the national averages? How does the in-year data compare with historical data? Are specific groupings of pupils' absence rates higher than others? Has persistent absence decreased?

#### **Overall Effectiveness**

The members of the Health Check Team were made aware of the transition in roles with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher taking up role in September and May respectively. It was clear that both the Head and Deputy have adapted to their new roles rapidly and, as such, they were able to demonstrate that the overall effectiveness of the school is Good. This conclusion was drawn from a range of evidence including staff interviews, a tour of the school, at least one observation of each teacher from Years 1 to 6, discussions with pupils, ongoing debate with the leadership team and scrutiny of the range of work within the school.

#### **Leadership and Management**

During the day members of the Health Check team spoke to the senior and middle leaders within the school. They demonstrated that the schools capacity for sustained improvement is good and that the current performance of the school is good.

The curriculum leads for both Mathematics and Literacy had an evidence informed action plan identifying the areas of need within their subject area and setting targets to ensure that provision was changed or adapted in order to meet these needs. The staff were all aware of the areas for development when questioned and work is clearly taking place to address areas of need.

Team leaders were able to share the way in which they were working towards the school development plan and how they had ensured that they were addressing specific areas within their own team. The regularity of meetings between leaders and clarity of SDP targets ensures that a cohesive plan of action is implemented across the school. Clarity over the need for development of the curriculum was evident and timescales for implementation realistic – it is clear that both enhancing the curriculum and reading are the highest priorities within the school. Team leaders were able to talk at length when questioned and should be confident in selling the aspects of their teams which go beyond the statutory provision expected of all schools.

Both the Head and Deputy engaged fully with the Health Check Team throughout the day. Their understanding and insights about the school were based on clear evidence trails which they use to support school development. It was clear and they have a deep understanding of the school and its needs – this is extremely impressive given their newness to the roles. They now need to be clear in showing the impact of the actions taken based on the plans created to enhance provision within the school.

Both the Heads and Deputies judgements and analysis were shown to be accurate in observation and book scrutiny.

**Recommendations:**

- How are all leaders able to demonstrate that their actions are having a positive effect on outcomes for pupils? Can leaders use the cycle of gathering evidence, plan, adapt/change and review in order to have full clarity of impact? Can leaders ensure that they show the additional benefits of attending Isaac Newton School without being prompted?

**Teaching Learning and Assessment**

The Health Check team observed teaching in each of the classes from Years 1 to 6. The school has arranged to work with the EYFS teachers using an EYFS expert and as such it was agreed that the EYFS teachers would not be observed. The Director of Education will meet with the EYFS expert in order to gain feedback following the initial visit.

Teaching in the vast majority of lessons was good or better. The observations showed that, in most cases, the lessons are clearly sequenced and adapted to meet the needs of the pupils over time and fit with the learning intentions of the wider schemes of work within the school. In two cases this was not the case as the lesson either did not allow the children to demonstrate their understanding or was not in line with the hierarchy that would have been expected by the leadership team given the previous learning.

Behaviour for conduct was at least good in all lessons and exceptional in the majority of classes. Behaviour for learning reflected this in the vast majority of lessons.

Book scrutiny reflected the findings in observations. The quality and quantity of work in the vast majority of classes is good. The learning sequences are well established and teachers are ensuring that the next steps for learning are planned to meet the needs of the pupils. The strongest practice shows that the teachers are clearly reacting to need within lessons leading to outstanding progress. Marking is timely and shows that the marking policy is being followed. There are some inconsistencies within marking that can be addressed quickly in order to ensure that it is used to aid progress without increasing workload.

**Recommendations:**

- Whilst the vast majority of teachers demonstrated that their lessons were part of a larger picture of learning, those who did not must ensure that this is not the case on a day to day basis. Evidence within books suggest that in one case a lesson was selected specifically for the health check rather than to meet the pupils learning needs.
- Hold a joint book scrutiny with another school in order to share good practice and allow revisions in practice to accelerate progress for pupils.

**Outcomes for pupils**

Outcomes for pupils remain good despite an outwardly facing static trend for the end of Key Stage Results in Key Stage 2. The school was able to identify 7 children who transferred into the 17/18 cohort during KS2 who did not achieve the expected level in all subject and thus reduced the overall attainment. This is the paradox of popularity for the school. Historically the year groups have not been full but as the schools' reputation has improved the number of in year transfers has increased. Based on internal data this is a trend that has ended as the school is now full. Predicted grades for the end of each Key Stage in 18/19 show that the plateau since 16/17 will end and attainment will rise.

Progress scores reflect the schools position with regard to the 17/18 data as each subject was either within the norms nationally or had made good progress in terms of the overall progress score when compare with 16/17.

KS1 and EYFS data shows that pupils make good progress and that the school is narrowing the gap between the low levels on entry and the nationally expected levels of achievement in each year group. Internal data is

clear and easy to interpret and shows the good progress that pupils are making. The data is used to adapt and change provision for cohorts, groups and individual pupils in order to impact upon progress levels. The school now needs to consider if as much data needs to be collated. This is an area which will be considered by partner schools within the Trust in order to ensure that the minimum required data can be gained to ensure maximum progress.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Maintain the cycle of moderation that has been created within the school to ensure that teachers are accurate in their judgements
- Consider the assessment system and adapt it in order that teacher workload is focused more on the planning and delivery of high quality teaching and learning and less focused on data.

#### **EYFS**

This was not considered during this health check for the reasons already stated.

#### **Behaviour, Safeguarding and Absence**

The absence rates at the school have improved significantly so far this academic year. Overall attendance levels are now in excess of the national picture in 2017/18 whilst persistent absenteeism has fallen by over 2%. This represents excellent progress.

Behaviour was observed throughout the school day including on the playground as pupils arrived and during break and lunch times. Behaviour was at least good at all times with children thriving in all areas of school life thanks to the relationships with staff, relationships with other pupils and the systems and routines that are so clearly evident.

All of the statutory safeguarding duties are met and the safeguarding lead was able to demonstrate the additional support that members of the school community receive. The school is able to escalate concerns appropriately to get the best outcomes for pupils. A full safeguarding Health Check is due in the next month.

#### **Overall Strengths and Areas to Develop:**

The school continues to be good and the ethos throughout the day was tangible. The team identified the following strengths:

- Behaviour for conduct and learning was always good and in many cases exceptional
- The systems and routines within the school allow the pupils to flourish
- Bespoke additional extras allow the most vulnerable children to be successful
- The new Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development within the school and have accurately planned in order to address the identified areas. The impact of their leadership is already evident despite their newness to the roles.
- The quality of teaching in the vast majority of classes is at least good
- The entire leadership team quickly addresses any underperformance within a caring but clear framework
- Attendance levels are increasing rapidly
- The number of pupils achieving greater depth has increased rapidly – this is reflected in the KS2 statutory assessments.

Having considered the lines of enquiry and drawn further conclusions the Health Check Team believe that the following three areas for development should not be prioritised whilst ensuring that those areas identified as lines of enquiry are embedded:

1. To maintain the drive to enhance the curriculum offer showing the hierarchy of learning within each subject.
2. Whilst the vast majority of teachers are ensuring that mathematics is taught systematically and within the hierarchies defined by the school leaders need to ensure that this is the case each and every day.
3. The school does much to enrich the education of its pupils- leaders should ensure that they can talk confidently about the additional benefits of attending Isaac Newton School.

Throughout the day the members of the Health Check Team were warmly welcomed and would like to extend their thanks to all members of the school community.