

Laxey School

Laxey School recently took part in an external validation of its school self- review and evaluation (SSRE) process which involved a validation team confirming the judgments the school made about itself across certain areas. Three aspects were looked at in detail in regards to:

- Achievement against prior attainment
- Management
- Teaching for Learning

Achievement against prior attainment

The school's tracking of pupil progress shows that a large majority of pupils make five or more jumps in thirteen of the areas of the Early Learning Goals. This indicates that progress in the Foundation Stage is 'very effective'. The school, in error, used the old criteria in this respect and has quickly updated its SSRE.

Achievement against prior attainment is 'inspirational' in Key Stage 1. Achievement against prior attainment is 'very effective' and very close to 'inspirational' in Key Stage 2.

From the learning walks and interviews conducted by school leaders, the outcomes reached by pupils and from the validation team's visits to classrooms and discussions with pupils it is clear that pupils acquire and apply skills, knowledge and understanding in their lessons. As a result of the school's approach to teaching learning habits an overwhelming majority of pupils have a well-developed love of learning.

The validation team concurs with the school's judgment that Achievement Against Prior Attainment should be judged as 'very effective' overall.

Management

The school has clear systems, established routines and all appropriate policies are in place. These are embedded in the day to day running of the school.

Pupils, parents and teachers informed the validation team that communication systems are excellent within the school. Parents were particularly positive about the use of social media to keep them informed.

The school analyses the performance of every pupil and uses this information to introduce effective strategies or plan individual support where it is needed. The validation team noted that the school uses 'steps to success' very effectively with pupils to enable them to identify where they are in their learning and what they need to learn next.

The validation team concurs with the school's judgment that Management should be judged as 'very effective' overall.

Teaching for learning

The language of growth mindset is evident in all classrooms and pupils talked enthusiastically about how being able to 'fail well' impacted on their learning. The language of growth mindset is ubiquitous across the school.

All teachers have a very effective command of their teaching and embed a culture of challenge, high aspirations and ambition in most areas of the curriculum.

Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for, and to make decisions about their learning. On the day of our visit pupils from across the school talked confidently about their learning. This is a strength of the school.

The validation team concurs with the school's judgment that Teaching for Learning should be judged as 'very effective' overall.

Other Areas Considered

As well as the three specific aspects of the SSRE on which it focused, the validation team also considered other judgments and examples set out in the SSRE. It concurs with many of these, including:

- An overwhelming majority of pupils speak very positively about their learning.
- The vast majority of pupils are positive about challenge.
- Attainment is very effective and is likely to be inspirational if the current trend continues.
- The recent federation of the two schools has caused issues for governance, which is not yet effective.
- Leadership of the school is very effective with all staff actively promoting the school values.
- Systems to gather evidence for the SSRE are robust and ensure the links to school improvement are explicit.
- The curriculum is enhanced through a variety of opportunities such as visitors to the school, trips out, after school and lunchtime clubs and residential trips for Year 5 and Year 6.
- Teachers act quickly to deal with questions regarding individual pupils and as a result relationships between the vast majority of teachers and parents are very positive.

In addition, the validation team is pleased to note that the school is held in very high regard by pupils, parents and staff and that behaviour is very good.

Conclusion

The SSRE is a clear document that demonstrates that the school knows itself very well. The SSRE clearly informs the school improvement plan, which would benefit from being more explicit about the intended impact on learning of some activities.

The school knows itself very well. It is in a very good position to move forward on its plans for further improvement.

Mr Maxim Kelly
Executive Headteacher
December 2018