

## **Methodology**

The aim was to adopt an inspection type approach to review the SEND provision at Withinfields with the dual purpose of preparing the SENDCO for an OFSTED visit and using inspection type evidence trails to verify the school's self-evaluation of the quality of provision for SEND pupils.

## **Context**

Withinfields is an inclusive school. The SENDCO (AHT) is relatively new in post – November 2020, having previously been EYFS teacher. Prior to this the Headteacher acted as SENDCO for two terms. The SENDCO is currently undertaking the SENDCO qualification via Best Practice Network. The percentage of SEND identified on the ISDR is lower than national. The HT pointed out that this is because historically where children could have needs met through quality first teaching they were not identified on the register. Since the newly appointed SENDCO took over in November there has been a greater focus on identification of need especially in terms of SEMH. 14.3% of pupils are now identified for SEN support; this includes a number of pupils on an ASD pathway. Staff at Withinfields have a positive attitude towards inclusion of children and this led historically to a high level of tolerance of need without needs necessarily being recorded. Since the appointment of the new SENDCO this has improved and IDLPs start earlier. 6 EHC requests have been made since January 2020 -3 awarded and 3 pending. A Communication Record has been introduced to track SEND actions.

Mobility is high especially in KS 2 and often SEND children are recommended for available places by other parents and support agencies. Recently Withinfields was successful in a bid to the LA for additional inclusion capital funding which was used to create a wildlife area as an alternative playtime space with more sensory experiences.

## **Progress since the last inspection**

Leaders described progress in all areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report, evidenced by data, termly reviews and external reviews of aspects of the school. Outcomes in 2020 were predicted to have improved had the external tests taken place. The curriculum has been reviewed and learning sequenced to secure progress and embedding of knowledge. There is ongoing tweaking as leaders reflect on implementation. Foundation subjects, referred to as Topic, are taught in blocks which supports SEND pupils to access and engage with content over a more concentrated period. Subject leaders have focused on differentiation and planning to embed learning. An example is the teaching of shape and space and measure in Maths which is implemented via drip feeding concepts

and constantly returning to the topic to embed the learning. Spiral learning is a feature of the curriculum planning and implementation which supports all learners and SEND learners. Leaders identified that links between English and Topic teaching are an area for development. Improvements were made in this area during lockdown when work was re-sequenced to support writing for purpose such as writing instructions and then carrying out instructions to follow a recipe. A Forest Schools programme has been introduced to enrich and diversify the provision; staff will be trained on this via the local cluster.

The Headteacher and SENDCO described improvements in the teaching of reading following an initial 'hit' on reading in the first lockdown. To compensate for the gaps there was a focus on reading and comprehension when pupils returned to school. Every pupil has one to one reading at least once per week, bottom 20% of readers have 3 times per week. This has helped fluency and confidence. Withinfields is promoting a love of reading and bedtime reading is encouraged systematically. Withinfields has built in ambition by focusing on the reading of quality novels during the spring lockdown. Phonics screening has also shown improvement with 87% of Year 2s reaching the standard in Autumn term.

#### Findings from the audit

The website is compliant and up to date. Information on SEND, Equality and Access are readily available and easily searchable.

Documentation and evidence trails relating to SEND was readily available including EHCPs and review documentation, IDLPs, bullying records, communication records. In referring to the documentation it was clear that the Headteacher and the SENDCO know the children very well. Documentation evidenced timely action following the identification of need and appropriate involvement of external agencies.

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils including SEND pupils and disadvantaged. There is no narrowing of the curriculum for SEND pupils. Intervention is planned on a rota basis so that SEND pupils continue to access the full breadth of curriculum. The SENDCO has led a move to have more in class support rather than withdrawal so that SEND pupils are more included in the curriculum.

Since her appointment the SENDCO has worked with subject leaders to plan adaptations to the curriculum to engage SEND learners and support them to progress. The strongest areas in terms of curriculum implementation are core subjects especially Reading and Maths. Geography is a strong Foundation subject.

There has been added use of technology in the last academic year which has supported the development of spelling and early Maths.

The SENDCO has led work on improving the learning environment of classrooms for SEND pupils and for all pupils so that there are less distractions to learning and more focus on the use of display for learning aids. This was evidenced on classroom visits. Pupil's concentration levels have been enhanced as a result of this approach.

Clicker 7 is used to support recording in a wide range of subjects so that recording ability is not a barrier to showing understanding of subject knowledge. This has been especially successful in History and Geography.

EYFS identified as a strength at the last inspection remains strong; a recent external review also confirmed the strength of this provision.

School's own data and destinations data (11+ success) show that the emerging trend of improvement in some aspects of the 2019 ISDR (attainment and progress measures) has continued. Leaders put this down to the positive impact of curriculum implementation. SEND pupils and all pupils are now achieving improved outcomes.

In terms of curriculum implementation leaders have taken steps to ensure that all SEND learners are supported to engage with and progress through the curriculum. Examples of this include the block planning of delivery of foundation (Topic) subjects, providing mechanisms for SEND learners to articulate their learning such as Clicker7 and the effective use of learning support staff to reiterate learning, act as scribes, encourage and support pupils to utilise their own SEND file, provide additional questioning to check on and embed understanding as well as supporting small groups within a class. During the lockdown SEND and the most vulnerable learners were prioritised for face to face learning.

Intervention strategies include a focus on memory work and embedding learning. Approaches to this vary across classes according to the needs of pupils. Staff have been trained on this and are trusted to use their professional judgement and information from assessment to inform approaches to intervention.

Behaviour and attitudes across school are strong including for SEND pupils. The fixed term exclusion numbers have reduced since the last inspection. The Deputy Head leads on behaviour data and analyses trends and Class Dojo links to learning behaviours. Staff have been trained on positive communication (Jason Bangbala) and Boxhall profiling has been introduced to analyse behaviour triggers, support SMART target setting and inform strategies to address the underlying causes of poor behaviour. Attachment training has been delivered so that staff can identify where behaviour issues may be linked to attachment rather than SEND.

Bullying incidents are rare and where they do occur they are often linked to an out of school social media exchange. Preventative work has been undertaken with SEND pupils to help them avoid using social media inappropriately. Discussion with a pupil confirmed that the one incident of bullying he knew about had happened out of school; he was aware that it was being dealt with and confident what to do if he was ever bullied or concerned for a fellow pupil. He could also articulate the school colour coded behaviour policy and give examples of types of unacceptable behaviour. He described some incidences of 'yellow' behaviour (lowest level) but that pupil rarely get 'orange' or 'red'. Purposeful behaviour was seen around the school during the visit.

Personalised and individualised strategies are being employed to allow SEND pupils to make progress in the curriculum. One example is a pupil who has a standing desk to use when he is finding seated concentration difficult. He described using the standing desk when he is doing extended writing; standing helps his concentration and this was reflected in his written work. To help him avoid fidgeting he had been provided with a wobble cushion and a fidget toy. He could describe articulately how the

aids help him concentrate for longer periods in class. Another child whose poor behaviour is linked to getting hot has been supplied with a thermometer and can be removed from class for a short period to cool down when he starts to overheat.

The SENDCO works effectively with the DSL and there is joined up thinking in protecting the most vulnerable pupils. Venn diagrams have been created to identify overlapping needs and vulnerabilities further ensuring a joined up approach.

The SENDCO's approach has empowered staff to identify the needs of their pupils and to implement policies to address needs. Training has been put in place to support staff with this including training on the Graduated Approach. There was a Whole school training day on this after Easter 2021. Teachers now take a lead in devising IDLPs (rather than TAs). Teachers are now confident to address Wave 1 initial concerns and involve parents at this stage.

The attendance of SEND pupils is showing a trend of improvement. SEND pupils were encouraged to attend during lockdown and were supported well as part of the remote learning strategy as evidenced in the recent remote learning audit. Attendance has improved from 92.2% in February to 94.35% now.

The Link Governor for SEND was interviewed as part of the audit. She is knowledgeable of SEND policy, practice and data and scrutinises the work of the SENDCO. Governors have regularly sought and received external verification of the impact of the SEND strategy in addition to receiving reports by the head and SENDCO. Under normal circumstances the Link Governor visits school frequently and observes practice and receives feedback from parents directly. Governors monitored the remote learning which took place during lockdown and, along with school leaders, ensured that the most vulnerable pupils were prioritised for face to face learning during that period.

The SENDCO works with the Headteacher, senior leaders and wider staff to develop the character and personal skills of pupils. Pupils including SEND pupils have recently been involved in a careers, aspiration raising event with Open Futures and Motivational speaking events with The Valley Learning Partnership. The impact of these events has been to inspire and develop a sense of enquiry and ambition; the experience has also informed high quality writing for purpose as the pupils have written letters of thanks to the adults involved. The reading focus led to 2 pupils reading 2 million words. They were accompanied by reluctant readers to a local bookshop to choose a reward for their achievement. The pandemic has limited wider curriculum activities but when these resume they will do so in an inclusive way. Leaders describe that SEND pupils are fully included in the wider curriculum but currently extra curricular work is limited due to the pandemic.

Referrals following identification of need are timely and school works effectively with outside agencies including CAMHs and the ASD outreach team. The SENDCO is aware of the gaps in provision locally and in particular the frustrations about accessing CAMHs. School compensated for this by directing resource to pay for EP assessments to provide a strong evidence base.

SEND documentation is a strength; records are maintained and there is a high level of individualised detail but the SENDCO has ensured that folders are working documents informing support strategies on a daily basis.

A SEND pupil interviewed as part of the audit described feeling supported and listened to; he could articulate how strategies for support helped him to improve his work. He showed a high level of

independence in deciding when he needed to access support strategies. He could also explain how the detailed feedback he had been given by his teacher (using the literacy marking strategy) has informed improvements in his written work.

#### Summary

In the short time she has been in post the SENDCO has put a vision for SEND learning at Withinfields into practice. Strategies employed by the SENDCO are already having impact. There is leadership capacity at a senior and middle level to support sustained improvement.

#### Action point

SENDCO to continue to review the curriculum sequencing and content with wider subject leaders across the school to ensure that all areas of the curriculum engage SEND pupils and are planned and sequenced to support all pupils to make progress.

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