



School Name: St Mary's CE Primary School
329 Lewisham High Street
Lewisham
London SE13 6NX

Headteacher: Ms Christine Barnard

IQM Lead: Caroline Maseko

Date of Review: 22nd May 2020

Assessor: Mary Hewitson

IQM Cluster Programme:

Cluster Group: Star Makers

Ambassador: Pauline Roberts

Date of Next Meeting: TBA

Sources of Evidence Context of COE Review day:

The school submitted comprehensive and accurate documentation of their own evaluation of developments over the past 12 months. During the day of review targets for 2020-2021 were also discussed and agreed.

Because of the restrictive factors caused by the outbreak of Covid-19 the Review Day was conducted using an 'on-line' platform. The IQM Coordinator had prepared meticulously and shared as much information as possible in the absence of a personal visit. Prior to the day we shared two telephone conversations and undertook a trial run using the 'online' facility. We had anticipated the challenges that might occur during the various remote meetings with stakeholders and agreed a plan should our first choice of technology fail.

St Mary's CE School is a single form entry primary school with 230 pupils on roll. It experiences an exceptionally high level of deprivation with the indicator being in the 5th quintile i.e. the most deprived of all schools. 66% of pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) with some parents unable to speak any English, 43% are eligible for Pupil Premium funding and 23% are on the Special Educational Needs and Disability register (SEND).

During the Review Day I met 'on-line' with the:

- Headteacher.
- IQM Lead and SENDCo.



- Deputy Headteacher.
- Year 2 Teacher (and Literacy Lead).
- Year 4 Teacher (and Reading Lead).
- EYFS Lead.
- Year 3 teacher and RE Lead.
- Year 5 Teacher.
- School Home Support Worker (SHS).
- Chair of Governors.
- SEND Governors.
- Parent of a child in Year 5.

Summary of Targets from 2019-2020

Targets for the year 2019-2020 were closely aligned to the School Development Plan for that period. There was a clear focus on:

- developing a 'graduated response' to the challenges that are detrimental to children's learning.
- staff training and parental engagement.
- language and communication skills.

The following specific areas for development were identified:

Continue to improve outcomes for SEND pupils by enhancing staff engagement with the 'graduated response'.

As part of her work towards achieving the national NASENCO Award, the SENDCo conducted an audit to ascertain the experience, knowledge and skills of all staff regarding the 'graduated response approach' to children's learning. Discussions with staff about her findings have enabled her to identify training needs and plan appropriate CPD which was due to take place during this Summer Term. Unfortunately, the school closure due to the Covid-19 virus has delayed plans to further embed the 'graduated response approach'; however, there have been ongoing, less formal discussions throughout the year.

The weekly support staff meetings have provided an effective opportunity to engage all those working with children to understand and implement this refined approach to learning and teaching. External lead professionals including the Speech and Language Therapist and Educational Psychologist work closely with school staff and have participated in the assessment and review process during regular meetings. As a result, the outcomes for pupils with SEND have been improved because of the enhanced knowledge and collaborative contributions made by all professionals.

Termly Pupil Progress meetings involve teachers and teaching assistants in consideration of the impact of interventions on progress. Work planned for the updating of pupil contributions to Pupil Passports has started and will continue when



the school re-opens. However, the SENDCo has been able to meet with year group staff to set and review new targets.

Raise levels of children's communication and language across the school

The SENDCo has been innovative in exploring a range of interventions which have been shared with all staff during training sessions. She recognises the range of specific difficulties experienced by many pupils in the school and understands that a variety of tools may assist their commitment to a 'graduated response approach'. Colourful Semantics is aimed at helping children develop their grammatical skills and is rooted in the meanings of words (semantics). Language for Thinking stimulates a dialogue between the teacher and child to underpin learning and usually involves the child asking questions. The school recognises that many children, but especially those with autism or developmental language disorders, can understand simple and direct language but struggle when required to 'read between the lines.' Language for Thinking is a structured approach to develop children's language from the 'here and now' to the 'how and why'. Read, Write Inc supports reading, phonics and language development in the EYFS and KS1 and Destination Reader is having a positive impact in KS2. The school is not driven by commercial resources but carefully selects those which can support the needs of pupils in this setting.

Working in partnership with parents is a highly valued aspect of school life. A number of parents have volunteered to be 'Reading Champions' and visit the school regularly to hear children read. The volunteers have received carefully prepared training by staff in school so that they understand and can deliver basic reading skills. The impact of the work carried out by these volunteers can be measured by the development of the comprehension and verbal skills of the pupils they work with. Parents are also invited to attend workshops focusing on language development. These provide vital support to parents as 66% of pupils have English as an Additional Language (EAL).

Support from speech and language therapists is an important aspect of school life and many children have targets linked to language acquisition and development. During this time of school closure, speech therapy has had to be delivered remotely via the telephone or online platforms. In many instances this has proved to be extremely difficult because of overcrowded housing and/or the absence of technology within the home.

Further develop 'Courageous Advocacy' to campaign for issues in the local community

As a Church School, SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) has a responsibility to monitor, advise and inspect the school's delivery of its Religious Education programme. The Evaluation Schedule has one inspection question: 'How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?' Underpinning this question is an expectation that the school not only teaches about the Christian Faith to its pupils but as an organisation, positively reaches out with love and support for the local community. SIAMs captures this message with the frequently used phrase



‘Courageous Advocacy’, with an expectation, that through practical action a Church School demonstrates the ethics of Christian teaching.

Examples of the school caring for the community are very evident, especially during this time of Covid-19. The Community Hub created by the school has provided childcare for pupils, not just from St Mary’s, but from other schools across Lewisham who were unable to provide their own facility. School staff have kept in close contact with many vulnerable families and have ensured that lunch vouchers were received by those in receipt of pupil premium. Food parcels have been delivered and sign posting to a variety of social care agencies and charities has continued.

During ‘normal’, times prior to ‘lock-down,’ the school had developed and embedded a culture of social awareness, responsibility and action – key features of ‘Courageous Advocacy’ and there are many examples of practical application of this concept including:

- School assemblies led by representatives of ‘Citizens UK’, an organisation which helps communities act together for power, social justice and the common good. These assemblies helped raise pupil awareness of their right to free school meals as well as other entitlements.
- Workshops with University College students and Year 5 pupils to consider issues of welcome and rights for all children in schools. From this, a visit to the Department of Education took place to deliver a request for a meeting with a Minister.
- The School Council visited the Houses of Parliament.
- The School Council attended a local consultation meeting on the development of homes and land in the area.
- Parents have been supported by the school with the setting up of the ‘Immigration Action Group’. The group met with a local councillor to discuss issues they face when they attend Council Offices. The Council agreed to requests of parents which included provision of training for their frontline office staff. School staff and parents have now been asked to assist with provision of this training.

It can be clearly seen that Courageous Advocacy is a very strong driving force within the school.

Agreed Targets for 2020-2021

Target 1 - To monitor closely the impact of social isolation during the time of school closure and to identify and provide appropriate support for pupils whose learning and mental health were most affected by the experience.

Senior leaders are very aware that their most vulnerable pupils and their families have experienced severe hardship during this stressful time. They will need to make careful adjustments in order to help pupils deal with the stress and anxiety caused by Covid-19.



Target 2 – To improve outcomes for all learners and particularly those with SEND by developing more effective TA interactions.

Actions include time allocation for peer observations and reflection, learning walks with the SENDCo and monitoring of information gathered in TA folders.

Target 3 – To become a recognised Sanctuary School.

This will further develop the inclusivity of the school as work with Citizens UK and 'Courageous advocacy' will continue. Led by the School Home Support practitioner, projects at class and whole school community level will be an important qualifying feature.

The Impact of the Cluster Group

Because of illness, the designated staff member was unable to attend the first Cluster Meeting in December 2019. However, work carried out in preparation for the meeting and the subsequent notes of outcomes provided by the host school led to staff discussions about lunch-time nurture provision at St Mary's. The feedback also prompted senior leaders to include staff wellbeing on meeting agendas and a 'Mindful March' event was planned.

The second meeting took place at the end of the Spring Term and focussed on Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and its links with Attachment Theory and Relationships for Learning. The 'Connect, Engage, Maintain, Restore' model was explored and feedback to all staff is planned.

The third meeting due to take place this Summer Term at St Mary's has been postponed due to Covid-19 and school closures.

Overview

St Mary's Lewisham is a Church School that joyously proclaims its Christian Faith. Its ideology emanates from a vision of inclusion, care and love for all those touched by this special community. This is summarised by its motto quoting St John, 'as I have loved you, so you must love one another.' The meaning behind this simple statement influences and governs every aspect of school life. Led by an inspirational Headteacher, the school bravely and unashamedly tackles all social injustice that limits the wellbeing of pupils living within a community challenged by extreme social deprivation and poverty. Whilst high quality educational provision is her priority, she knows that serious social barriers must be tackled in order to help the children become ready to learn. Senior Leaders are united in their belief that pupils are better able to flourish in school when stress and anxiety in their home lives is effectively tackled.

The Deputy Headteacher has produced a detailed summary of the RE curriculum which demonstrates the awareness and respect shown to other faiths followed by children and their families. Pupils enjoy learning about different traditions and practices and have noticed the similarities in beliefs across the main faiths regarding day to day behaviour



and social responsibility. This is further demonstrated by the pupil-initiated support and leadership of a range of community projects noted earlier.

The IQM Coordinator is also the Special Educational Needs and Disability Lead for the school and has developed excellent relationships with external agencies ensuring the best provision for pupils with additional needs. Her understanding of the learning process has had a remarkable influence on staff development and all teachers and the teaching assistant who participated in the review day demonstrated a tangible grasp of just how to promote learning. A common thread was the importance of breaking teaching down into small steps accompanied by regular review not only of pupil progress but also of teaching technique. Self and peer review by the adults are used, for example, to identify too many or too few challenging questions or observational comments. Teachers clearly see themselves as masters of a craft which can always be improved and refined.

A significant number of the families of children attending the school are living in overcrowded and temporary accommodation or are homeless. Some families have insecure immigration status, are refugees or have no access to public funds. Consequently, mental health issues are very evident, exacerbated by unemployment and financial issues.

Against this backdrop of great challenge, the school works tirelessly to reach out and support all pupils and families in need. This is the norm for the school, but social issues are now hugely exacerbated by Covid-19 and its effect on the school community. Many parents are unable to support their children's learning and are too terrified to allow them out of their homes to attend school activities for 'vulnerable pupils', for fear of them contracting the virus. During 'lock-down' school staff have focussed on outreach to the local community delivering food parcels, offering advice, signposting to charities and care agencies and by ensuring that families know that they can turn to the school for help.

Prior to this time of National and International crisis the school already had a strong culture of community outreach, thus developing insight, compassion and determination to help, within the staff team. A 'Community Hub' is well established which offers a wide range of family and community services. As part of this project the School Home Support Worker (SHS) helps to improve life chances for pupils, developing trusting relationships and often referring families for essential help. Families are signposted to crucial services such as those offering financial, immigration, housing, employment and legal support. This support worker's previous experience of working within the legal profession means that she is well placed to guide parents and is fearless in her determination to gain the right outcomes. Practical help for families is accessed through the school which has been instrumental in providing home furnishings, holidays, white goods, decorating services and Christmas presents, through their own resources and through contact with other local organisations and charities.

Workshops are provided for parents who struggle with literacy and numeracy by providing sessions with a focus on reading, writing and maths in school. School staff have noted greater parental engagement in home learning and some parents volunteer



to hear pupils read in school. As positive relationships are developed, parents are more inclined to ask for help with other needs. Even though the local community experiences lower than national levels of stability, many families who are forcibly removed from the local area continue to send their children to the school. The wellbeing of pupils has been improved by the reduction of sources of stress and anxiety in their home lives, helping them to be better equipped to flourish at school. Home learning has provided many challenges for parents in recent weeks, especially if they do not possess an online device. The school has resolved the problem for many by distributing the laptops used in school to children and families at home.

Despite the social disadvantages of families, attendance before Covid-19 remained above the national level and assessment shows that pupils make excellent progress. A parent shared her experience of the school during the 'online' meeting and explained how her child with additional needs was welcomed into the school community via the 'managed move' route. She was overwhelmed by the positivity and understanding shown by school staff and, whilst she acknowledged that her child still has some difficulties, she is not living with the constant fear that he might be excluded. Staff believe that pupils enjoy coming to school because of the enriched curriculum leading to improved pupil engagement and behaviours for learning. This was endorsed by pupils in videos, displayed on the school website; pupils were animated with excitement as they described various school events.

School Governors also joined a review meeting and are clearly proud to be part of the school. They see their role as being a 'support system' for the headteacher and staff during this difficult time and are keen to help in the planning and decision-making process. They have reviewed essential documents and the Chair of Governors speaks to the Headteacher daily during this challenging time.

Preparing for and leading the IQM Review Day at St Mary's has been a memorable experience and has demonstrated the ongoing life changing outcomes of the school's motto 'as I have loved you, so you must love one another'.

Having discussed the progress made since the last IQM review and the school's plans for the future, I am of the opinion that the school continue to hold Centre of Excellence status and be reviewed again in 12 months' time.

Assessor: Mary Hewitson

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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Joe McCann MBA NPQH

Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd