

The Curriculum, Learning and Achievement Committee annual report

2020/2021 has been a really challenging year for the whole school community as everyone continues to be affected by the COVID19 situation and the changing implications this has for the school and its families. The Curriculum, Learning and Achievement committee have been able to keep in touch with the school throughout the academic year and we are delighted to be able to report on how well the school have supported the children through the different forms of provision they were able to offer, whether children needed to stay at home or come onto the school site. The staff have been amazing at dealing with the multiple and changing expectations of them in terms of how best to support children's learning as well as helping families to support their wellbeing. This has been possible through determined and inspirational leadership by Anna-Claire Norden and the senior leadership team, who have responded to each and every change of directive with a full sense of responsibility to meeting national expectations whilst leading the most constructive response for the school in the best interests of its children and families. We are confident you will have received clear communication and strong support for the learning of your child/children. This report does provide the opportunity to reflect on the strategic work the staff have been involved with, some of which you might be less aware of.

Our strategic objectives

Due to the extenuating circumstances of the last two years we have extended our committee strategic objectives across 2019-2021.

A key area to focus on, given the national focus on promoting the Foundation subjects beyond English, Maths and Science, has been to collaboratively plan and follow a strategy which supports and monitors Foundation subject curriculum and assessment review and development. This has been done through establishing link Governors with staff leads for each of the Foundation subjects. This has allowed all staff to have someone to contact them during this difficult period to prepare for being able to come into school when this is appropriate to discuss developments in their subject responsibility. Amazingly during the prolonged periods of remote working staff were able to review all of their subject policies in the light of an overarching framework, which links in with the new school inspection framework. This work was expertly led by Lucy Poskitt. This meant that our committee were able to ratify Foundation subject policies in line with national expectations and timelines. This is highly admirable considering everything else that was taking place and required staff to work in new ways online to discuss and develop the documentation.

Our core subjects remain high priorities and we set objectives linked to focused actions identified in the school development plan for English, Maths and Science.

In English we have seen really creative use of reading, writing and art work in focusing first on the book LEAF to help children reintegrate into school and then the Reading Rivers project, to help celebrate the inspirations for reading and the progress made over time. It was an inspired idea to include the whole community in this as everyone has a Reading River story to tell and this has been a lovely chance to revisit favourite reads and all the positivity these memories offer. Reading for pleasure is the key focus in English this year and

we were able to join staff in their mid-year meeting (via Zoom) to hear about the full range of the activities relating to this in every class of the school. We are looking forward to hearing from staff and children later in the summer about how they have been keeping track of their reading interest and also progress academically. We are aware that children's writing development across all of the areas in the curriculum has been harder to maintain through the periods of lockdown and has become the key focus for teachers working with their classes on the basis of having analysed children's needs and next steps.

There are two areas of focus in Maths. The first is to map small-steps needed towards mathematical knowledge progression. This involves introducing a strategic guide/template for how to deliver maths across the year groups at SPS which supports a shared understanding across the staff of what constitutes progression at SPS and will be used to guide any new teachers joining the school. Progress towards developing this needs to be pragmatic, alongside other duties and preserving wellbeing. This is being monitored through keeping in touch with staff. This is linked with monitoring the second focus which is on the diagnostic work taking place across the school with children to identify gaps in baseline skills and knowledge and the catch-up interventions based on national documentation and resources to support progress. It has been great to hear that, on returning to school, mathematical skill development has not drifted significantly across the school, and therefore the 'normal' approach to support and intervention is being offered throughout the year.

Science has been leading the way with respect to moving its assessment strategy to a software package called BROMCOM. This can then be modelled for the other foundation subjects which will be useful to help staff gain an overview of where their work in any one subject fits into the bigger picture and guide our review of how the subject policies are being put into practice.

We have also an objective focusing on Early Years provision. The work in the Early Years team has been to bring the new national Early Years curriculum and assessment strategy into practice, involving a new language and ways of working with the children to support their skill development. This involves a focus on observing and facilitating opportunities for play and development than previous practice. We have been hearing from staff how this has been taking place as a collaborative venture, involving staff shadowing and sharing of practice. Staff are reporting that they feel confident and positive about this new approach to Early Years work, which has benefitted from the school's decision to become early adopters of this national policy.

Looking forward

For 2021-2022 we look to being able to celebrate the work across the full breadth of the curriculum through which children have opportunities to develop their interests and apply and strengthen their core literacy and numeracy skills, becoming confident and independent learners. Review of policy, practice and pupil achievement will remain the basis of our work as a committee, through regular committee meetings and through contacts with key staff and, we hope, being able to restart our regular visits to school. We look forward to hearing

at first hand, as we have this year, about the fantastic breadth of engaging activities which are the offer provided by staff for pupils at Swavesey Primary School.

With best wishes to all the school's families as we move into the summer break and end of the academic year

Alison Fox

Chair of the CLA committee

On behalf of

Andrew Baker, Rachel Hallam, Diane Herrington, Laura McAuley and Anna-Claire Norden