

Basic Skills Quality Mark Programme – Visit Feedback Report

School name	Sir Jonathan North Community College Knighton Lane East, Leicester LE2 6FU		
Principal:	Ms Alison Merrills		
School and/or HT email	sraynes@sjncc.leicester.sch.uk	Tel no	0116 2708116
Alliance QM Assessor	Alan G. Hutchinson	Visit date	22 Nov. 2011

Purpose of Visit	Renewal Assessment
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The Assessor spoke with the following people

Vice Principals Assistant Principals YES	Literacy Subject Leader YES	Numeracy Subject Leader YES	Assessment Manager YES
SENCo YES	Pupils Yes Lessons observed YES	Community Arts Manager/ INCA/SEAL YES	Teaching Assistants YES

'Learning Walk' completed? YES	Relevant evidence-base reviewed? YES
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<i>N.O.R.</i> 1,198	The previous development points have been considered and are being implemented	(Principal out on Ofsted training course)
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Preparation for the renewal visit was excellent. So many Teachers and Support staff made a contribution to the day (about 20 staff spoken to individually!). The paperwork/ Powerpoint presentations/ evidence provided showed a real commitment to the process and the school is clearly among the top flight of schools that I have assessed. The school has worked hard to take on board previous development points and is well placed for the next phase of development.

Suggested areas for development in preparation for the next Quality Mark visit:

It is important to state that there are no Development Points for Sir Jonathan North to

meet the criteria for BSQM. This is a clear-thinking, reasoning, highly successful school when it comes to Basic Skills. I found it remarkable and a real privilege to observe at first hand.

Some areas we discussed include:

Whole-school:

- The key to whole-school development is centred on Literacy across the Curriculum and there is a major emphasis on Reading for All. There is a purpose and drive to ensure that every area of the curriculum is working towards Language across the curriculum.
- The school has developed a thorough and comprehensive system for monitoring and recording assessment. This is well used to track student progress. Student interviews follow within 2 days. A lot of work goes into this and the school will maintain this as a means of setting challenging targets. Baseline assessments are thorough too. With 40+ feeder schools this year, there is a real need to promote a seamless transition.
- There has been a culture shift in the school from looking at Attainment to Achievement (number of students who have met their target). Target setting is rigorous, based on FFT+. E-mark books and spreadsheets for each Faculty are well used to track progress. The school intends to develop and maintain this system; new staff are being trained to ensure continuity.
- The school is pro-active in looking at the recommendations of the Wolf report (Mar 2011) and considering how its recommendations will dove-tail into existing good practice. In both Literacy and Numeracy there is an on-going commitment to support learners from before entry right through to GCSE and other appropriate qualifications.

Literacy:

- Continue to raise self-esteem in Reading through the intervention work that currently takes place. Reading will always be a priority. Continue to make Literacy objectives explicit in other areas of the curriculum. Encourage Reading for Pleasure - across all faculties. English lessons begin with a 10-minute reading slot and this gives a high profile.
- Continue to develop Speaking and Listening through a variety of genres (eg Rise Radio, as I observed today), focusing on Active Listening and Verbal Communication.
- Encourage all children to Write as often as possible (Draft, Discuss, Reflect). Develop transferable skills. Promote key words, spelling.

Numeracy:

- The progress in Mathematics is excellent, and the school will wish to maintain current levels of progress.
- Using and Applying Mathematics is a focus for development. Maths for Life

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programmes and theme weeks are an integral part of the curriculum.

- Literacy in mathematics is part of the whole school initiative too.

'Good practice' identified in relation to the 10 Elements of the Quality Mark:

Elements 1,2,3 and 10 relating to Assessment, Target setting, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating impact.

- I was greatly impressed by the commitment and involvement of the Senior Team in the process of self-evaluation. Subject leaders and SMT effectively use data on both individual children as well as whole-school trends. The capacity to think analytically, to drill down for further information is excellent. The cycle of monitoring and evaluation is extremely thorough.
- All Staff are aware of what is required to help the children achieve their potential. The atmosphere is calm, purposeful and firmly focused on learning. Realistic, challenging and measurable targets are set for each individual child.
- TAs are central to the process: they are positive about their role in the classroom and how they are part of the assessment process. The TAs I met were closely linked to departments and had built up a wealth of knowledge and expertise.
- Individual Pupil Targets for Literacy and Numeracy are set out clearly to track progress, and these are being used effectively.
- All staff, both Support and Teaching, spoke highly of the Team work within the school.

Elements 4 and 5 relating to underachievement/or under attainment.

- The school is very clear about the focus on Achievement. Children are closely monitored to see if they are on target. Baseline assessments are used together with KS2 Data to set a benchmark.
- Children who transfer during the course of the school year often have quite specific needs. The school is very good at assessing these and targeting resources accordingly. I observed one pupil (Kaniz) on a Reading Recovery lesson. From no English whatsoever, and parents likewise, to a fluent speaker and capable young reader in 9 months shows the daily commitment given.

Elements 6,7,and 8 relating to Teaching and Learning.

- Teaching and Learning is monitored regularly: the style of management encourages regular observation. Lessons are based on a clear analysis of the needs of each particular child.
- The fact that there are no boys in this school has created opportunities to develop a

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range of teaching and learning styles and approaches that suits girls. The school tackles this well: the curriculum is specifically tailored to engage girls and reflect their interests. The school tackles the need to close the gender gap.

- The atmosphere and ethos of the school, on the day I visited, was exemplary. Children had come to school ready and prepared to learn. The most striking thing for me - apart from the Art work - was the level of higher order questioning and the degree of challenge within lessons. Clearly both teachers and children expect this and it shows.
- The school has made a bid into WIT (Whatever it Takes) to raise the standards of vulnerable readers.
- Students are able to participate in the ASDAN course and then go onto the COPE programme which contains modules developing student's life skills and basic skills.
- The Learning and Development faculty led by the SENco, supports students across the school in a variety of ways: one-to-one in-class help, withdrawal groups, and booster groups. Assistants work with students to improve their basic skills across all areas of the curriculum. This is a strength of the school. Pupils are keen to learn and are happy to be a part of any withdrawal groups, as they see this as a positive learning opportunity. All of the children I worked with felt as if they were valued and that they were making progress.

Elements 9. Relating to involvement of parents.

- Liaison with parents is really important and staff are good at keeping parents informed. Reports are sent home and parents are given the opportunity to be involved in their child's learning. A well-used web site and informative newsletters help to keep them involved.
- Parents can also experience a series of workshops in English, Mathematics, ICT, in order to help them support their children. I liked the fact that the library has books in it for children to take home to teach younger siblings.

There are many other positive achievements that deserve mention, in particular:

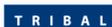
- The preparation for the Assessment was excellent. The self-analysis was detailed and thorough. I had several powerpoint presentations made to provide evidence, even a dedicated section on the intranet to gather useful documents together. Every member of staff I spoke to, and there were many, wanted to share their area of responsibility with pride. I was privileged to talk to some dedicated, committed and highly professional teachers and support staff. They really are a great asset to the school and inspirational to the children. Continuous professional development is a real strength.
- The feel of the school is reflected from the moment one enters the site. The entrance and Reception area reflect the achievements that occur in this school.

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The Art work in every corridor and classroom is outstanding.

- The Library is a real focus for learning. The librarian is a highly valued member of the team, and many staff appreciate her expertise and commitment to helping develop the students' interests in reading.
- Extra curricular activities are a strength too, both for recreation and to enhance the learning in the classroom. Breakfast clubs , Art therapy, Radio and Drama work are all examples of the commitment of the staff as a whole.
- I sensed a wave of enthusiasm across the whole school. They even managed to get me to sing to a group in a reading recovery lesson .. a first! The atmosphere is truly Inclusive.

I was made to feel welcome in every area of the school: as a staff you were extremely helpful. Of the 4 categories I challenged them with (Striding, Strolling, Standing, Stumbling) the staff in general identified the school as 'Striding'. You are clearly confident but not complacent. I wish you every success in the next phase of your development.

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