

Basic Skills Quality Mark (BSQM) – Visit Feedback Report

School name	Dame Ellen Pinsent School Birmingham		
Headteacher	Miss Denise Fountain Mr James Brown Deputy Head/BSQM Lead		
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Alliance BSQM Assessor	Elaine Stevens	Visit date	14/02/2017

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

Headteacher and/or Senior Leaders YES	Literacy Subject Leader YES	Numeracy Subject Leader YES	Assessment Manager YES
SENCo/EYFS Lead YES	Pupil representatives YES	Governor representative(s) YES	Parent representative(s) YES

'Learning Walk' completed? YES	Relevant evidence-base reviewed? YES
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Suggested areas for development in preparation for the next Quality Mark visit and links to the 10 Elements of the Quality Mark:

1. To further develop the outside learning spaces including the current Forest School provision, extending curriculum opportunities for all children at Dame Ellen Pinsent School. To further enhance the learning experiences and encourage opportunities for Speaking & Listening and social skills using the outdoor space the school has to offer. (Element 6,7,8)

2. To continue to develop the ethos of “nurturing a love of reading” through the planned library renovation and story areas across the setting (where appropriate), together with initiatives recently put into place to embed the culture of Reading for Pleasure for all children. (Element 6, 7, 8)

3. To enhance the quality of learning opportunities for all parents to enable them to take a valued role in their child's learning journey. The provision of the Maths packs are already well-received - to further develop opportunities for "real-life" maths for families based on the school curriculum and giving parents the opportunities to build on learning. (Elements 6, 7, 8)

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

There is a strong sense of community within the school and all the staff talked with passion and commitment about their contribution to making a difference to the lives and learning opportunities of every child at Dame Ellen Pinsent school. Staff are focussed on the development of the whole-child, providing a rich and engaging learning environment with opportunities to engage and challenge every child.

I saw evidence of SMSC which threads through the curriculum including the Friendship Squad supporting children's social skills, playleaders - and I was privileged to join the school council meeting where the children talked with great enthusiasm about their aim to house every hedgehog in Birmingham!

During my visit I talked with leaders at all levels who shared their passion and enthusiasm and a vision of where the school is going next. The initial assessment was led by James the deputy Headteacher. He has been at the school for eight years and knows the children, staff and parents exceptionally well. His drive to achieve the very best learning opportunities and outcomes for his children was evident throughout the day. Thank You very much for supporting my visit.

Elements 2, 3, 1, 10 (relating to Assessment, Target-setting, Planning, Monitoring and evaluating impact)

- The school focuses on the all-round development of every child and there is considerable expertise in meeting the needs of the individual child. The school's self-evaluation and school improvement processes are extremely thorough and identify the strengths and areas for further development to provide a very high quality learning experience for everyone.
- Data is used effectively to assess progress and attainment using the SOLAR on-line system. Together with test data and evidence in children's work, staff are able to identify strengths and next steps which form part of each child's personalised plan. Current data reflects the very positive impact of practice on all children's progress and attainment.
- There is a rigorous target-setting process in place with target sheets for basic skills. Outcomes and targets form part of the Appraisal system with CPD linked to the key issues identified through the improvement planning cycle.
- There is a strong commitment from leaders at all levels to ensure that their practice meets the needs of each child. A rigorous monitoring programme across the school and with external partners ensures consistently high quality teaching and learning is taking place and this was evident during my learning walk in the school.

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Elements 4 and 5 (relating to underachievement/ underattainment)

- Children have a baseline assessment within six weeks which assesses their ability across the whole curriculum. Data is entered onto the on-line system which then enables staff to set targets and also to evidence learning with an on-going record of achievement and learning journey for each child.
- The Maths coordinator is also the lead for assessment and she analyses the data and evidence. The SENCO then puts interventions in place which are supported by HLTA staff. There is clear evidence in data of the positive impact of this process in making a difference to attainment and progress of the identified children.
- There are a range of interventions in place which are monitored by the SENCO. Links with outside agencies, partner settings and the valuable peer mentoring from a local school all help to ensure the assessment judgements are accurate.

Elements 6, 7, 8 (relating to teaching and learning)

- The new Maths leader shared her action plans with me and was very well prepared for our meeting. I was able to see a range of initiatives which are beginning to have a positive impact on outcomes. The "See and Learn" resources for number and literacy have been put into place and are specific interventions for identified children. I was able to see the literacy resource being used in classrooms during my walk.
- The wider curriculum offers "Enrichment Week" with a maths focus each year. The "Money" week included opportunities for the children to make and sell produce and carry out problem-solving tasks. This focus on "real-life" maths is having a positive impact on learning.
- The development of homework packs using a range of maths equipment and suggested learning opportunities are very popular with parents. I was impressed with the hard work and time staff have given to provide this resource which is very successfully enabling parents to take an active role in their child's learning. During my conversation with a parent it was clear how valuable these packs are to families.
- The English leader is also new to post and has already had a positive impact on practice. Her background in mainstream settings and her knowledge of Speech & Language is evident in her focus for development. Elements of a range of phonic resources are used in school to support reading and I was able to see the personalised reading books in action during the day.
- Her aim is "to nurture a love of reading" and she talked with passion of her plans for the school library and class reading areas. A whole-school focus on sharing stories was evident as I walked around the school.
- The EYFS phase supports children from Reception age through to Y2 with topics planned following the child's interests. I saw the free-flow organisation with adult-led focus group activities taking place. There is a strong focus on developing play skills, with the older children having a more formal morning session and the opportunity in the afternoons to experience high quality EYFS provision. The outdoor space is an area for development and I look forward to seeing the changes on my next visit !

Element 9 (relating to the involvement of parents and carers)

- I talked with the Chair of Governors who is also a parent and had a very positive

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relationship with the school for five years. Although she lives locally herself, only a small number of parents are able to have daily contact with the school staff. Therefore links such as the Home-School book are vital to sustaining a positive relationship. The books contain the child's targets, records their interests and their reading records. It also gives parents the opportunity to respond with learning from home. The new website is very accessible and the class pages clearly reflect the exciting learning experiences taking place.

Transition is dealt with sensitively, both with a child moving into the school and beyond to Secondary School with a supportive process in place to help parents and child with the change of setting.

She talked with passion about the positive impact the school has had on her child. She said "I am incredibly grateful to the school for bringing my child back to me". Through careful interventions, support and encouragement her child is making very positive progress.

I enjoyed my visit to your school very much indeed. I was made to feel very welcome and I look forward to seeing your continued progress in the future.

Thank You.

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