



## **Cliddesden Primary School**

### **Hampshire Curriculum Leadership Project**

The aims of the project were to:

- Review models of leadership that move schools forward and secure the great teaching of an inspiring curriculum.
- Apply strategies that strengthen leadership at every level.
- Explore how, through excellent leadership, senior leaders hold staff to account for delivering the curriculum
- Develop a culture of innovation to enhance and embed teaching approaches that challenge children to deepen and connect learning.
- Explore the concept of mastery within topics and link to Hampshire curriculum and assessment models

Schools were selected, based on their capacity to innovate, to participate in a Hampshire LA project led by two Primary Phase Inspectors. The project was designed to develop or strengthen aspects of the curriculum whilst also strengthening leadership within schools.

The project was launched in the Autumn term 2015 and gave school leaders, at all levels to attend seminars, workshops, network and visit schools working on similar projects. Timescales for the projects were flexible but initial presentations were in January 2016 and final summaries were submitted in April 2016. Curriculum and leadership models developed were shared and provided

**Name of school: Cliddesden Primary School**

#### **Overview of Project**

##### **The curriculum development element:**

- To develop and embed a broad and balanced topic based curriculum where learning skills and behaviours enhance the acquisition of subject knowledge.

### **The leadership development element:**

- To utilise the skills interests and subject knowledge of staff members in the planning, the development and the continued progression of the topic based curriculum.
- To provide a platform for senior and middle leaders to advance leadership skills and secure accountability.

The evidence of impact in terms of pupil outcomes can be directly related to the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers domain statements and outstanding grade descriptors from the Ofsted handbook (September 2015).

The following were particularly relevant the project:

### ***National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers 2015***

#### *Domain Two*

*2. Secure excellent teaching through an analytical understanding of how pupils learn and of the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design, leading to rich curriculum opportunities and pupils' well-being.*

*4. Create an ethos within which all staff are motivated and supported to develop their own skills and subject knowledge, and to support each other.*

#### *Domain Three*

*6. Distribute leadership throughout the organisation, forging teams of colleagues who have distinct roles and responsibilities and hold each other to account for their decision making.*

#### *Domain Four*

*1. Create outward-facing schools which work with other schools and organisations - in a climate of mutual challenge - to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all pupils.*

### ***Ofsted Evaluation Schedule (September 2015)***

#### *Outstanding (1)*

*Staff reflect on and debate the way they teach. They feel deeply involved in their own professional development. Leaders have created a climate in which teachers are motivated and trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that are right for their pupils.*

*The broad and balanced curriculum inspires pupils to learn.*

*Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, within this, the promotion of fundamental British values, are at the heart of the school's work.*

## Project Launch

A presentation on leadership models challenged schools to reflect on how they measure the impact of leaders. The notion of evidence based accountability was used to analyse forensically what would be an inspiring high quality curriculum that would empower pupils to excel and therefore achieve high quality outcomes. From this understanding of excellence reverse engineering can then be used to plan the improvements and steps needed in how to get there.

Particular aspects of leadership that could be strengthened through the project are:

- Modelling excellence
- Impact of middle leaders
- Innovation and change
- Productive relationships with staff
- Increased accountability

A second presentation on curriculum design promoted an enquiry based approach that would increasingly deepen and connect learning for pupils in engaging and relevant contexts. Blooms taxonomy and SOLO taxonomy were outlined as frameworks to develop higher order thinking. Key principles of curriculum design were discussed and the concept of mastery explored.

As a school we reflected on our current curriculum breadth of studies and outcomes for pupils.

Decisions were that the curriculum lacked depth and creativity, being too focussed on subject knowledge acquired through the topics. It was decided that we would revisit our breadth of studies and use Blooms taxonomy model as a platform for a more child initiated, skills based curriculum.

We planned out details of the project and set precise leadership milestones using a timeline. This clearly identified actions and accountabilities of different leaders at different stages.

Existing planning was reviewed using the following questions:

*Do plans promote enquiry based learning based on secure knowledge and understanding?*

*Do plans deepen and connect learning and give opportunities for application and evaluation?*

*Do plans promote learning values, SMSC and develop skills progressively?*

*Do plans focus on essential learning rather than excessive reams of 'teacher script'?*

*Do the children acquire subject knowledge through enquiry based learning?*

We sharpened and refined our thinking to how we could ensure a broad and balanced curriculum that inspired all pupils and enhanced their learning in terms of learning behaviours, acquisition of skills, enjoyment and knowledge.

We used a 'reverse engineering' principle to ensure age appropriate high quality outcomes were clearly identified.

We then allocated an inset day to look at:

- our current curriculum maps
- samples of work
- to identify where and if there were gaps in the curriculum coverage.

The next step was to enhance, develop and change our long term curriculum maps for the non-core subjects by:

- Adding specific skills we wanted the children to learn, acquire and use based on blooms taxonomy
- Using teachers subject knowledge and interests
- Developing hooks to each topic based area of learning
- Providing opportunities for child centred learning
- Increasing the range of learning techniques and recorded outcomes

We presented ideas to governors, added new section in School Improvement Plan and considered how to collect evidence of impact on higher quality learning as the project progressed.

A seminar on 'Being an effective middle leader' was an opportunity for a senior manager to engage in the project and reflect on their impact as a leader to date.

Reflections were that our curriculum was too knowledge based and required depth, creativity and innovative ideas.

Aspects of leadership that we wanted to strengthen were teamwork, shared knowledge and skills. Cliddesden is a small school where all staff have curriculum responsibilities. Having separate coordinators for all subjects was seen as unmanageable and would not provide the best impact.

It was decided that once we have revised our topic based curriculum we would then focus on key subject areas for development on a yearly cycle. To replace the organisation of having separate subject leaders, we would create a new tier of middle leadership by introducing Curriculum Leaders for each key stage. They would have the responsibility of:

- Monitoring the topic based curriculum through audits, observations

- Providing support for the curriculum
- Collecting a portfolio of evidence
- Attending training or networks for specific subjects on an annual cycle in line with the school improvement plan.

### **Initial Phase 1**

Successes have been:

- All teaching staff have had significant input in revising curriculum maps

Challenges have been:

- Ensuring an exciting hook for each topic that inspires learning while ensuring a significant level of skills and knowledge are acquired
- Prioritising time for curriculum development

### **Intermediate Phase 2**

Initial impact has been:

- Redevelopment of curriculum maps
- Children using a wider range of learning skills
- Levels of children's and staff's enjoyment and engagement
- Improved standards of work

Empowering leaders has:

- Developed accountability of all teachers
- Ownership of curriculum development
- Sharing knowledge, expertise and skills

Pupils have been empowered to evaluate their own learning skills and be involved in determining learning areas.

### **Final Phase 3**

#### **Summary**

Leadership has strengthened through:

- an increased level of accountability for all teachers in providing an enriched curriculum
- Teachers supporting each other and sharing knowledge, skills and interests

Evidence of impact:

- The curriculum has strengthened through cross curricular links, coverage and learning skills
- Pupil outcomes seen in work samples, their enthusiasm, reflection, home learning, parents comments, videos, school website and other samples attached.

## **Next Steps**

*We are now working towards a curriculum where:*

*Staff reflect on and debate the way they teach. They feel deeply involved in their own professional development. Leaders have created a climate in which teachers are motivated and trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that are right for their pupils.*

*The broad and balanced curriculum inspires pupils to learn. (Ofsted 2015)*

- The project has given us an exciting and broad curriculum
- Creation of 2 new curriculum leaders
- Monitoring of the topic based creative curriculum
- Adding Rights and respect agenda into the learning
- Cross curricular links with English, Maths and computing