

Investors in Pupils

First Assessment Report

Name of School:	Cottesbrooke Infant and Nursery School
Headteacher:	William Loughlin
Investors in Pupils Coordinator:	Fiona Beardsley
Chair of the School Council:	Keith (F)
Investors in Pupil Assessor:	Helen Grundy
Date of the Assessment:	20 th July 2017
Headteacher email:	w.loughlin@cottesbrooke-inf.bham.sch.uk
Investors in Pupils Coordinator email:	f.beardsley@cottesbrooke-inf.bham.sch.uk
School contact telephone number:	0121 706 2742
Local Authority:	Birmingham

Context of the school

“The school is an inclusive and positive learning community. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and well-behaved learners. The staff value pupils’ work and efforts and encourage pupils to succeed and enjoy school.” (OFSTED, 2017)

Cottesbrooke Infant and Nursery is a three-form entry school situated in the east of Birmingham. It is a mainstream school, but one with a significant proportion of children with high needs. The schools *“willingness to be inclusive”* (DHT) therefore, is paramount in their approach to daily school life. Many of the needs of pupils at Cottesbrooke are of children with ADHD, ASD and behavioural needs and therefore by giving the pupils a voice, it is felt that many children will be able to access their school experience more fully and that the best outcomes achievable will be the result for each child. Cottesbrooke is *“determined and committed to giving the pupils...the best possible introduction to life with an emphasis on citizenship, equality and participation.”* (Coordinator)

Cottesbrooke is situated in an area of high social deprivation with 33% of the pupils classed as disadvantaged; 30% of pupils are EAL and 17% are SEND. It is a welcoming and friendly school which approaches many of the experiences offered to the children with a deeper level of thought and intelligence. Cottesbrooke is a multicultural school, 42% of pupils are Muslim, 29% are of a White British heritage and 32% Pakistani. Children are encouraged to learn about and from each other in an open and inclusive way. Strategies in lessons support this such as *“use of Talking Partners, which the children are clearly comfortable and familiar with to give children a voice. They engage beautifully and immediately with each other. The teacher uses questioning to elicit deeper thinking in the children and enable them to make the connections.”* (SACRE report, 2016). The school has an excellent website which informs the whole school community. It promotes and explains all the main elements of the Investors in Pupils award, shows photos, explains and has links to newsletters highlighting successful events and the school’s ‘Takeover Day’, and gives statistical pupil voice feedback which shows an overwhelmingly positive attitude of Cottesbrooke pupils towards their school.

Strengths of the school which support the principles of 'Investors in Pupils'

Learning

- Pupils understand how, and why, there are different levels of support in place for individual learners. This tends to focus on the lower ability pupils however, although the children were very open and sensitive in their discussions about individual needs. Pupils are aware of lifelong learning and see adults in school as learners. The HT has delivered a series of assemblies including 'Do staff in school learn?' delivered in March. Pupils in class talk confidently about the HT and staff having meetings to learn 'how to teach maths and handwriting better' and there are accessible, pictorial displays in classrooms showing the training that adults in school have received. *"Now we know the grownups have to keep learning. This makes us want to keep learning too."* (Pavan, Children's Report to Governors).
- Pupils have had a strong voice in keeping the existing 'Good to be Green' reward system which motivates them greatly. They enjoy the inclusion of a governor handing out stickers at the weekly celebration assembly and are proud of the HT's recognition of their good behaviour and work. The fortnightly Investors in Pupils newsletter has a strong body of content from pupils as well as enjoyable activities to engage them and they enjoy this being sent home and shared with parents. Parents also found this a happy interaction with school and enjoyed hearing their children talk about the work they were doing towards Investors in Pupils in school. *"We are well informed about how the school is trying to build them up for the challenge of life. This isn't just about the learning in lessons, it's been really intriguing for them. My child went for an interview for takeover day and was so excited! The Stars of the School in the newsletter is the lighter element and the newsletter involves the pupils. It's lovely."* (Parent)

Behaviour

- During my visit, the behaviour of these very young children was consistently exemplary. Pupils were happy, confident and friendly. Cottesbrooke has *"introduced additional resources and play equipment to keep pupils active, healthy and safe outdoors."* The children *"are happy to be in school and told me that they like the company of their friends and look forward to playing and working together."* (OFSTED). Rules are on display in each classroom and pupils are aware of how they have a change in focus each term, linked to the theme of the HT assemblies. Lunchtime supervisors are aware of behaviour systems and take great care to lead games in zoned areas as well as supervise children playing freely or using the quiet area with small world play equipment and books on offer. This gives a good balance of activities and means that the children are safe, energised and happy at playtime, when a lot of young children are sharing one space.
- Children have a clear understanding of the reward system in place and indeed, understand the consequences and route through the behaviour system, should they misbehave as well. There has been a significant fall in behaviour incidents logged during the period that Investors in Pupils has been introduced. Autumn 2016 saw 45 pupils carrying out 123 behavioural incidents, which systematically fell each half term to 19 pupils with 33 incidents by the end of Summer 2017.

School and Class Management including knowledge of school finance

- All classes have an individualised version of the school vision, under the themes of 'Caring, Inspiring, Successful'; children understand these terms and can talk confidently about which they feel is most important to them. *"I think it is important to be inspiring because then other children will know how to behave."*(Pupil). Increased opportunities to take on roles and responsibilities have added to the children's desire to be trustworthy, behave and attend. Cottesbrooke works hard to promote aspirations for their children and enable children to understand the roles adults have.
- One of the features they have added to school life is a 'Take Over Day' which proved to be hugely popular with both pupils and staff alike, and had great impact on the children's understanding of adult life. Children shadowed a wide range of roles and saw for instance, the safety and first aid needs for lunchtime supervisors and the importance of the site manager in keeping them safe and happy at school. *"She was brilliant, I gave her the keys and she grew six foot. She was questioning me about the age of our school boiler and how much it would cost to replace!"* (Building supervisor).
- Having to apply and interview for posts gave rigour to the process and enabled children to discuss their future aspirations at home. The school had some concern over how those who were unsuccessful in their applications would feel but the resilience of the children proved to be boosted by the whole process. *"At first I was a little bit sad but I was alright. That's how things go, you don't always get the job!"* (Y2 pupil) The SLT have decided to make this a more frequent feature of school life.
- Cottesbrooke has a large and consistent governing body and the pupils are very aware of the governors and their roles. Taking part in weekly, HT led assemblies has been effective in the governing body being a constant presence. Children feel that they have a strong pupil voice link with the governors. The governors tour the school, hold a meeting with pupils and receive an annual children's report to formally hear about their school experience; governors also attend trips or assist with PPA cover for instance, to informally hear about it too. *"Putting the children first, having them involved in the decision making and being at the forefront of everything is how the school runs."* (Governor). The longevity of one governor's service, 25 years, means that he understands the impressive impact and success of recent attendance initiatives and has seen the school through many cycles.

Attendance

- Pupils know that attendance and punctuality are linked to their learning and their futures. *"Attendance is important so we can learn lots of stuff. Maths is my favourite."* (pupil). The DHT and Investors in Pupils lead has had attendance as a performance management focus this year, and has seen a huge improvement in this area due to the work she has done, especially for persistent absenteeism. Investors in Pupils has seen impact with the low-level absenteeism of less resilient children who might have occasional days off for little reason. *"Children and families have been targeted and tracked for specific absenteeism and then more generally, Investors in Pupils has created a real buzz. Children want to come to school."* (Coordinator). *"The children have new jobs in school and the children can choose more things like The Animal Man. Investors in Pupils makes school more exciting."* (Minahil, Children's Report to Governors). Absenteeism rates have halved this year, from 15.2% absence to 7%. Displays, the school website, weekly celebration assembly and attendance certificates in classrooms remind pupils of the target for attendance and their

previous week's achievement. Children show really good understanding of this and are enthusiastic to win!

Induction

- Induction books are in place in each classroom, the content of which has been driven by pupils. Each has been individualised to include for instance 'What we love about our class', as well as containing information about daily routines such as going to the toilet. Pupils talk about how important things like this can be for a new child and how anxious they may get. For the younger classes (reception), an adult may go through the book with the new child with a child from the class joining them, however, this is increasingly being done by the children themselves. "*They just use it spontaneously.*"(TA). Year 1 and 2 children enjoy talking about going through the induction book with new starters and supply teachers and it can then be taken home to share with parents. The process is well embedded and has both consistency and individuality across classes.

Areas for development

Please note these actions are compulsory, areas must be acted upon to ensure that the standard is maintained in the future.

- To clarify the purpose of individual and class targets and make these 'SMART' targets. Which are academic/behavioural? How is the class target visually worked towards/displayed to maintain a sense of togetherness in aim? When and how often are targets measured? Can children and staff keep track of three personal and three group targets or would one shorter one have more impact?
- To offer opportunities for children to consider their Assessment for Learning feedback such as smiley or sad faces, and what that means to them. What are their strengths and weaknesses? This will be useful for all pupils to consider their own uniqueness, that we all need support sometimes if we are achieving our full potential and that different levels of support for individual learners is not only for lower ability children.
- To have greater understanding (age appropriate) of the school budget; where money comes from; how it is allocated and how fundraising supports and supplements this. As the numbers are beyond the understanding of infant children, this could be done pictorially, with an image of the budget as a whole, showing e.g. proportions shared out similar to a pie chart but in a more child friendly manner.