



Investors in Pupils

First Assessment Report

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Context of the school

Somerville Primary School is in the Small Heath area of Birmingham, a densely populated area which is in the highest quartile for deprivation. Somerville has a significant number of pupils, in Year 5 especially, who are recently arrived to the country with little or no previous education, EAL and high mobility rates within the group. All pupils in the school have ethnic minority heritage, 92% of pupils are of Pakistani, Bengali or Somali ethnicity. Pupil Premium sits at 285/783 which is significantly higher than the national average. Despite these potential barriers to language and learning, Somerville offers an impressive experience for its pupils, within which Investors in Pupils sits well. This was the rationale behind the introduction of Investors in Pupils. Staff wanted to consolidate and recognise the good practice already happening and build on the achievement of the UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award. Somerville staff and pupils are currently working towards the Health for Life Award, Voice 21 Oracy Project and are a School of Sanctuary. Staff recognise the value in each of these many initiatives and they sit comfortably alongside each other, supporting and benefitting a wide spread approach to a whole school ethos. It was also felt that, after the school had achieved the Investors in People award, staff wanted something to reflect the continuous school focus of its pupils in a similar vein. Investors in Pupils is referenced on the school SEF and all staff are very positive about its success and impact. It has been led exceptionally well by a teacher in the early stages of his career, who should be commended on the school wide recognition he has achieved in enabling the success of this award and how all staff feel included and positive about it. The SLT are fully engaged and supportive also, as are the Governing Body and parents.

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

Learning

The learning environment and ethos is quite beautiful at Somerville and clearly inspires the children. Vibrant displays fill the corridors and classrooms and the children are excited to talk about the stimulating, creative curriculum full of educational visits, visitors into school and have pride in Somerville's own history and culture which gives pupils a real sense of belonging. An 'I have a dream' competition display shows how pupil voice is intrinsically at the heart of Somerville's school life and is linked to the Rights Respecting School Award which the school promotes through all areas of the curriculum. The school has achieved the first level of RRSA; pupils are extremely knowledgeable about it and show resolve in being a part of global challenges and issues. "It makes us feel safe that we have these articles that protect us, but not everyone does in the world," (pupil). Pupils understand that there are different levels of support in place for individual learners, and that they are all catered for and valued, whether needing extra support or being at the point where they can access some of the gifted and talented materials on offer. Pupils set targets for staff in a fair, respectful and mature way, having learnt these skills from the termly target setting discussion days held to set their own targets with their teacher. "Pupils feel that it's not just them who have weaknesses but that adults have to strive to achieve something too...and because they are shown they *can* achieve something, they rise to it," (governor).

There is a wealth of extracurricular clubs supporting learning with both academic and pleasure benefits to pupils. These include sports clubs, gardening, cookery and G&T focused events. The school is starting yoga sessions for staff and even has its own Cub Scouts Group. Oracy is important at Somerville. A debating club is popular, where pupils are given the chance to practice 'sharing their opinion and disagreeing in a polite way' (coordinator). To enable these skills in pupils and ensure that their voice is developed to the highest degree and in order that they have the life skills to make them highly functioning adults in society, the school is currently undertaking the Voice 21 oracy project, a project that believes that "the ability to communicate effectively using spoken language, should have the same status as numeracy and literacy in the curriculum" (Voice 21). This is built into all lessons and offers children sentence stems to structure their thoughts and opinions constructively and effectively, and the ability to identify the various roles we take on when communicating; instigator, summariser, challenger etc. The way in which children speak at Somerville does indeed show the benefits of this school focus. They are polite, confident and competent communicators and lovely, fun children to spend time with. Aspirations are further promoted through the Health for Life programme which the school is working on this year, promoting the ability for children to cook and grow healthy food for themselves. Raised vegetable beds and a bottle greenhouse are being prepared for this, partly aided by the school Cub Scouts group.

Behaviour

The Behaviour Report shows that incidents of bullying, racist or homophobic issues or behavioural incidents are low and falling generally. "We have an anti-bullying week in school but we don't really have bullying here. I suppose that's why! There is a post-box too that you can write down your worries and post and that's looked at every week. If someone does bully and it gets put in the post-box, they have to see the Headteacher and he will ask them 'why have you? Is it right to bully?' and they will know it's wrong," (pupil). There are clear, consistent systems across school including merit certificates and wristbands, individual house point prizes and a weekly, whole class go-kart afternoon. Lunch time systems have a positive focus of yellow slips for good behaviour, and although the white slips for bad behaviour are rare, pupils know of them and what will happen. "There is a column on the slip to tell you what you did to get it so that you are

really clear and can think about it,” (pupil). The strong ethos of pupil participation and voice has resulted in confident, rational pupils for whom bad behaviour holds less attraction and reward. “Pupils behave impeccably and their attitudes to learning are a credit to the school...the environment of the school is calm and purposeful...,pupils have a thirst for learning and want to do well. They show a high degree of respect for each other” (Ofsted)

School and Class Management including knowledge of school finance

Pupils know that they are listened to and valued at Somerville. They input their thoughts into the running of the school and are spoken to maturely about finances and what is or isn't feasible. “We are a very lucky school,” (pupil). There are many opportunities for pupils to take on roles and responsibilities and various ways of applying for, voting on and being selected for these, always with pupil interaction at heart; Eco Council, Sports Crew, Dining Hall Monitors, Cool Friends etc. The Cool Friends are a particularly highly regarded group by the pupils where older pupils offer a layer of care to younger pupils on the playground. Younger pupils feel supported by this and older pupils are proud to nurture others. The school has a Health and Safety Working Party, where children have worked under Local Authority guidance to help set up policy with staff. “Children undertake weekly ‘health check’ walks around the site, taking photos and recording any H&S concerns which are then followed up and acted on,”(HT). During the School Council meeting, a pupil spontaneously raised a question about ropes on the playground climbing frame which had been reported previously through this mechanism. The connectivity which operates between initiatives and groups at Somerville meant that the adult in the room was fully able to report to School Council that new ropes had indeed been ordered, discussing costings of these and why a whole new climbing frame had not been ordered as requested. The School Council runs weekly meetings which are chaired and run by pupils. An agenda is set with apologies expected of those not attending and minutes are taken by the adult. Staff know that they can attend School Council meetings to ask for pupil support in their curricular areas and they do. Pupils have recently been successful in requesting a school minibus which was put to governors and purchased. It is now used widely in school and pupils in and outside of the School Council know that this is down to their voice. Children's understanding of the running of the school is building with a takeover day and children work in the school office under supervision every morning and lunchtime to welcome visitors and assist with minor admin tasks which they clearly enjoy. A maths week has proved popular and embedded understanding about the finances of the school and resources. “A big part of the school budget goes on staff salaries which means our learning is good. In April we get more [money] but it has to be used for staff, the building, pencils, chairs, PE equipment. Mr Khan puts half towards trips too which helps us to learn because it helps us to imagine what life was like before,” (pupil). Each class has its own vision statement, class mission or promise which is linked to the relevant UNICEF article and is again, agreed between pupils and teacher.

Attendance

As acknowledged by Ofsted, “rates of absence and persistent absence, which were high...are falling rapidly” climbing to 95% last year and sitting at 96% currently. Following PV feedback via the School Council, the school reinstated ‘attendance parties’, termly events for children and parents achieving 97% attendance or above. Both children and parents talk about these a lot. “I've really seen a difference. A lot of children used to take time off but now they're really eager to come. My daughter asks me to book doctors' appointments and things like that after 3.30 and is really excited to come home and tell me ‘we had the full 30 today!’” Parents are called in to discuss attendance if their child's drops below 90% and the

Achievement Co-ordinator holds '3 Houses' sessions, an early intervention programme where children can 'visit' the houses of worries, dreams and good things, attendance being part of these discussions. A large display board greets children outside the school stating "If you are late to school, firstly, don't worry" and then goes on to encourage children to still come to school if running late, but also encourages punctual attendance as the goal, starting the rational and fair approach Somerville takes before children have walked in. Children are motivated to come to school and talk excitedly about the clown, the bike raffle, which are individual prizes and the whole class trips on offer. Both the head and deputy state that they are not averse to knocking on doors and challenging poor attendance when appropriate and support structures are then in place to attempt to end this cycle.

Induction

Induction booklets are in place in all classes and one member of the Investors in Pupils team has the responsibility to monitor their presence, content and that pupils know it is there and what it is for. There has been a successful monitoring of this recently. Pupils can talk about the induction book and have found it useful. The content has a standardised minimum and then each class adds its own relevant detail, including individualised comments from the children in the class. The Cool Friends system ensures that younger pupils are monitored by older pupils and no-one is left alone during the times when children can be more vulnerable to loneliness. Pupils know the importance of inducting new pupils within the school year and are accepting of new children to the school. They offer themselves as happy, positive role models to new children and exude the ethos of acceptance and mature self-regulation that Somerville promotes. "We love it here. Our teachers are very proud of us...we don't want to leave." (Y6 pupil)

Areas for development

- It is essential that pupils' individual targets have a clear measurable impact and timed element to be truly SMART targets. For instance, some seen were "To be confident" and "To go to bed on time." Some targets were moving towards being measurable, such as "To complete and read a book every week" and "To bring my planner to school every day." Pupils could not tell me how they knew when they had achieved their target, other than 'the teacher just changes them.' It is good that targets are clearly shared with parents and there is strong home-school communication of them. Targets can therefore be achieved both at home and at school and a system of recording will be necessary to support this. As an example, the 4 targets mentioned above could become:
 - To be confident and add to class discussions two times per week until Easter
 - To go to bed at 8pm every week night for 5 weeks
 - To complete and read a book every week until I have read 8 books
 - To bring my planner to school every day this half term

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