



SELF EVALUTATION SUMMARY: REVISED JULY 2022



QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Intent

- St Nicholas School motto is ‘Learning Together’, which encompasses the collaborative approach to helping our special pupils achieve their full potential, regardless of their ability
- The curriculum offered to pupils is broad and balanced. Allowing the EYFS curriculum to be used in all KS1 classes mean that more children reach their ELGs by the end of Year 2.
- Year 1 and 2 objectives from the National Curriculum are covered by pupils throughout the rolling 3-year EYFS and Key Stage 2 curriculum. Teachers identified where these were in a staff meeting in the Summer Term
- Lessons are planned well to take account of pupil’s differing abilities. Planning also ensures lessons include robust support for the development of pupil’s reading, writing, communication, mathematics skills and social skills.
- Planning is tailored to support specific needs, ensuring pupils with the greatest needs are making progress.
- Schemes of work are coherently planned and sequences towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning. Curriculum co-coordinators have written their schemes of work ensuring that content is consistent with requirements of the new national Curriculum, including their EYFS curriculum.
- Staff have high but realistic expectation of the children, encouraging them to reach their potential.
- The curriculum allows our children to have daily learning experiences that enables them to be equipped with the skills, resilience and life experiences to become healthy, active and respectful learners.

Implementation

- Teachers work well as a year group to plan their medium-term planning. Teachers also complete weekly plans adapting activities appropriate to their class, drawing on a wide range of expertise and ideas.
- Teaching Assistants contribute well to learning. Ongoing training and strong partnerships with teachers have enabled some more experienced teaching assistants to lead learning activities.
- Methods of teaching are creative, ADAPTABLE AND FLEXIBLE. Contexts for learning are well considered so that they are meaningful to pupils and are linked to pupil interests.
- Alternative teaching approaches such as TEACCH or Attention Autism have proved successful in allowing some of our sensory and non-verbal learners to access the curriculum. Individual strategies have been further developed for the most challenging pupils e.g. Zones of Regulation or sensory strategies to reduce level of stimulation.
- Teachers support Reading through identifying early reading behaviours and then progress on to reading through matching symbols, phonics and sight word reading schemes and then progression onto the Accelerated Reading Scheme.
- Communication strategies such as signing, PECS, Colourful Semantics and visual timetables are used to support the teaching in lessons throughout the school allowing for commonality. The teaching of Mathematics is supported with the use of Numicon and tactile objects. PECS is more widely used across curriculum subjects.
- Specialist communication work is provided to targeted groups of children, delivered by teachers and TAs trained in a range of specialist approaches.
- Teachers have developed creative ways to help pupils understand their Pupil Passport targets in class, and take responsibility for their own learning.
- Placement of increasingly complex children has required development of more sensory approaches in some classes, and development of a more systematic approach to behaviour plans including risk assessments.
- The school also adopts a Rights Respecting ethos, having achieved its Gold status, where every child is valued and their views are heard.

Impact

- Teachers create an environment where, not only do the pupils learn, but are also allowed to challenge and explore their learning in a safe and supportive environment. Pupils demonstrate their resilience and often strive to improve on what they can and cannot do.
- The school holds a number of curriculum weeks throughout the year which enhances the educational experiences and enjoyment of the curriculum for staff and pupils.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to share their work with their peers, staff and visitors. It is obvious during monitoring that children are engaged in their learning.
- Parent inform us that their children are happy and the vast majority are pleased with their progress, according to our latest parent survey.
- Pupils are positive about their achievements and those of their peers. This is evident at our weekly ‘Star of the week’ assemblies, House Point Assemblies and from our Wow Boards.
- Evidence from teacher assessment shows that each child makes good progress from their relatively low baselines.
- Progress in core subjects varies across Key Stages – this is related to the development profile of pupils particularly communication and social needs.
- Pupil progress is closely tracked – small steps in learning are recorded and used towards termly tracking of pupils against ELGs in Reception and a tailored tracking system from Year 2. This is backed up by moderation in school and with other schools in core subjects. The school has also developed its own Assessment system for Personal, Social and Emotional Development, which is where some of our learners make the best progress.
- Pupils make good progress towards or achieve personalised targets agreed with parents termly and at the Annual Review of the EHCP. These are often linked to core subjects, communication and independent skills to support readiness for the next phase of education.

- Total Pupils on roll July 2022 – 224 (one child has now been off rolled following a move to Rugby September 2022 – 245. There will be 36 new Reception starters and 8 new starters in Year 1-6
- Free school Meals = 34.8%
- Attendance (Summer Term) = 88.9%
- 0 pupils in care (↓)
- 55% pupils have English as a first language. Remaining 45% pupils have 30 different home languages
- Needs profile (approx.) MLD: 44% ASD: 26% SCLM: 30%
- Year 6 leavers: Bensham Manor: 8 Brent Knoll: 1 Linden Lodge: 1 Clifton Hill: 1 AVA: 1 Elm Court: 1 6 children do not currently have a place (2 of these are Out of Borough)

EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- The Head Teacher is new to the role (September 2021). She is supported by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable SLT team and Governing Body.
- The Head Teacher had her Performance Management in December 2021 and new objectives have been set. 5 half yearly reviews will take place in July 2022.
- The school has a new SiP called Clare Farmer. She has not been able to visit the school in her capacity as SiP but has attended some co-production meetings held at school. She has contacted the Head Teacher and has also started a mentoring and coaching partnership with her.
- Performance Management processes for teachers and non-teaching staff remains in place and is a robust process. Objectives for staff link directly to school improvement actions whilst also developing their own CPD. This ensures that the quality of teaching across the school is at least good and any areas for development are addressed promptly through whole school training or targeted support plans. Appraisal targets for support staff also focus on whole school initiatives.
- All senior leaders are involved in the Performance Management of teachers and trained to observe lessons. Lesson observations are generally carried out jointly with another member of SLT.
- Model of distributed leadership continues to be in place with all experienced teachers undertaking leadership responsibility for a curriculum area and the performance of management of support staff. Internal Middle Management Roles were advertised. We have an Assessment Lead and 3 Mentors for new staff.
- Curriculum co-ordinators have developed schemes of work to support planning. Action plans are updated yearly and they are increasingly involved in overseeing their curriculum areas.
- A regular programme of monitoring including focussed learning walks and monitoring of pupil progress ensures that any areas of underperformance are identified quickly with targeted support and greater frequency of monitoring in place to address any emerging issues.
- A new staff Governor was elected in the summer term and will join her first meeting in July.
- The school leaders and Governing Body share and demonstrate a clear school ethos and vision, created and adopted by all.
- Committed and passionate leadership results in a powerful ethos that places ‘Learning Together’ at the heart of what the school does. Rigorous systems ensure all pupils make the best possible progress. Pupils are prepared well to move onto Secondary School.
- Governors attend training set aside for their own development and skills base. Have opportunities to update their knowledge, skills and understanding in agreed areas relating to the school’s work. Governors attended training on OFSTED in March.
- Demand for places is very high: school leaders spend a significant amount of time visiting pupils in settings to determine suitability and prioritise pupils for a limited number of places. The Head Teacher has received 38 consultations this term.
- The Head Teacher and Deputy head attended 3 panel meetings for Reception places. All 36 places are now full for September. The school also has 8 new starters in Year 1 – 6 in September.
- This term we have employed 3 new teachers (1 ECT, 1 FT and 1 on a fixed term contract). One of our HLTAs who is interested in teacher training will lead a class as an unqualified teacher. We also recruited 7 new TAs. Further recruitment will take place towards the end of the summer term. The Deputy head teacher resigned from post in May to take up a new position closer to home. His role will be distributed among the remaining SLT until a new replacement is employed.
- Governors have continued their monitoring visits.

What does the school need to do to improve further:

- Reintroduce monitoring and observation cycle including Governors coming into school to spend time in classes.
- Embed middle management roles within the school leadership.
- Review and expand current induction and ongoing CPD model to create areas of expertise among staff.
- Embed curriculum monitoring from subject leaders.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Assessment of EYFS and how this will work alongside the way the school approaches whole school assessment
- Continue to improve communication skills by ensuring consistency of approach in all classes and increasing personalisation of provision; matching learning needs and outcomes set out in EHCPs.
- Ensure that staff are using a range of communication strategies effectively to support not only children’s understanding of instructions and routines but also of vocabulary used within the curriculum.
- Embed the Schemes of work written and continually adapt them to suit the changing needs of our children.
- Ensure that our curriculum is culturally competent.
- Transition from EYFS curriculum in year 2 to the adapted National Curriculum in year 3
- How are the ever expanding cohort of children with sensory or complex needs being supported in the curriculum.

SAFEGUARDING AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- A strong culture of safeguarding is established in the school with a clear system of reporting and recording ensuring the safety of all students and member of the school community. Safeguarding is tracked using My Concern software package.
- The HT and DHT attended a safeguarding conference in October. Staff have also had an update on KCSIE and Online Safety in February. An Assistant Head who will be the lead DSL in September also attended a Safeguarding conference in June.
- Safeguarding measures including staff training are taken very seriously and developmentally appropriate curriculum activities ensure pupils understand risks. At the INSET for teachers in February, teachers looked at where safeguarding is taught within their curriculum.
- Procedures ensuring the welfare, care, health and safety of the pupils, including Child Protection are very good. Governors audit safeguarding and review the Child Protection Policy Annually. Regular updates of the Single Central Register are completed by the SBM and monitored by the Safeguarding Governor.
- Therapists at the school meet with the Head Teacher and Assistant head teacher at termly multidisciplinary meetings to agree support strategies for pupils causing concern. AN MDT meeting with take place in early September for the new starters so that the school can put support systems in place for children.
- The school has invested in further support for pupils by providing an in-house Speech and Language Therapist, play therapy, music therapy, an in-house Occupational therapy and Family Liaison Officer. The school has a good relationship with CAMHS and Social Care. However, provision is tight with CAMHS support and EPOC is the first offer of intervention.
- Additional support and training is provided by NHS speech and Language Therapists, Occupational therapists and EP which has a positive impact on the quality of provision.
- The community Paediatrician is available regularly for medicals and to consult with and support parents. A school nurse is available for consultation with staff and to support parents.
- A number of staff have been trained in PECS level 1 which will enable the school to focus on using PECS within the classroom and curriculum more effectively. One of the SLT members is an accredited Makaton tutor and staff and parent courses are held throughout the year.

What does the school need to do to improve further:

- Extend the use of My Concern to include recording of low-level concerns
- To further explore additional therapists that can be used within school e.g. Drama Therapy
- Use an external safeguarding company to look at safeguarding procedures as a critical friend
- Continue to strengthen the relationship with social care.

BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES

- Pupils are enthusiastic, engaged in lessons and display attitudes to learning because of high expectations, a clear approach to behaviour management, a very well-matched curriculum and a caring ethos.
- Staff know the pupils’ individual needs and abilities very well and use this knowledge to adopt and refine daily teaching to support good progress.
- Parents and other visitors to the school comment on the calm, happy environment.
- The school runs successful Parent Coffee Mornings which includes workshops and outside speakers. These groups are generally well attended and provide additional support mechanisms between parents. Coffee mornings on Behaviour, OT and a chill and chat session are some of the coffee mornings this term.
- Two members of staff have been trained in delivering training in the PROCAT SCIPr approach and have delivered training to staff in groups of up to 16 over the coming year. This approach aims to focus on analysing behaviour through functional assessments to understand the purpose of the behaviour and then implement proactive approaches to avoid Behaviours of Concern and improve quality of life. The new approach and feedback from training of staff have been supportive. Behaviour plans following the new approach are now being written and the Behaviour Policy is being finalised to reflect this approach.
- Three members of staff are also trained Mental First Aiders. More staff have been selected to be trained in Mental First Aid. Mental First Aiders hold weekly clinics for staff.
- Attendance of pupils is monitored and discussed with parents and the Family Liaison Officer will make home visits if necessary.
- From a recent parent survey, parents reported that pupils are keen to come to school. Overall, the responses from parents in the survey was positive with most answers having over 90% agree/strongly agree.
- St Nicholas works closely in partnership with other schools and organisations to enhance and enrich learning opportunities. This includes Croydon Drop in, CAHMs, Nordoff Robins and music and theatre groups.
- The school works closely with local services to identify and meet wider needs of pupils and their families.
- Speech and Language and Occupational Therapists are effectively integrated into the provision at the school and have also provided training for staff in specific areas e.g. sensory processing, emotional regulation, communication strategies as well as individual support. However, provision has been reduced as the school has expanded and a departing therapist was not replaced recently.
- The Zones of Regulation were introduced into each class last year and these have been successful in allowing children and staff to discuss their emotions and ways to regulate them. The AHT for therapy provision will also attend further training.
- Weekly Star of the week assemblies and House Point Assemblies focus on achievement and behaviour provide feedback to pupils and reinforce expectations of outstanding behaviour.

What does the school need to do to improve further:

- Increase the range of therapy support available to pupils.
- Re-establish Mental First Aiders to better support the mental health and wellbeing of staff
- Embed the PROACT SCIPr approach and review Behaviour Plans