

Graham Reeves Ltd

for

The Isle of Man Department of Education, Sport and Culture

External Validation of the School Self-Review and Evaluation

Kewaigue School

Introduction

Each school on the Isle of Man is expected to conduct a School Self-Review and Evaluation (SSRE) using an approach devised by the Department of Education, Sport and Culture (DESC) in consultation with the schools. Graham Reeves Ltd has been commissioned by the Department to carry out an external validation of each school's SSRE. The validation of the Kewaigue SSRE included a visit to the school on Tuesday 27th March 2018. The visit was made by Howard Marshall. He worked alongside Adrian Shorthouse, headteacher, and Geoff Moorcroft, Director of Education, representing the DESC's Education Improvement Service.

Context

Kewaigue School is located in Braddan, one mile from Douglas. It serves an extensive rural catchment area. The area includes residential estates of varying size, town housing, individual dwellings and farming communities. Most housing is owner-occupied. 35% of the pupils are currently living outside the catchment area.

There are 129 pupils on roll. They are organised into 5 classes. 6% of pupils receive free school meals. This is below the Island average. 12.4% of pupils are on the register of special educational needs. This is below the Island average. 5% of pupils are learning English as an additional language. This is above the Island average.

There are 6.2 full-time equivalent teachers including the headteacher. There are 2.6 full time equivalent support staff.

Focus of the Validation

The validation of the SSRE covered the full range of the school's judgements but focused on three specific aspects. These were

- **Attainment**
- **Leadership**
- **Teaching for Learning**

Attainment

The school judges this aspect as 'effective'. It was chosen for consideration in order to confirm that:

- Attainment for the Foundation stage is judged as 'effective'
- Attainment for Key Stage 1 is judged as 'effective'
- Attainment for Key Stage 2 is judged as 'not yet effective'

- Attainment can be judged as 'effective' overall

Leadership

The school judges this aspect as 'very effective'. It was chosen for consideration in order to confirm that:

- Leadership is 'very effective' because leaders enthuse and inspire colleagues
- The large majority of teaching staff (including school leaders) can clearly articulate the vision and priorities for school improvement
- School improvement activity is owned by the staff and their reviews show that improvement priorities are being achieved successfully
- Staff are taking more ownership of their own professional development through action research
- Leadership can be judged as 'very effective' overall

Teaching for Learning

The school judges this aspect as 'very effective'. It was chosen for consideration in order to confirm that:

- A large majority of teaching staff create and are embedding a growth mindset culture towards learning
- A large majority of pupils are confident, engaged in their learning, enjoy being challenged most of the time, persist in the face of setbacks, and see effort as a pathway to achievement
- Most pupils know what the learning objective is and in most classes pupils regularly generate their own success criteria and know what they have to do next to improve
- In the large majority of classes, teachers give detailed and accurate feedback to pupils (both oral and written), and comments refer clearly to progress against the learning objective
- Teaching for Learning can be judged as 'very effective' overall

The Validation Activities

To check and confirm the judgments in the SSRE the validation team:

- toured the school
- observed lessons
- observed playtime and lunchtime
- looked at a number of documents
- talked with a group of teachers
- talked with a group of pupils
- talked with a group of parents

Findings

Summary

The school knows itself well. It is in a very good position to plan for further improvement.

Attainment

Attainment in the Foundation Stage is 'effective' as a very large majority of pupils achieve the Early Learning Goals in all of the Prime Areas and the Specific Areas of literacy and mathematics. If the school's literacy score had been 2.5% higher the judgement would have been 'very effective'. Most pupils exceed the Island's benchmarks with 80% reaching a Good Level of Development (GLD) in the Prime Areas.

Attainment in Key Stage 1 is 'effective' as the school is above the Island's benchmarks in four areas (reading, writing, mathematics and science) and in line with the other (speaking and listening). Again, this is close to being 'very effective'.

Attainment in Key Stage 2 is 'not yet effective'. Attainment is above the Island benchmark for level 4 in reading and speaking and listening, in line in writing and below in mathematics and science. The school's data shows that attainment is often above average at higher levels in English and mathematics. The school has very good data to show that in other year groups in Key Stage 2 most pupils exceed expected attainment in all aspects of English and mathematics. The broader evidence provided by the school indicates that attainment is above expected attainment throughout Key Stage 2. The school has used the SSRE criteria very well to make a correct judgement of 'not yet effective' based on 2017 year 6 outcomes.

The validation team concurs with the school's judgment that Attainment should be judged as 'effective' overall.

Leadership

Leaders provide opportunities for effective professional development and this is enthusing and inspiring colleagues in the school. This has resulted in improved practice in the 6Rs, ICT and child-led activities across the school according to the school's monitoring and the validation team's discussions with teachers. Teachers informed us, and this is supported by the school's monitoring, that they are now taking more responsibility for their professional development through action research and sharing their learning with colleagues. This is a good example of how leadership is being distributed across the school.

There is a collective vision for the school community which the teachers we spoke with could passionately articulate and this provides a clear direction for the school.

The school improvement process ensures that all staff are fully involved and this has led to the priorities being owned by the staff. Teachers regularly review and update key priorities leading to achievement of their priorities. One priority, to increase child-led learning, has impacted on teaching in the school and pupils report that they have more opportunities to lead their own learning.

The school's commitment to inclusion has resulted in teachers reviewing their provision to ensure barriers are minimised.

The validation team concurs with the school's judgment that Leadership should be judged as 'very effective' overall. As initiatives become embedded and sustained there is potential for leadership to be judged as 'inspirational'.

Teaching for Learning

Through assemblies, displays and teaching, the school is creating and embedding a growth mindset culture. Pupils informed us that they love learning and see making mistakes as a positive part of their learning. This culture is contributing to the large majority of pupils being very engaged in their learning and welcoming challenge. They are developing strategies to help them overcome aspects of learning that they find difficult. Pupils are confident in their learning. The school's monitoring and the validation team's visits to classrooms indicate that most pupils are aware of what they are learning in lessons and know what they need to do to be successful. Often the pupils generate their own success criteria and know what they need to do next to improve. Teachers regularly give detailed and accurate feedback to pupils in a variety of ways against the learning objective.

The quality of formative feedback to pupils is an area of development in the school and is improving. Comments are often related to the learning objective.

The validation team concurs with the school's judgement that Teaching for Learning should be judged as 'very effective' overall.

Other Areas Considered

As well as the three specific aspects of the SSRE on which it focused, the validation team also considered other judgments and examples set out in the SSRE. It concurs with many of these, including:

- The large majority of pupils are happy and caring; they build and maintain positive relationships and achieve very well.
- Achievement against prior attainment is 'very effective' in all parts of the school
- Teachers are very clear about expectations of them and procedures to follow.
- Management is 'very effective'.
- The governors are involved in school self-evaluation.
- The school curriculum is 'effective'.
- The vast majority of parents report that the school works well with parents to support pupils' learning and well-being.
- Partnerships between the school and other schools are 'effective' in making a difference to school improvement priorities and outcomes.
- All decisions regarding Safeguarding are based on comprehensive risk assessments and policies.

In addition, the validation team is pleased to note that the school is held in very high regard by pupils, parents and staff and that behaviour is very good.

Conclusion

The school knows itself well. It is in a very good position to plan for further improvement.

The SSRE is a clear document that demonstrates that the school knows itself well. With a few additions from the evaluative evidence it has the SSRE would be an exemplar of good practice. The school is aware that, by adding this evidence, the link between the SSRE and the areas identified for improvement plan will be explicit.

Howard Marshall
April 2018