

Department of Education, Sport and Culture

Rheynn Ynsee, Spoyrt as Cultoor

Chief Executive Officer
Ronald Barr

redacted

School Improvement Adviser

Education Improvement Service
Department of Education, Sport and Culture
Hamilton House, Peel Road, Douglas
Isle of Man, IM1 5EZ

Date: 7 February 2018.

Headteacher
St Thomas C of E School
Finch Road
Douglas IM1 2PL

Direct Dial No: redacted
Mobile: redacted
Website: www.gov.im
Email: redacted

Dear redacted

Re:
Moderation of Science Record 2017-18

Date: 1st February 2018

School: St. Thomas' C of E Primary School

Moderators: redacted

Class teachers: redacted (Y5/6), redacted (Y2/3)

School Context:

The moderation exercise started with a meeting and discussion with the Headteacher/Science Co-ordinator, redacted who made the additional relevant points:

- The school staff report that they 'lack confidence' in their ability to accurately assess SC1. They feel that they would benefit from 'science exemplars' that show what, for example: "A good 4a looks like." This view was endorsed by the Headteacher.
- Science has not been an explicit action point on the School Improvement Plan recently but could be included in the 'Teaching & Learning' aspects of the current SIP in order to raise the profile of science teaching. The Headteacher, having observed a student recently is challenging the quality and quantity of AT1. She is keen to develop an aspect of "Talk for Science" potentially that would seek to challenge and improve the quality of questioning and learning.

Evidence of in house moderation:

Although the school has not carried out in-house science moderation, regular book trawls are carried out by the Headteacher who is also the school's science co-ordinator to ensure that the science assessment trackers are regularly updated and reflect the evidence in the children's workbooks. These are in the front of every child's science book and were dated, and in some cases annotated, which would be considered best practice.

Science Training attended including Science Cos:

Due to the demands of having a management/teaching role, attendance at Science Co-ordinators' meetings by the Headteacher has not always been possible.

Verbal feedback given:

The Headteacher agreed the points made by the moderators.

Moderation Focus:

Summative assessment of four pupils, 2 currently assessed as L2a and 2 at 4a.

Overall Comments:

Individual Students:

Student 1 yr 2/3 red
Level: 2a act

Evidence provided:

There was not enough adequately assessed evidence provided to enable the moderators to easily or accurately gauge an attainment level. This was particularly so in SC1. However, following discussions with r with regards to SC 2, 3 and 4, there is a good level of knowledge and use and understanding of vocabulary (e.g: r explained how shadows were made by light not passing through opaque materials e and explained and provided examples of transparent materials.)

The Moderators were unable to accurately agree or disagree with this level because:

Agree: level 2a for SC2, SC3 SC4 with some aspects of Level 3 demonstrated but not assessed/recorded.

SC1 - Not enough evidence to agree overall level

Student 2 yr 2/3 red
Level: 2a act

Evidence provided:

See above comments on evidence and likewise, r demonstrated a good verbal knowledge and understanding of other SC aspects. (e.g: melted chocolate goes back hard if you leave it a long time to go cold. She was also able to use this knowledge to begin to predict the effects on temperature on melting speed/time.)

The Moderator were unable to accurately agree or disagree with this level because:

Agree: level 2a for SC2, SC3 SC4 with some aspects of Level 3 demonstrated but not assessed/recorded.

SC1 - Not enough evidence to agree overall level.

Student 3 yr 6 r
Level: 4a e

Evidence provided: Evidence was written and photographic. However, lack of AfL/annotations of photographic evidence made the attainment level difficult to assess from evidence alone.

However, re was very able to explain each photo and what it represented (Eg: atoms of da)

solids, liquids and gases and how the atoms (molecules?) behaved). She was also able to talk about fair-testing and variables.

The Moderator were unable to accurately agree or disagree with this level because:

Agree level 4a for knowledge and understanding for Materials and Properties.

SC1 - Not enough evidence to agree as a secure 4a as elements of SC1 learning are missing.

Student 4 yr 6 red
Level: 4a act

Evidence provided: See comments on evidence above.

As above re was very knowledgeable on the science that had been covered, using a wide range of vocabulary accurately and was able to make links to previous learning. r was able to reason and plan verbally how she would separate a mixture using more e than one step. re very obviously enjoys Science.

The Moderator were unable to accurately agree or disagree with this level because:

Agree level 4a for knowledge and understanding for Materials and Properties.

SC1 - Not enough evidence to agree as a secure 4a as elements of SC1 learning are missing.

Strengths:

- The Headteacher recognizes that the teaching and assessing of SC1 needs to be developed and improved, especially with regards to encouraging questioning and 'deeper thinking' skills and to develop the 'Discussing, Explaining and Evaluating aspects of SC1.
- There is clear evidence that the Science Strands are being used for assessment. Each child has a relevant target sheet in their book and these are regularly updated by the teacher.
- Science is taught weekly and on a rolling programme that meets the needs of mixed aged classes and ensures adequate coverage and re-visiting of Learning Objectives.
- It is obvious that all the children enjoy science. All 4 were enthusiastic and able to articulate their science learning, using scientific vocabulary accurately and expressively.
- Following in-depth discussions with the children, it became obvious that with regards to SC2, 3 and 4, there is a good level of knowledge and understanding and evidence that high expectations in learning are encouraged (but this is not always evidenced)

Areas for development:

Develop a science planning focus on SC1.

There was not enough adequately assessed evidence provided to enable the moderators to easily or accurately gauge the attainment levels of all 4 children, particularly in SC1 which ultimately affected their judgements.

Whilst the children all feel that science is well taught by their teachers, the older children expressed a wish to have a greater variety of practical science, particularly investigations.

Evidence of SC1 activities in the samples of work provided were incomplete. There was little evidence of methodology, accurate conclusions and questioning and reasoning.

Develop effective and meaningful AfL teaching and assessment.

The use of AfL techniques within science appears limited. 'I can' statements are evident but there was little evidence of specific and targeted feedback and/or marking to enable the children to consolidate or extend their learning.

Much of the examples given were similar and the school could look at developing the flexibility and variation of opportunities offered through the science curriculum.

During conversation with the Headteacher, the Moderators identified the Science Coordinators ItsLearning site as a good place to start for regular updates around scientific teaching. The science moderators are keen to offer further support needed and if necessary provide a follow up visit in the next 12 months to look at assessment procedures in science.

Signed (Moderator) –

Date –

Signed – (HT)
Yours sincerely

Date –

redacted

School Improvement Adviser