

Ballasalla Primary School

Ballasalla School recently received an external validation, which involved confirming the judgments the school has made about itself across certain areas. For the purpose of this validation, three aspects were looked at in detail:

Achievement against prior attainment
Assessment
Care

Achievement against prior attainment

Achievement against prior attainment is good, with most pupils in the foundation stage making more progress than is generally expected for the Island. Most pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make better than expected progress in English, mathematics and science. Children with special educational needs generally make very good progress.

Assessment

The school has some good processes for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics including peer and self assessment. School recognises the need to continue to assess how progress and attainment is measured and recorded in other areas of learning. The school uses summative assessment to make evaluative judgments about pupil progress. School will continue to develop using this information to identify next steps and in setting targets. Teachers make good use of praise and encouragement in their feedback to children. Overall, the team concluded that this aspect of provision was satisfactory.

Care

The team agreed that Care at the school is good and that it provides a safe and secure environment for pupils. Its behaviour guidelines and established routines promote responsibility for pupils' well-being and mutual respect. Pupils know they can approach any adult in the school for support. They develop a sense of safety at school. The school has developed links with external agencies (including the Pre School Assessment Centre, Services for Children, Fit 4 the Future and the Thriving Families Project) to ensure relevant intervention. It has established routines to ensure that any incidents are recorded and reported. Care of pupils is clearly something to which the school attaches great importance.

Other areas considered:

As well as the three specific aspects on which it focused, the validation team also considered other judgements set out in the SSRE. It concurred with a number of the school's judgements including those that:

- Pupils feel sufficiently secure in their relationship with adults in the school to discuss their needs.
- Pupils understand that a healthy diet impacts positively on their physical well-being.
- The development of the '6Rs' is reflected in the learning environment.
- All class bases have reading corners and role play centres designed to encourage independent learning and play.
- Central hall and corridor displays are used effectively to celebrate pupil achievement, application and effort.

- All pupils learn about the cultural heritage of the Isle of Man.
- Subject leaders have a collective responsibility for monitoring and evaluation and for auditing training requirements.
- All staff are encouraged to take risks in planning, the delivery of new projects to provide challenge and enjoyment for both staff and pupils.
- Teachers use their planning to set objectives and define focus groups.
- The school adopts teaching strategies that are matched to pupils' needs.
- The team determined attainment to be satisfactory overall with attainment in the '6Rs' showing elements of good.

Conclusion

The school's self review and evaluation, acknowledges the school has many strengths, including the overall positive ethos of the school. It also documents areas for further development. In particular, the school's self review document does not currently allow it to demonstrate that it knows itself well enough. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen the school's self review and evaluation processes to enable it to fully document its strengths and areas for improvement. The validation team concurred that the school is held in high esteem by the parents and the wider community and that parents are grateful for what the school provides for their children both academically and socially.

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Headteacher
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