

Arbory School

Arbory 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
- Learning and teaching
- Guidance and support

Achievement against prior attainment

The validation team concluded that the school's judgment that children's achievement against prior attainment was 'good' overall was likely to be true. Although the school did not have the full range of data, it was agreed that most pupils who completed Key Stage 1 in 2014 were likely to have made better than average progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science over the course of the key stage. Most pupils who completed Key Stage 2 in 2014 had made better than average progress in reading, mathematics and science. Most had made at least average progress in writing. Based on results over time it is likely that, within lessons and units of work, pupils acquire and apply skills, knowledge and understanding, demonstrating progress in their learning.

Learning and teaching

The validation team agreed that it is likely to be true that the school was right to judge learning and teaching as 'good' as available evidence showed that pupils acquire knowledge or skills in their learning, develop ideas and increase their understanding. Pupils take appropriate opportunities to direct their learning and, where appropriate, this learning is extended beyond the classroom through such things as learning logs, use of the outdoor classroom, visits and sporting events. The validation team raised questions about consistency and of a systematic approach throughout the school in terms of setting learning objectives and targets but agreed that teachers generally show good command of areas of learning and have identified a need to improve their teaching of ICT.

Guidance and support

The validation team concurred with the school's judgment that guidance and support is 'good' and noted that the school provides effective guidance and support through policies, procedures and curriculum opportunities to address the issues of educational inclusion, healthy lifestyles, enjoying and achieving, citizenship and economic well-being and to enable pupils to make good choices in terms of both their personal and academic development.

Other areas considered

As well as the three specific aspects on which it focused, the validation team also considered other judgments set out in the SSRE. It concurred with the judgments that:

- Pupils display self-confidence and most have high self-esteem. They work together in a variety of groupings.
- Pupils are not afraid of putting their views across to others and are secure about giving answers.

- Behaviour is good.
- Pupils have a positive attitude to keeping fit.
- Pupils know about 'stranger danger'.
- Participation in community events is good.
- The development of a skills-based curriculum has enabled teachers to focus on skills sets that can be developed in partnership with the pupils.
- Resources throughout the school are good.
- The learning environment within the school shows creativity.
- The school is proactive in developing opportunities for transition to high school.
- Transition meetings for new Reception pupils are well attended by parents.
- The school has a very good reputation in the community.
- Pupils are proud of the school.

Conclusion

The school knows itself quite well. This self-knowledge is not reflected in the SSRE, which does not provide sound evidence that supports and illustrates judgments and which is not sufficiently related to the relevant grade descriptors. It is important for the school to remedy this so that it has a firm basis on which to plan for improvement.

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