

Jurby Community School

Jurby Community School recently took part in an external validation of its SSRE document. This process involved Mr Graham Reeves from World Class Learning and Mr Geoff Moorcroft, Director of Education, working alongside the Headteacher, Mr Will Nelson, to confirm judgments the school had made about itself.

Three areas were looked at in detail:

- Achievement against prior attainment
- Assessment
- Stakeholder perceptions

Achievement against prior attainment

The validation team concurs with the school's judgment that achievement against prior attainment is 'satisfactory'.

The validation team notes that the small cohorts of pupils in the school means that aggregated assessment data is not necessarily a completely reliable measure of overall rates of progress. Nevertheless, it finds such data indicative that for pupils who completed the Foundation Stage in 2015, average achievement against prior attainment was less than satisfactory. Most pupils who completed Key Stage 1 had made better than expected progress in English, mathematics and science over the key stage. The same applies for those who completed Key Stage 2. The school does not have evidence about the extent to which, within lessons and units of work, pupils acquire and apply skills, knowledge and understanding, demonstrating progress in their learning.

Assessment

The validation team concurs with the school's judgment that assessment is 'satisfactory'.

In most lessons, teachers tell the pupils the learning objectives of those lessons. Too often, these 'learning objectives' refer, in fact, to the activities the pupils will be undertaking rather than what they will learn from these activities. Teachers involve pupils in identifying success criteria for lessons. These success criteria would be more useful if the learning objectives were more specifically about learning. Peer- and self-assessment regularly takes place in lessons. Again the usefulness and effectiveness of these activities would be improved with more specific learning objectives on which they could be based. Through its tracking systems, the school is aware of the progress made by individual children. Through feedback, teachers make pupils aware of the next steps in their learning.

Stakeholder perceptions

The validation team finds that the school has set itself too high a standard in this area and that, in relation to the agreed grade descriptor, stakeholder perceptions should be judged as 'good'.

The vast majority of parents are very happy with the school, and find it a welcoming and friendly place. The school consults formally and informally with stakeholders on a range of issues. For example, parents, governors, pupils and staff were involved in the production of the school behaviour policy and vision statement. Parents are

encouraged to engage with their child's learning through, for example, learning logs and termly information sheets.

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 statements set out in the SSRE. It concurred with many of these, including:

- Homework is based around open-ended learning challenges, encouraging pupils to direct their own learning.
- 'Learning walls' have been developed in classrooms.
- There is a strong Manx context in planning.
- Visits into the community and visits into school enhance curriculum provision as well as developing community links.
- 'Visual timetables' are used where appropriate.
- Displays produced by staff and pupils highlight dyslexia and autism issues and how other pupils can support those who are affected.
- The school has introduced the 'Mile a Day' initiative.
- The school runs a breakfast club to ensure that all pupils are able to start the working day without being hungry.
- In Class 1, fruit is provided as a mid-morning snack.
- Informal partnerships with parents are generally good.
- Staff are available for parents in the playground for between five and ten minutes before each day begins.
- The staff have a clear vision. This vision is displayed around the school.
- The headteacher is a visible presence around school as is always cheerful and enthusiastic.

Conclusion

The SSRE is mostly very well set out with clear and succinct judgements and comments specifically related to the grade descriptors. The sections on attainment and achievement against prior attainment are less clear. The judgments are reliable; the only one with which the validation team disagreed had been made by setting the standard even higher than was necessary. The school knows itself well and is a good position to plan for further improvement.

Mr Will Nelson
Headteacher
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