

**Herts for Learning**  
**Hertfordshire Improvement Partner Report**  
**2019-20 Spring Term Visit - Primary School Version**

School	Giles Nursery and Infants' School	Number	160	Date	06.02.2020
Present	<b>Rouane Mendel (Headteacher), Judith Garley (Deputy headteacher), Lisa Dacombe (Foundation Stage leader), Emma McPartland, (Mathematics leader), Lucy Dean (Mathematics leader), Lisa Hill (English leader) and Anne Peck (Hertfordshire Improvement Partner) joined by Steph Stevens (Chair of Governors) and Kate Long (Governor).</b>				

### Outline of Visit

8:30 – 12:15

An exploration of the quality of education provided by the school through a single deep dive into mathematics undertaken in partnership with the headteacher and the curriculum leaders for mathematics including:

- discussion with curriculum leaders to explore long and medium term thinking and planning including the rationale for content choices and sequencing
- visits to three lessons (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) with a focus on how all pupils benefit from high quality education
- discussions with teachers, from the lessons seen, to understand how the curriculum informs their choices about content sequencing
- discussions with pupils, chosen from the lessons visited, alongside a brief review of their recorded work, to explore how well they build schema and recall learning and how effectively the intent of the school's curriculum is enacted in its implementation
- a discussion with one member of staff from the school's speech and language base, to explore provision in regard to the quality of education in mathematics.

12:45 – 2:00

A 'spotlight' on provision for pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium grant (disadvantaged pupils) including:

- a discussion with the leader with responsibility for disadvantaged pupils to explore the rationale behind the school's deployment of the pupil premium grant and the impact of their actions to date
- visits to two intervention sessions led by the school's pupil premium champions
- a review of a sample of the written and recorded work of disadvantaged pupils, in writing and mathematics, to explore the impact of leaders' actions to accelerate pupils' progress through the curriculum
- a discussion with the school's family support worker to explore the rationale and impact of her actions to support disadvantaged pupils and their families.

2:00 – 3:00

Feedback and next steps discussions with senior leaders and governors.

### Progress against actions agreed at the previous visit:

<p>Revisit curriculum progression in reading, so that all teachers articulate a solid consensus of the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to develop across the school's broader reading curriculum.</p>	<p>Senior leaders have provided teachers with three days of non-class based time to reflect on the intent of the curriculum, in total and in individual subjects.</p> <p>Leaders report that teachers and support staff have now secured a common consensus, in terms of the cumulative sequence of learning across all subjects, and can reflect on how each component of learning fits into the broader curriculum journey.</p>
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### Strengths noted based on evidence collected during activities undertaken:

#### **Mathematics:**

Curriculum leaders have adopted and adapted a clear pedagogical and content intent for the teaching of mathematics across the school. As a result of leaders' own professional development, as well as training and support provided to colleagues, teachers share a secure and solid consensus of the sequence of learning in mathematics, from nursery to Year 2. Review of leaders' intent documentation indicates that new material is divided into manageable steps and that there are extensive opportunities for all pupils to revisit prior learning and make connections with new content. The intent of the school's mathematics curriculum, both in terms of pedagogy and content, was seen to be securely and consistently enacted in its implementation across the school. The following themes emerged.

Teachers provide learners, systematically, with opportunities to master the content of the school's mathematics curriculum and to engage in deep and meaningful learning. As a result, pupils are well supported to know more and remember more over time. For example, in Year 2, pupils were engaged in activities planned to support the understanding of subtraction of a single digit number from a two digit number including bridging ten ( $43 - 6$ ). In this instance, pupils had been provided with a range of examples with completed and then empty number lines and were then supported to extrapolate the calculation from a word based problem, again using the same base strategy. In Reception, teachers prioritise a deep and meaningful understanding of the number system. In the lesson seen during the visit, pupils were supported to explore the 'fourness of four' with a range of practical and reasoning activities which involved regrouping numbers to four in a number of different ways and contexts. Pupils' interactions with the content, in addition to discussions with teachers, indicate that this style of learning is typical of pupils' mathematical learning diet.

All pupils, regardless of background or prior attainment group, have access to concrete and pictorial scaffolds which support the development of mathematical schema. In the lessons visited, pupils in Year 2 were working with a range of number lines as well as bead strings; pupils in Year 1 were manipulating 2D shapes and pupils in Reception were accessing learning through natural and mathematical resources such as conkers, shells and cubes. Review of pupils' recorded work indicate that cherry diagrams, tens frames and bar models are consistently used to support learners' conceptual development across key stage 1.

Teachers are highly effective in planning learning which explicitly connects new content with prior learning. For example, in Year 1, the teacher explicitly planned to start the lesson with a 'prior access learning' task, skilfully involving the antics of a naughty elf who had crept into the classroom, overnight, and messed up the children's *Maths Garden*. In Year 2, pupils revisited slides from previous lessons before tackling new variations in content in the lesson visited.

The implementation of the school's curriculum intent supports frequent opportunities for pupils to reason and apply their learning. This includes the use of speaking frames, precise questioning which encourages explanation and debate and open ended deepening and broadening learning activities.

As a result of leaders' ongoing training and support, there is fidelity to the school's chosen curriculum, consistently and securely, across all classes seen. However, there is also significant capacity amongst the teachers to be flexible in their application of this teaching sequence and for adapting it to support pupils to address gaps in their learning and to catch up and keep up with their peers. For instance, in Year 1, the teacher explained how she intended to revisit the concept of vertices with the class before the end of the school day and then again the following morning as her assessment for learning practice indicated that not all pupils were secure in their understanding. In Reception, the teacher had adapted the whole class teaching to incorporate a group of pupils, some with special educational needs or a disability (SEN/D) so that access to individual resources and scaffolds allowed them to access learning at an age appropriate level. For some pupils a more individualised approach is required and some pupils with an SEN/D were seen to be following a personalised curriculum. Pupils in the speech and language base were supported in class with additional pre and post teaching opportunities. Class teachers and base staff liaise regularly and pre teaching packs are prepared for use at home. The intervention model used by the school is considered in more detail below.

Across the school there was accurate and appropriate use of disciplinary language, for instance, 'vertices' in Year 1 and 'subtrahend' in Year 2.

As a result of the implementation of the school's intent, learners, including those with a SEN/D and those who are disadvantaged, were seen to develop detailed knowledge and skills in mathematics. The attainment of pupils, at the end of key stage 1, at both the expected standard and for those pupils working at greater depth, has been above the national average for the past two years. Leaders' assessment of how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum towards end of key stage 1 national curriculum expectations indicates that results in 2020 are likely to be equally strong.

### **Provision for disadvantaged pupils:**

In 2019, the attainment gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers narrowed significantly in reading, writing and mathematics in relation to the expected standard at the end of key stage 1. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment was broadly in line with the attainment of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in reading and mathematics. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics check was also broadly in line with their non-disadvantaged peers in school and above the national average.

However, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching a good level of development (GLD) in 2019 fell from 2018 and there was a significant attainment gap in evidence. Leaders reflect that, for some disadvantaged pupils, attainment on entry is very low. Consequently, all vulnerable pupils are screened on entry using specialist tools such as the Wellcomm assessment toolkit in order for gaps in learning to be successfully exposed and then addressed through specialist teaching. Leaders reflect that whilst the attainment gap is not closed by the end of reception, there is extensive evidence of accelerated progress leading to success by the end of key stage 1.

The leader with responsibility for disadvantaged pupils has undertaken extensive analysis of pupils' outcome data; the school's published strategy for recent years is available on the school website and the impact of past actions, alongside the rationale for current actions, is clearly detailed.

Leaders have invested considerable funding in appointing a pupil premium champion for each year group and in providing teachers with non-contact time to plan, prepare and assess learning for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, the connections between class based teaching and 1:1 precision support are seamless and pupils engage only in meaningful, short, sharp intervention sessions as necessary which impact minimally on other curriculum areas. Discussions with leaders as well as visits to sessions during the afternoon of the visit indicate that this strategy has been highly effective in accelerating pupils' progress through the curriculum. In both examples seen, pupils were supported to access learning previously taught in the morning to secure concepts and practise key vocabulary. Consistently, provision seen was precisely matched to the teaching seen in the morning in class including the use of specific vocabulary, resources and presentation of activities. In one example, the attention to detail in terms of the colours used to exemplify a concept for example, was exceptional.

The pupil base and location deprivation indicators, as identified on the school's inspection data summary report (IDSR) for 2019, are in the fourth quintile (more deprived) of all schools. Leaders report that a number of disadvantaged pupils in school have barriers to learning which are linked to socio-economic factors including child protection concerns, behaviour management at home and attendance. In order to address these issues, leaders have appointed a family support worker who works with parents to formulate a coherent plan of support. For example, creating a joint home/school 'three point scale' to support a pupils' emotional wellbeing or devising a strategy to support pupils to become more independent in terms of attempting written or recorded work in class. Feedback from parents, as well as pupils' outcome data, seen during the visit, indicate that this approach is also highly effective.

**Additional strengths noted through the deep dive and spotlight activities:**

Pupils behave with consistently high levels of respect for one another; they demonstrate high levels of self-control. Where some pupils with a SEN/D may find the high expectations demanded by school more challenging, leaders have been successful in supporting them to meet these high standards.

Displays around school and discussions with pupils actively promote a growth mindset. Pupils are encouraged to 'let their brains grow!'

Provision in Reception is ambitious for all pupils, regardless of need or background. The curriculum in both Nursery and Reception has been well thought through and links with the curriculum journey across key stage 1. The indoor learning environment, seen during the visit, is well resourced and organised to support independent learning. Pupils' play, as seen during child initiated learning, is purposeful. Pupils' artwork, displayed in the corridor, is exceptional in terms of the clear development of fine motor skills and colour mixing.

Leaders have been highly effective in securing a solid consensus of the school's curriculum journey across the school. They have used training and staff meeting time to great effect to secure this understanding and precisely detail the components of learning in reading and mathematics. Actions to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils have been highly effective. Feedback and monitoring, particularly to early career teachers, is impactful and supportive of ongoing professional development.

There is an inclusive ethos across the school. Pupils are known as individuals to teachers and leaders and their needs are precisely met. As a result, pupils' outcomes were in line with or above the national average, in all benchmarks in 2019.

### Areas for development noted based on evidence from activities undertaken:

During the visit, one pupil was seen to re-enter the mathematics lesson, after reading with an adult, and move directly to table based activities without any input from an adult. Discussions with pupils and 1:1 support staff indicates that this is typical practice. Leaders should consider this so that a 'bridging' opportunity is built into intervention so that pupils can be acclimatised to the lesson before the adult leaves them.

Review of pupils' written and recorded work indicates that they have individualised targets in writing and mathematics which are reviewed on a regular basis. This has been particularly effective for disadvantaged pupils in terms of accelerating progress through the writing curriculum to enable some pupils to catch up with their peers. Leaders could consider the impact of this strategy and explore ways in which a similar impact could be affected with less pressure on teacher workload.

<b>School's own view/evaluation of its overall effectiveness (on the basis of leaders' on-going self-evaluation):</b>	Leaders' own evaluation indicates that, as a result of focused professional support and development, the consistently highly effective provision seen in mathematics during today's visit is evident in all other curriculum areas. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are positive and leaders' high expectations for conduct are met. There is highly inclusive provision for pupils with a SEN/D and for those who are disadvantaged.
<b>HIP RAYG rating:</b>	Light green  It is not possible to confirm a dark green judgement without further deep dives being undertaken.
<b>HIP comment:</b>	The deep dives into reading and mathematics, undertaken over this academic year, and the spotlight on provision for disadvantaged pupils, indicate that the school's curriculum intent and implementation are embedded securely and consistently across the school. There is exceptional attention to detail in regard to support and intervention for vulnerable pupils and, as a result, the vast majority of pupils attain highly in national tests and make accelerated progress through the school's curriculum.

Although this visit draws on the deep dive methodology published by Ofsted in 'Inspecting the curriculum', the visit's length limits the number of subjects which can be explored. Consequently, there is insufficient evidence to draw firm conclusions about the systemic aspects of the school's work. However, hypotheses are likely to arise which leaders may wish to pursue as part of their ongoing self-evaluation. Similarly, where the HIP makes further visits to the school during the course of the year, they may follow up these hypotheses by exploring other subjects alongside school leaders.

Summary of agreed actions	By whom	By when
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Review the information currently available on the school website in regard to curriculum. As a matter of urgency, publish the curriculum journey documents shared during the visit.</li> </ul>	Senior leaders	End of February 2020

▶ Provide support and direction to staff so that pupils returning to the classroom after intervention are reconnected with whole class learning.	Senior leaders	End of February 2020
▶ Explore current practice in regard to target setting for pupils. Reflect on how current practice might be repetitious for teachers and how the same positive impact could be afforded whilst reducing teacher workload.	Senior leaders	End of February 2020

<b>Date and focus of next visit</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Focus</b>
	TBC	

**Hertfordshire Improvement Partner:** *Anne Peck*

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> February 2020

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